

# A MANIFESTO JUST for the CITY

Volume 4

Edited by Roberto Rocco, Caroline Newton & Juliana Gonçalves



# Colophon

## A Manifesto for the Just City Vol.4

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**Keywords:** Just City, Spatial Justice, Hope & Care, Spatial Planning.



Published by TU Delft OPEN Publishing |  
Delft University of Technology, The Netherlands

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.59490/mg.142>  
ISBN/EAN: 978-94-6518-012-0



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The electronic version of this book is available at:

<https://books.open.tudelft.nl/home/catalog/series/manifesto-just-city>

Cover and graphic design by: Roberto Rocco

This activity is supported by the:

**Delft Design for Values Institute (DDfV)**, the TU Delft platform discussing values in design and engineering. <https://www.delftdesignforvalues.nl>

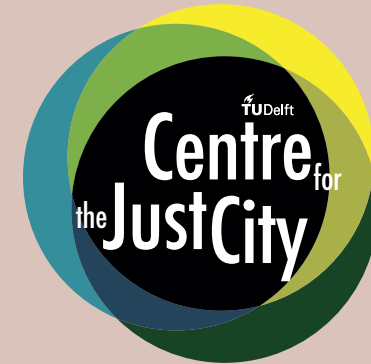
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Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no conflicts of interest. The views expressed in this volume are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official position of TU Delft.

Peer Review: This book has been peer reviewed. The peer review was open. The Editors and the Publisher would like to thank the reviewers for their time and effort.

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DEDICATED TO PURSUING SOCIAL JUSTICE THROUGH THE LENS OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT, THE CENTRE FOR THE JUST CITY VALUES ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE, DIVERSE THOUGHT, AND COMMITTED ACTION.

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The Centre for the Just City was set up at the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment at the Delft University of Technology in response to the pressing challenges of rampant social inequalities affecting the cohesion and the sustainability of cities and communities. Recognising the vital need to address these issues, the Centre emerged as a platform for research, education, and outreach activities for the creation of just cities. Since its inception, the Centre has been at the forefront of bridging theory and practice, fostering collaborations, and influencing policies and actions that contribute to making cities equitable, sustainable, and inclusive.

This book is based on an online workshop and lecture series that took place over five days in October 2023. 273 students from 86 different academic institutions submitted 73 manifestos for publication.

This is the fourth Call for a Manifesto for the Just City organised by TU Delft and partners.

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# Acknowledgments

We are truly grateful for the collaborative spirit and generous support that have made this book possible. This project is the result of the contributions of many individuals who have shared their insights, passion, and creativity with us.

First and foremost, we extend a heartfelt thank you to the talented contributors whose manifestos bring this book to life. A remarkable **273 students** from **86 universities** worldwide have crafted **73 manifestos** for this edition. Your thought-provoking ideas and passionate writing have helped shape a vision for more just and equitable cities, and we are deeply inspired by your work.

We are also incredibly thankful to **our speakers**—brilliant academics and dedicated activists—whose expertise has enriched the discussions and concepts explored within these pages. Your knowledge and perspectives have been invaluable in deepening our collective understanding of urban justice.

A special thank you goes to the **dedicated teachers and researchers** who have incorporated our Manifesto Workshop into their classes, encouraging their students to contribute to this book. We are especially grateful to colleagues from **KU Leuven, Cape Peninsula University of Technology in Cape Town, Cairo University, Military Institute of Science and Technology in Dhaka, Morgan State University in Baltimore, and Winston-Salem University in North Carolina**. Your enthusiasm and support have helped bring together a truly diverse and global collection of voices.

Last but not least, we extend our warmest thanks to the fantastic team at **TU Delft OPEN**, particularly **Frédérique Belliard**, for their unwavering support of this book series. Your meticulous work in checking copyrights and permissions, as well as your dedication to ensuring the highest standards, has been instrumental in bringing this book to publication.

This book is a testament to what we can achieve together—a celebration of shared knowledge, creative expression, and a collective commitment to shaping more just and inclusive urban communities. Thank you all for being part of this journey.

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# Facing the challenge to decolonise our minds

# Introduction to the 4<sup>th</sup> Volume of the Manifesto for the Just City

Roberto Rocco, Caroline Newton &  
Juliana Gonçalves  
Delft University of Technology

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In an age marked by converging global crises—climate change, growing inequality, democratic erosion, and increasing socio-spatial inequality and fragmentation—the search for justice has become a definitive imperative for urban planning. One way to explore these issues is through an exercise of collective imagination we call *The Manifesto for the Just City*.

The *Manifesto for the Just City* series, now in its fourth edition, stands as a platform for critical reflection and collective imagination. It brings together voices from students and teachers around the world to envision cities that are equitable, inclusive, and sustainable.

Anchored by the work of the *Centre for the Just City* at TU Delft, this initiative transcends traditional academic and professional boundaries, engaging students, practitioners, and scholars in a shared pursuit of urban justice.

The Manifesto is a collaborative workshop that invites students to engage critically with the concept of spatial justice via online lectures with leading intellectuals and leaders through lively debate. Participants explore how justice, and injustice, can manifest in urban spaces through its three indissociable and mutually reinforcing dimensions: fair distribution of burdens and benefits of our lives in society, inclusive decision-making, and the recognition of diverse identities, histories, trajectories and experiences.

The Manifesto's open-access publications by TU Delft OPEN Publishing in a special book series amplify these ideas, contributing to a global conversation about the ethical foundations of urban development.

The significance of this project is amplified by the context in which it unfolds. Globally, urban inequalities are intensifying, exac-

erbated by climate change, pandemics, and rising authoritarianism. The burdens created by these challenges are not distributed evenly; they disproportionately affect the most vulnerable—those living at the margins of society, overlooked because of their race, gender, or economic status. Cities, as focal points of both vulnerability and opportunity, are where these injustices must be addressed. The *Manifesto for the Just City* is a response to these intertwined crises, a call to action that recognises justice as the foundation of sustainable, resilient and dignified human life.

One of the Manifesto's unique strengths is its global scope. Organised in collaboration with institutions like IHS Erasmus University of Rotterdam, the Winston-Salem State University, Morgan State University, the Anglia-Ruskin University, the University of Illinois, and the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, the workshops bring together diverse perspectives and experiences. More and more teachers around the world are picking up this exercise as a class-activity, and using the lecture series and its many offshots as class material (i.e. our YouTube Channel, the Podcast *Duty of Care* and our other publications and activities).

The objective is to create a 'global community of equals', in the words of LSE Professor Romola Sanyal, who can discuss these issues freely, understanding the global interdependence of such processes. By 'equals', we mean a community sharint the values of social justice and inclusivity while respecting and celebrating diversity and difference.

Central to this year's Manifesto is the understanding that justice is not static or even universal but dynamic and context-specific. What constitutes a just city in Amsterdam may differ from what is needed in São Paulo, Cape Town or Dhaka. Yet, common

principles—equity in the distribution of burdens and benefits, participatory open urban governance, and the recognition and affirmation of diverse identities and forms of being in the world—form the backbone of a global commitment to justice. The Manifesto reflects this duality, highlighting the shared aspirations of urban justice while celebrating the local specificities that make each place unique. For this reason, we publish all Manifestos submitted by participants. In this global conversation, all voices are important and deserve attention, even those who are still struggling to develop a critical stance.

Most of all, the *Manifesto for the Just City* is a transformative process. By engaging participants, it equips them with the tools to critically assess urban injustices and envision better futures. This participatory approach mirrors the very principles we advocate: inclusivity, collaboration, and respect for diverse perspectives. The resulting manifestos are not mere academic exercises; they are declarations of intent and resolve, crafted by those who will shape the cities of tomorrow.

As we present the fourth volume of the *Manifesto for the Just City*, we do so with a renewed sense of purpose. This collection is not just a snapshot of contemporary urban planning thought and education but a call to action for policymakers, planners, and citizens alike. It challenges us to imagine new different worlds that are both desirable and fair. It reminds us that justice is not a given but a constant toil, one that requires courage.

At a time when trust in institutions is eroding and democratic values are under severe threat, the Manifesto serves as a beacon of hope. It reminds us that justice is not an abstract ideal but a lived reality that requires constant vigilance, critique, and renewal. By

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empowering students to imagine and articulate visions for the Just City, the Manifesto contributes to a broader movement for equity, inclusion, and sustainability.

This volume invites you to join this ongoing journey. Read these manifestos not as final answers but as provocations, ideas, and commitments. Let them inspire you to question the injustices you see around you and to envision the possibilities of a just urban future. Together, we can build cities that are not only places to live but spaces where everyone can thrive.

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# A Crisis of Imagination or a Crisis of Recognition?

## The Role of Prefigurative Planning in Fostering Alternative Imaginaries

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**Keywords:** Climate Injustice, Disproportionate Impacts, Capitalism and Colonialism, Alternative Imaginaries, Prefigurative Planning

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## Everything about Climate Change is Disproportionate

Extreme weather events have become disturbingly routine, with recent years marked by increasingly severe floods, heatwaves, wildfires, and hurricanes, which have caused immense social and economic losses worldwide. In 2021, heavy rainfall led to severe flooding in parts of Western Europe, particularly in Germany and Belgium; extreme spring heat waves in India and Pakistan with temperatures almost unbearable for human life; severe flooding in Ghana, Niger, India, Afghanistan and South Sudan; drought and heatwaves in Central Asia; Tropical Cyclone Seroja, which hit Indonesia in early April and Hurricane Grace, which hit Haiti two days after it experienced an M7.2 earthquake. In 2022, heavy rainfalls led to severe flooding in Pakistan, displacing millions of people; China, Europe, and the US witnessed dangerous and often unprecedented heat waves; Hurricane Ian hit Florida, leaving millions of people displaced. The years 2023 and 2024 were no different, with extreme wildfires in Chile, Hawaii, Canada and Greece; heavy rain in Pakistan, India and the Philippines; historical floods in north-eastern Libya; in Mozambique and Malawi; in Myanmar and parts of Bangladesh; and in Southern Brazil. The list goes on and on.

As climate events become more intense and frequent across the globe, they increasingly expose the disproportionate nature of climate change (Gonçalves & Verma, 2024). Low-income countries and marginalised communities disproportionately bear the brunt of climate change and also lack the resources to recover from disasters and adapt to a more extreme and unstable climate (Sultana, 2022; Reckien et al., 2017; IPCC, 2022). Globally, countries characterised by small carbon emissions, low income, and high vulnerability are already experiencing extreme heat, heavy rainfalls and flooding, and consequent disruptions in water, food and energy supply. Some countries are even at risk of losing a significant part of their territory, as is the case for small island states. The Caribbean, for example, is projected to have between 8.7% and 49.2% of its islands entirely submerged (Bellard et al., 2014).

Within cities, poor and low-income communities that contribute the least to climate change are also disproportionately impacted by landslides, storms, and floods owing to factors such as high population density, poor-quality housing, limited infrastructure, and a lack of resources for disaster preparedness and recovery (IPCC, 2022). Many of their assets are in vulnerable physical forms, such as homes and vehi-

cles, which are more vulnerable to climate impacts. Additionally, women, girls, children, the elderly, and those with health conditions face more significant climate risks (Ebi et al., 2007), with women and girls experiencing higher mortality rates (Neumayer & Plümper, 2007; Andrijevic et al., 2020). Climate change thus intersects across class, gender, age, and other social categories, overlapping to create a cumulative exposure to climate risks and burdens. This is highly problematic from a justice perspective, because these vulnerable groups, already left out of the distribution of “development” benefits, are also the ones that bear their burdens.

## Systemic Roots of Climate Injustice: Capitalism, Colonialism, and Patriarchy

The disproportionate patterns of burdens/benefits and oppression/privilege, revealed and worsened by climate change, are not recent. For decades, critical scholarship, social movements, indigenous peoples and other frontline communities have been pointing to the systemic and structural nature of environmental and climate injustices, linking climate change to capitalism and colonialism. Even the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the United Nations body for assessing the science related to climate change, has recently recognised that

“[The] vulnerability of ecosystems and people to climate change differs substantially among and within regions (very high confidence), driven by patterns of intersecting socio-economic development, unsustainable ocean and land use, inequity, marginalisation, *historical and ongoing patterns of inequity such as colonialism, and governance* (high confidence).” (IPCC, 2022, p. 12) (emphasis added).

Furthermore, feminist scholarship argues that women’s oppression is intricately linked to climate change through the exploitation of both gendered and racialised labour in capitalist and colonial relations (Sultana, 2022). Under these relations, women are often relegated to low-paid and unpaid domestic work, sustaining the labour force while being socially and economically marginalised. Both capitalist and colonial systems thus thrive on the subjugation of women, particularly women of colour, whose bodies and labour are commodified. This intersectional analysis highlights how capitalism and colonialism reinforce patriarchal structures, making climate change inseparable from the dismantling of patriarchal systems (Acha, 2019).

Yes, despite this systemic understanding grounded in critical scholarship, dom-

inant climate action remains fixated on short-term technology-based incremental improvements within existing systems, which hardly address systemic issues and completely ignore structural concerns. The persistent focus on risk management and system optimisation reflects a fundamental institutional lock-in, where “solutions” to the climate crisis have to comply with the imperative to minimise disruption to the status quo: so-called solutions have to be economically ‘feasible’ and ‘scalable’ – two qualifiers often used to dismiss alternative and transformative ways of addressing climate impacts. Such an approach is not only insufficient to address climate targets but reinforces existing social inequalities and dispossession across gender, race, and class (Sultana, 2022).

## A Crisis of Imagination or a Crisis of Recognition?

In view of this apparent inertia, many argue that our failure to address climate change stems from a “crisis of imagination” - a dual limitation in collective imagining and the ways climate change itself constrains our ambitions (Ghosh, 2018). Others, however, see the growing focus on imaginaries as a sign of hope for alternative futures (Saunders, 2022). I argue that this is not only a failure of imagination. It is also a crisis of recognition – a failure to recognise and elevate the transformative potential of alternative imaginaries that resist “on the margins” of dominant systems and narratives.

Indigenous peoples, communities of colour and grassroots organisations have long been at the forefront of social change and resistance, advocating for autonomous, community-driven approaches that challenge the dominant socio-economic order (Escobar, 2018). These groups envision futures in which values such as ecological balance, social justice, and collective well-being take precedence over economic growth. Their collective and social practices of resistance encode claims to the normative – what it should be – as well as the possible – what it could be, forming alternative imaginaries that are “promissory, deterministic and performative” (Whiteley et al., 2016). However, these alternative imaginaries are often appropriated, as green-washing or arts-led gentrification demonstrate, or ignored by mainstream climate discourse. As previously mentioned, they are not economically ‘feasible’ nor ‘scalable’. In many cases, they are met with systemic violence, usually targeting in-



indigenous peoples and community leaders (Global Witness, 2023). Ignoring their value as actors of change under the guise of a “crisis of imagination” contributes only to further marginalisation and oppression.

In this manifesto, I emphasise that transformative change will not emerge from policy reforms or technological innovations alone but also from fostering diverse, community-rooted imaginaries that prioritise collective well-being. Only then can we begin dismantling the structural injustices that underpin both the climate crisis and the inertia in addressing it, opening space for radically different futures. Therefore, I call for a critical approach to alternative imaginaries that engages with three key questions: (1) How are alternative imaginaries collectively negotiated and (re)produced? (2) How do they conflict with dominant ones? (3) How are they fixated and sustained? By engaging with these questions, we can foreground stories of hope and resistance without romanticising or exoticising them. I believe we are all in need of stories of hope, but it is by juxtaposing hope and resistance that we have a complete picture of the transformative potential of alternative imaginaries.

## Stories of Hope and Resistance

Bottom-up organisations and grassroots movements have been enacting alternative imaginaries by challenging dominant systems and fostering solidarity networks. Grassroots movements such as the Zapatista Movement (Mexico) and the Transition Towns Movement focus on autonomy, participatory, and community-driven approaches to governance.

The Zapatistas’ imaginaries are collectively produced through caracoles, which are cultural and political centres of the movement that aim to “increase the strength of the peoples and their networks so that they can achieve negotiated solutions based on non-negotiable principles” (Casanova, 2010). Caracoles are both an organisational structure and a physical space, operating under a set of priorities, from creating effective autonomy within the legal and national framework to restoring respect for women, children, and older people, as well as establishing information and cultural networks.

The Transition Towns Movement (TTM) originated in the UK in late 2005, in the context of increasing climate change, shrinking supplies of fossil fuels (‘peak oil’), and a growing recognition of the downsides of the current economic model, exposed and exacerbated by the 2008 financial crisis (Smith, 2011). Currently, TTM is a trans-

national grassroots movement active in forty-one countries and organised by the Transition Network (Feola & Nunes, 2014). The movement promotes ‘energy descent’ and local resilience through local action and community knowledge. The collective (re)production of their imaginaries occurs through training sessions, permaculture practices, and publications such as the Transition Handbook (Hopkins, 2008), Transition Initiatives Primer (Brangwyn and Hopkins, 2008) and Transition Companion (Hopkins, 2011).

Alternative imaginaries also often conflict with dominant socio-economic models, leading to global struggles over land and the city. The Right to the City Movement and anti-gentrification movements resist displacement caused by neoliberal urban development, advocating for affordable housing (Harvey, 2008). Related to this is the squatting movement and their alternative imaginary of housing as a right rather than a commodity. In Amsterdam, for example, squatting was strong in the 1970s and 80s in response to housing shortages and vacant buildings held by speculators. Squatters advocate for the communal use of urban space for housing, culture, and political activism, which materialise in community centres, self-organised cultural spaces, and housing cooperatives. In both cases, these imaginaries are met with legal and police violence in the form of legal battles, frequent evictions, police raids, periodic violent clashes, and even the criminalisation of squatting (Vasudevan, 2023).

Finally, alternative imaginaries are usually sustained through networks of care and solidarity. A beautiful example is Teia dos Povos (“Network of the Peoples”), a network that connects black communities, indigenous peoples, and small-scale and landless farmers across the Brazilian territory in both urban and rural areas. The network pursues autonomy through an imaginary of food sovereignty, which is materialised in agro-ecological practices and the cultivation of native seeds: A symbolic and material act of opposition in opposition to agro-industry practices that focus on monoculture farming and the privatisation of seeds promoted by corporations such as Monsanto, which threaten biodiversity and local farming traditions. By focusing on the preservation of traditional knowledge, seed-sharing, and agro-ecological land stewardship, the network aims to build an alliance that is Black, Indigenous, and Popular.

## Implications for Cities and Urban Areas and the Role of Prefigurative Planning

Housing 4.2 billion people – over half of the world’s population – cities are epicentres of climate vulnerabilities while simultaneously grappling with increasing multidimensional inequalities exacerbated by neoliberal government policies and planning (Nijman & Wei, 2020). Their dense populations and stark inequalities amplify the risks associated with climate change, particularly for the most vulnerable groups. How cities plan and implement climate action in the coming years will largely determine the living conditions of the future. Worldwide, cities have developed plans and policies to become smart, sustainable, circular, and/or resilient, but these are scattered and lack a coherent strategic vision that appeals to the public - that is, a collective vision. As a result, despite significant efforts, these ‘progressive’ initiatives have failed to deliver on their promises and have, instead, exacerbated inequalities and created new forms of dispossession, as shown by several scholars (Shelton et al., 2015; Wiig, 2016; Thatcher et al., 2016; Savini, 2019; Amorim, 2021).

The lack of a collective vision is also associated with a risk-averse approach that dominates planning and transition management, leading to short-term, incremental and scattered interventions. Obviously, the fact that political cycles are short-term and climate change challenges need long-term action exacerbates this disconnection. Another major criticism about urban transitions is the strong reliance on so-called experts: City plans and policies are, at best, informed by the needs and aspirations of citizens and other “non-expert” urban actors, let alone open to alternative imaginaries. These highly exclusive processes often lead to business-as-usual interventions that are detached from citizens’ lived experiences (Wright et al., 2013).

In response, prefigurative planning appears as an emerging mode of planning that fosters planning imaginations, embracing and performing alternatives here and now. This means organising, acting, and living in ways that reflect the values, structures, and practices that people wish to see in a transformed society. Prefigurative planning thus calls for

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*“The rejection of the given and the envisioning of alternatives, not by producing plans, but by harnessing planning imaginations; and not by pre-defining a postponed future, but by performing the possibilities of the not-yet in the here and now. This mode of planning is about initiating, forging, enabling and engaging in alternative ways of intervening in space-time from within the conditions of the present but without being limited to them” (Davoudi, 2023).*

For that, critical engagement with alternative imaginaries is necessary, not only with their narratives but particularly their enactment. Planning research and practice must (re)learn to negotiate and (re)produce imaginaries, anticipate and embrace conflicts that will emerge, and foster relations of care and solidarity within a meshwork of imaginaries without pushing for their universalisation.

## In Conclusion

To achieve meaningful climate action, we must move beyond the incrementalism of current approaches and embrace alternative imaginaries, particularly the imaginaries of those most affected by climate change. We must recognise that the most transformative solutions may already be emerging from the margins, instead of ignoring them and erasing their stories. By respecting and amplifying these efforts and learning from their stories of hope and resistance, we can create a future - here and now - that is not only ecologically sustainable but where diverse ways of living have a place and are sustained by networks of solidarity and care.

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# Where Did We Lose Our Radical Spatial Imagination? A plea to dare to imagine

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**Keywords:** Radical Imagination, Spatial Design, Participatory Practices, Systemic Change, Decolonisation

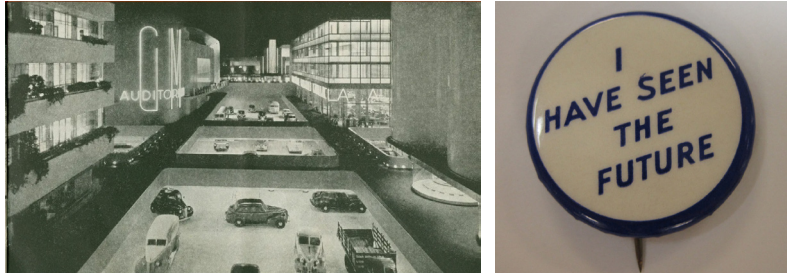
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Have you ever found yourself in a room filled with presentations of work and ideas, feeling both impressed by their clarity and comprehensiveness yet simultaneously disappointed by their lack of boldness? In today's intellectual and professional environments, it has become increasingly rare to encounter imaginative visions that push boundaries and evoke a sense of wonder. While the discourse on imagination and spatial visualization is becoming prevalent in research institutes and practices, this mainstream acceptance has paradoxically led to sterility in imaginative endeavours. The current landscape is characterized by a polarization between top-down and bottom-up approaches to imaginative capacity, yet neither fully realizes the true potential of radical imagination (Khasnabish & Haiven, 2014).

Bottom-up imaginative approaches, often rooted in grassroots movements and participatory practices, emphasize inclusiveness and local knowledge. These methods are driven by the desire to empower communities and foster collaborative problem-solving. However, they can sometimes be limited by their cautious incrementalism and an overemphasis on feasibility (Koning & van Dijk, 2024). On the other hand, top-down approaches, typically orchestrated by institutions and authorities, aim for grand visions and systemic change. These are often more ambitious but can be criticized for being detached from local realities and for imposing solutions from above with little regard for the actual needs of citizens (Udoewa, 2022).

This dichotomy highlights a broader issue: the diminishing space for radical imagination. Radical imagination is not merely about grandiosity or utopian thinking; it is about daring to conceive of fundamentally different ways of being and organizing our societies (Hoffman et al, 2024). This requires us to step beyond the constraints of what is immediately practical or efficient and to challenge the underlying assumptions of our current systems. Radical imagination involves envisioning transformative change that shakes the foundations of systemic injustices. It is about questioning the very structures that perpetuate inequality and envisioning alternatives that promote equity and justice. The term "radical" itself implies going to the root of issues, addressing not just the symptoms but also the core causes.



Figs. 1 & 2: Excerpted images from “Futurama,” 1939, in the 1939-1940 New York World’s Fair Collection, Museum of the City of New York. Source: <https://blog.mcny.org/2013/11/26/i-have-seen-the-future-norman-bel-geddes-and-the-general-motors-futurama/> Usage follows The MCNY standards of fair use. No further use allowed.

## An era of radical imagination

Since the 1960s, there has been a noticeable decline in the boldness of our collective imagination (Koning & van Dijk, 2024). The revolutionary fervour of the 1960s and 1970s, characterized by civil rights movements, anti-war protests, and feminist activism, gave way to a more cautious and conservative approach in subsequent decades. The fear of being labelled as utopian or unrealistic has led to a reluctance to propose visionary ideas that deviate significantly from the status quo. This fear is compounded by a neoliberal emphasis on efficiency, feasibility, and political correctness, which often stifles creative thinking. It is rooted in the idea that utopias have a blueprint, which must become realities rather than tool (Hoffman et al, 2024).

The trepidation associated with radical imagination is partly rooted in the fear of megalomania (Koning & van Dijk, 2024). The 20th century witnessed several grand ideological projects that ended in catastrophe, from totalitarian regimes to failed utopias. An exemplary case is the exhibition “Futurama” at General Motor Highways in New York, devised by Norman Bel Geddes in 1939 (Miller, 2020), showcasing a future based on cars. This very future became a reality, and therefore, a spatial nightmare in our cities and territories.

These historical lessons have instilled a wariness of ambitious visions that seek to overhaul existing systems. Consequently, many intellectuals and practitioners have retreated into safer, more incremental approaches that prioritize modest reforms over transformative change. However, the fear of boldness also reflects a deeper issue: the lack of confidence in our collective ability to envision and implement radical alternatives. This self-doubt is fuelled by a cultural and in-

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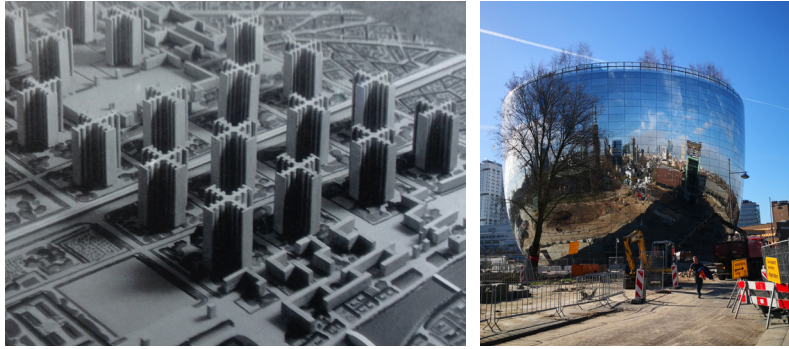
Fig 3. Figurines for the Triadic Ballet by Oskar Schlemmer; Staatsgalerie Stuttgart © José Luiz Bernardes Ribeiro / CC BY-SA 4.0. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Triadisches\\_Ballett\\_by\\_Oskar\\_Schlemmer\\_-\\_Staatsgalerie\\_-\\_Stuttgart\\_-\\_Germany\\_2017\\_\(cropped\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Triadisches_Ballett_by_Oskar_Schlemmer_-_Staatsgalerie_-_Stuttgart_-_Germany_2017_(cropped).jpg)

tellectual climate that rewards conformity and punishes deviation. The prevailing narratives of our time emphasize pragmatism and incrementalism, leaving little room for the boldness of radical imagination.

This conservative shift in imagination is particularly poignant in the fields of architecture and spatial design. The 1960s were a time when architects like Archigram, Superstudio, and Constant Nieuwenhuys dared to envision radical urban futures. Archigram’s concept of the Plug-In City, with its flexible and expandable structures, challenged conventional notions of urbanism and proposed a dynamic, adaptive environment that responded to the needs of its inhabitants. Superstudio’s speculative designs, such as the Continuous Monument, critiqued the modernist obsession with functionality and efficiency, advocating instead for an architecture that embraced the absurd and the surreal. Constant Nieuwenhuys’ New Babylon envisioned a world where people were liberated from the constraints of labour and could devote themselves entirely to creative pursuits, transforming the city into a playground for the imagination.

There is no better example of radical imagination daring to think differently than the Bauhaus. Founded in 1919 by Walter Gropius, the Bauhaus school became an inflection point in the history of radical spatial imagination. The Bauhaus was not merely an educational institution; it was a revolutionary movement that sought to unify art, craft, and technology to create spaces that challenged existing social orders and offered new ways of living and working. The Bauhaus empha-





Figs 4 & 5. Left: Plan Voisin, central Paris, Le Corbusier, 1922. By SiefkinDR - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=52660332> Right: Photography of Boijmans Depot Rotterdam, MVRDV (2021). Photo by Slariane, CC BY-SA 4.0, source: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Boijmans\\_Depot\\_Rotterdam.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Boijmans_Depot_Rotterdam.jpg)

sized the integration of form and function, yet it also encouraged its students and faculty to imagine beyond the practical, to consider how design could fundamentally alter human experiences and relationships.

The Bauhaus's role in radical spatial imagination was pivotal in its ability to use design as a tool for social change. In a time of immense political upheaval and social transformation, the Bauhaus envisioned a world where oppressive systems could be dismantled and replaced with more egalitarian structures. Imagination at the Bauhaus was not a passive act; it was a form of resistance against the status quo. Through their work, Bauhaus designers proposed alternative ways of organizing society, suggesting that design could be a means of liberation rather than merely a tool of the ruling class.

Imagination, when wielded as a tool in this context, becomes an instrument for countering design decisions that perpetuate inequality and oppression. It provides the power to envision alternatives and to create spaces that do not just reflect but actively reshape societal values and structures. The Bauhaus demonstrated that radical spatial imagination could transcend the limits of the present, offering visions of a future where design serves humanity rather than dominating it.

As we reflect on the legacy of the Bauhaus and other radical movements, it is clear that reclaiming our radical imagination is not just desirable but necessary. In an era during which global challenges require bold and innovative solutions, the courage to imagine differently—to push against the constraints of feasibility and practicality—may be our greatest asset. These radical visions were not mere

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fantasies; they were profound critiques of the social and economic structures of their time. They questioned the fundamental assumptions of urban planning and architecture, challenging the notion that cities should be designed primarily for economic efficiency and functional utility. Instead, they proposed a future where human creativity and imagination were the central drivers of urban development.

### Why is it so wrong to feel free to radically imagine today?

The decline of such radical imagination in contemporary design is a symptom of a broader cultural shift towards conservatism and risk-aversion (Koning & van Dijk, 2024). Today's architectural practices are often constrained by market forces, regulatory frameworks, and the imperative of economic sustainability. While these factors are undeniably important, they can also stifle creativity and innovation. The emphasis on feasibility and practicality often leads to designs that are safe and predictable, rather than bold and visionary. While there is a clear understanding that the safe and predictable designs have a strong and necessary role in our practice, radical imagination has lost its leverage to become a tool for innovation and creative design making (Koning & van Dijk, 2024).

On the other hand, the courage to generate bold visions has become the domain of an elite group of star spatial designers, who use these visions to create iconic city structures disconnected from truly democratic collective imagination. In this context, the megalomaniac exploits imagination and boldness as tools of abuse, shaping cities based on isolated, individual preferences, thus reinforcing oppressive systems.

Incremental changes, while valuable, often fail to tackle the systemic causes of inequality and oppression. Transformative change requires a fundamental rethinking of our social, economic, and political systems. It involves envisioning alternatives that are not constrained by the limitations of the present but are inspired by the possibilities of the future. Radical imagination is a tool- the same as a hammer- it can be used to build a home but also to hurt someone. The way radical imagination is used defines the way we can address transformative changes to our systems (Loorbach, 2022).

Spatial designers have a unique role to play in this reimagining of our world. By daring to envision radical alternatives, they can challenge the dominant para-

digns of urban development and propose new ways of living that are more just, equitable, and sustainable. To reach radical spatial imaginaries, spatial designers, and specifically architects have held a power relationship with future imaginaries. This has led to the need to decolonize the design processes, since even the more “participatory” processes still operate under colonial and power dynamics. The last decades we have a extensive body of research and praxis into participatory and co-creation practices aiming to dismantle spatial design as a colonial process where the designer aims to get approval from the participants rather than to develop a truly co-created design (Udoewa, 2022)therefore, leading to perpetuating systemic injustices rather than targeting spatial transformations that tackle socio-political and socio-environmental challenges. This requires a willingness to think beyond the immediate constraints of feasibility and practicality, and to embrace the possibilities of what could be. What would a truly just and equitable society look like? What radical changes are necessary to achieve this vision?

## A future of imaginative hope

To reclaim our radical imagination, we must overcome the fear of boldness and the fear of becoming megalomaniacs who use this tool for their own interest, challenge the dominant narratives of pragmatism and incrementalism, and dare to envision a fundamentally different world (Escobar, 2018). In doing so, we can shape a future that is not only feasible but also just, equitable, and aspirational. There are many questions to explore and pathways to follow in this direction, and the revival of imagination should become a rallying point for spatial designers to reconsider their role, agency, and values in this context. The task ahead is daunting, but the possibilities are immense. By embracing the boldness of radical imagination, we can begin to envision and create a truly transformative world. Let us dare to imagine. Let us do so together.

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# Spatial Justice and Extreme Climate Events: What future for Porto Alegre's islands?

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**Keywords:** Climate Vulnerability, Spatial Injustice, Informal Settlements, Participatory Adaptation, Urban Inequality

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Cities in the Global South are especially vulnerable to extreme climate events due to various socio-economic and infrastructural challenges. In Brazil, approximately 34% of its municipalities—1,942 of a total of 5,570—are susceptible to disasters such as landslides, floods, and inundations (Government of Brazil, 2023). At least 8 million Brazilians who live in areas of geo-hydrological and geological risk are vulnerable. This highlights the urgent need for climate adaptation, defined by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) as changes in processes, practices, or structures to moderate or offset potential damages associated with changing climatic conditions (McCarthy et al., 2001). According to the IPCC, developing countries will need \$127 billion annually by 2030 and \$295 billion annually by 2050 to effectively adapt to climate change (IPCC, 2023). While policies and strategies of climate adaptation are still being drafted and agreed upon at various levels of governance, the realities of urban centres show that immediate action is necessary. In May 2024, extreme rainfall and flooding devastated Rio Grande do Sul, a state in southern Brazil, forcing the evacuation of entire cities. Over 460 municipalities were affected, displacing more than half a million people. Porto Alegre, the state's capital, was submerged after its poorly maintained flood defence system failed, resulting in a major disaster. In response, the Brazilian government launched a \$10 billion recovery operation, which included housing and climate adaptation strategies broadcasted by international media as President Lula's hurricane Katrina moment.

Upstream of Porto Alegre's Guaíba Lake, the Jacuí Delta, formed by the confluence of five rivers, plays a crucial ecological role. Its wetlands regulate hydrological dynamics, maintain water quality, and provide essential ecosystem services. Over time, sediment accumulation has led to the formation of sixteen islands in the Delta, which have become a focus of urban expansion. Although much of the Delta has been designated as Conservation Areas, with two different levels of protection, a lack of coordination between municipal and state authorities has led to weak enforcement of environmental regulations. Over the years, informal settlements have developed on five of the islands in the Delta—Ilha da Pintada, Ilha Grande dos Marinheiros, Ilha das Flores, Ilha do Pavão, and Ilha Mauá. Informality in such an ecologically sensitive area can be explained through ideas of spatial injustice that posits that unequal distribution of urban assets, such as land, infrastructure and housing in cities, is inherent to contemporary modes of urban development (Soja, 2010). Under such pressure for affordable urban land



and housing, disadvantaged residents are relegated to build homes in areas where land is cheap. In the case of Porto Alegre, hazardous and high-risk locations that do not allow for formal land titles become the only option for disadvantaged residents to settle near urban services. The islands of Jacuí Delta, home to low-income residents and traditional fishing communities, have been incorporated into Porto Alegre's municipal boundaries and designated as neighbourhood Archipelago. Given its Deltaic conditions, the neighbourhood is especially susceptible to climate change impacts. Additionally, as an environmentally protected area, it lacks infrastructure and public services, and currently does not allow for secure land tenure attenuating the spatial injustice these communities face.

The unplanned urban expansion into low-lying, flood-prone areas due to increasing housing deficit in Porto Alegre puts the islands' inhabitants at disproportionate risk. While the local population has adapted to cyclical flood regimes, climate change poses unprecedented challenges that require urgent adaptation measures. Despite their vulnerability, the islands have also attracted luxury developments, with high-end residences and private marinas being illegally constructed. This juxtaposition of affluent homes and substandard housing starkly illustrates the growing spatial inequality in the area. In the extreme flooding of May 2024, 3,902 people and 1,906 homes in the Archipelago were severely affected. As the municipality of Porto Alegre takes responsibility for defining the islands' urban development regime, the challenges of land regularisation and adaptation strategies are brought to the fore. Historically, informal settlements in cities of the Global South have been not only more vulnerable to climatic events but also to eviction and expropriation, as their legal protections are weaker compared to formal property rights (Moser and Satterthwaite, 2010). In this context, evictions add to experiences of spatial injustice during extreme climate events. Eviction as a strategy to mitigate flood risk disproportionately impacts low-income communities, who are often relocated to areas disconnected from urban services and economic opportunities. Wealthier residents in similar flood-prone areas, however, are controversially allowed to stay, further perpetuating spatial inequalities (Anguelovski et al., 2016). Frequently, post-flood evictions serve commercial interests and urban beautification projects rather than genuinely addressing residents' vulnerability (Arabindoo, 2011; Coelho & Raman, 2010). This reflects broader global patterns where urban adaptation efforts often serve market-driven objectives, exacerbating spatial injustice rather than addressing it.

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Despite these inequities, informal settlers are rarely willing to leave their homes without contestation, especially when their livelihoods and cultural identities are tied to their location. Fisher communities in the Archipelago, for example, rely on proximity to the water for their work, making relocation a direct threat to their way of life. Although there is a growing consensus against the forced removal of these communities, especially given their deep sense of place and identity, finding a long-term solution remains complex. For those residents willing to leave, the Federal Government offers a support package of 200,000 reais (circa \$36,800) for buying new homes. For those willing to stay, a public lawsuit has generated pressure on State and municipal institutions to provide durable adaptation solutions. Through participatory planning approaches, Porto Alegre's urban and environmental planning agency is expected to achieve both land regularization and enforcement of environmental regulations in the area. Participation is critical to procedural justice, ensuring that marginalised communities have a say in decisions affecting their lives and therefore crucial to achieve spatial justice. Actual realisation of spatial justice, however, is not limited to participation but relies on three mutually reinforcing dimensions: recognitional, procedural and distributive. Unfortunately, achieving justice in all dimensions in Porto Alegre's reconstruction remains fraught with challenges.

The complexity of rebuilding and planning whole communities requires coordination across different levels of government, yet political polarisation and disputes connected to upcoming elections threaten to derail urgent recovery efforts. Moreover, the task at hand is not only to rebuild but to fundamentally address the causes of vulnerability. Dominant urban development models, which prioritise commercial and speculative interests, have historically condemned low-income populations to live in the most disaster-prone areas. Without addressing this systemic issue, the city will continue to expose its most vulnerable residents to future climate-related disasters. Reconstructing the city on new socio-environmental foundations is not only ethical but also economically sound. Investing in equitable adaptation strategies, such as affordable housing and inclusive planning processes, can mitigate the need for costly disaster responses in the future. If Porto Alegre continues to prioritise the interests of developers over the needs of its most vulnerable populations, it will only deepen existing inequalities and exacerbate future risks.

The case of Porto Alegre's Archipelago islands exemplifies the complex in-

terplay between climate vulnerability, socio-economic inequality, and spatial injustice in urban centres of the Global South. As climate events become more frequent and severe, cities like Porto Alegre must prioritise inclusive, participatory adaptation strategies that centre on the needs of marginalised communities. Reconstruction efforts are often driven by the interests of investors, construction companies, and service providers, leaving affected communities with little influence over the decision-making process. In post-disaster situations, where survival takes precedence, the most vulnerable groups are often excluded from meaningful participation. Communities like those in the Archipelago have historically contributed little to the causes of climate change but bear its most severe consequences. Disasters not only destroy homes and livelihoods but also entrench cycles of poverty and vulnerability. In the wake of the 2024 floods, residents are left in limbo, with many still displaced and uncertain about their future. Without addressing actual causes of climate vulnerability, such as unequal access to land, housing, and urban infrastructure and services, post-disaster reconstruction will only perpetuate the very conditions that make these communities so vulnerable. There must be a fundamental shift in development paradigms; otherwise, we risk perpetuating the same practices that caused the problem in the first place. Achieving spatial justice in climate adaptation is not just a moral imperative—it is essential for creating resilient and equitable cities in the face of a changing climate.

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# Advancing Spatial Justice: A Framework Integrating Spatial Justice and Spatial Capital\*?

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**Keywords:** Spatial Justice, Spatial Capital, Informal Settlements, Urban Inequality, Participatory Planning

\*Further development of the framework will be published in greater detail in an upcoming article by the authors.

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## Introduction

Urban inequality, epitomized by the systemic marginalization and precarious conditions of informal settlements and areas characterized by spatial disparities, continues to be a significant barrier to achieving equitable urban environments across the globe. Such spaces are frequently neglected by formal planning systems, manifesting pronounced spatial injustices that not only mirror existing socio-economic and political disparities but also exacerbate them. Yet, they also function as sites of resilience and agency, where residents engage in ongoing negotiations to claim their right to the city (Lefebvre, 1968), even amid instability and fragmented governance (Roy, 2011).

Building on the foundational contributions of Harvey (1973) and Soja (2010), the concept of spatial justice extends conventional social justice frameworks by emphasizing the spatial dimensions of power, governance, and inequality. This perspective encompasses not just the equitable distribution of resources, but also the dynamic processes through which urban spaces are produced, contested, and regulated. In doing so, it foregrounds the varied experiences and identities shaped by spatial inequalities, demanding a critical examination of the mechanisms that perpetuate exclusion. Achieving spatial justice, therefore, requires inclusive urban planning approaches that place marginalized communities' needs, rights, and agency at the forefront.

Translating spatial justice from theory into practice, however, is rendered difficult by its conceptual breadth and the challenges of operationalising it in diverse contexts. Overcoming these hurdles necessitates a dual strategy: first, identifying the physical and systemic factors that reinforce or mitigate spatial injustices; and second, developing suitable evaluative frameworks to probe these dynamics. Spatial capital offers a potent lens in this regard, illuminating the interrelations among spatial configurations, resources, and human agency—factors crucial to a nuanced understanding of urban inequities.

Accordingly, this article introduces a foundational framework for analysing spatial justice in informal settlements by integrating the concept of spatial capital. Through this integrative approach, the article bridges the theoretical underpinnings of spatial justice with pragmatic applications that can inform policy making, planning, and grassroots interventions.

## Theoretical Foundations: Spatial Justice and Spatial Capital

Spatial justice captures the spatial dimensions of social relations, explicating how urban environments both reflect and reinforce systemic inequalities. This analytical perspective thereby elucidates the processes that sustain or contest spatial exclusion, particularly in settings where marginalized communities bear the brunt of such injustices.

Sen's (1979, 2009) capabilities approach offers an incisive conceptual framework for understanding justice in terms of the substantive freedoms' individuals require to lead lives they value. Nussbaum's (2000) focus on the socio-cultural barriers to achieving core capabilities deepens this perspective, highlighting how embedded systemic injustices, especially pronounced in informal settlements, curtail individuals' essential freedoms. Aligned with these views, MirafTab's (2004) notion of insurgent planning accentuates the proactive agency of marginalized communities, demonstrating their capacity to resist exclusionary policies and envision transformative urban futures.

Complementing these perspectives, Simone's (2004) concept of "people as infrastructure" reframes human interactions and social networks as adaptive, informal systems that compensate for the shortfalls of formal infrastructure—particularly in the Global South. This re-conceptualization spotlights the creativity and resilience emerging from community-driven responses to systemic constraints, underscoring the interplay between resource limitations and collective agency. Taken together, these theoretical insights form a robust basis for recognizing, critiquing, and addressing the spatial structures that perpetuate urban inequalities.

While spatial justice remains an aspirational ideal, in this article, spatial capital is unpacked using the A.U.R.A (Access, Utilisation, Resistance, and Adaptation) framework, where the complex interplay of the different characterisations allows the concept to be operationalised.

Spatial capital extends Bourdieu's (1986) conception of social capital, which he conceptualises as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition" (Bourdieu 1986, p. 248). Spatial capital then draws attention to how the spatial configurations and spatial distributions of resources shape socio-economic opportunities and constraints. It re-conceptualizes spatial

environments as active determinants of agency, thereby influencing how individuals and communities navigate structurally unequal urban landscapes.

Levy's (2014) expansion of social capital integrates a spatial lens, illustrating the ways in which built environments can both enable and constrain access to vital resources, opportunities, and networks. This perspective is especially relevant in informal settlements, where spatial inequalities are most acute. In turn, spatial capital emerges as a critical determinant of community resilience and adaptive capacity, forming the basis of the AURA framework that operationalizes spatial capital through its four interrelated dimensions: access, utilization, resistance, and adaptation.

## A.U.R.A (Access, Utilisation, Resistance, and Adaptation): A Framework for Operationalising Spatial Justice

### Access

Access, as framed by Amartya Sen's (2009) capabilities approach, highlights the importance of creating meaningful opportunities rather than merely providing resources. Within a spatial context, access addresses how both physical configurations and institutional frameworks can either foster or hinder equitable engagement with essential services—such as housing, infrastructure, and public amenities. Sen's emphasis on genuine opportunities resonates with David Harvey's (1973) critique of how entrenched political and economic power structures shape urban space, often marginalising vulnerable populations.

Evidence from Mumbai's M-East Ward, where only 31% of households have access to individual toilets compared to the citywide average of 85% (Subbaraman et al., 2014), reveals the severity of systemic neglect. This disparity directly affects public health, economic stability, and social mobility. More broadly, limited access to infrastructure (e.g., potable water and reliable transportation) exacerbates barriers to education and employment, compounding cycles of marginalisation. In this sense, access serves as the foundational dimension of the AURA framework, defining the baseline conditions under which communities interact with—and potentially transform—their urban environments.

Nevertheless, access on its own does not guarantee meaningful engagement

with resources, leading to the next dimension: utilisation.

## Utilisation

Henri Lefebvre's (1968) concept of the right to the city offers a lens through which to view utilisation as an active, participatory process. Rather than simply focusing on the availability of resources, utilisation foregrounds the agency of marginalised communities as they navigate systemic constraints and repurpose spatial resources to meet socio-economic and cultural needs. This perspective aligns with Edward Soja's (2010) framing of spatial justice as a process in which urban spaces are continually shaped and reshaped by lived practices—not merely top-down governance.

In Dharavi, Mumbai, for instance, like many other such neighbourhoods, shared spaces become sites of vibrant economic activity, where residents establish recycling workshops, pottery studios, and small-scale manufacturing units that collectively yield an estimated one billion dollars annually (Sharma, 2000). These practices are not limited to economic pursuits; they also strengthen social cohesion and cultural expression. During the annual Hindu Ganesh Chaturthi festival, shared spaces are temporarily transformed into communal areas for celebration. These environments likewise serve as venues for personal milestones, such as weddings, underscoring their adaptability as cultural infrastructure. Utilisation, then, bridges the gap between formal resource provision and the lived realities of agency, highlighting how communities creatively leverage spaces in ways that do not necessarily alter the structural conditions but do enable immediate survival and collective identity.

Yet, these strategies often encounter external pressures or policies that undermine local ingenuity, ultimately prompting resistance.

## Resistance

Resistance refers to the collective mobilisation of marginalised groups against spatial arrangements or policies threatening their livelihoods and well-being. Informed by Faranak Miraftab's (2004) theory of insurgent planning, resistance emerges as a grassroots endeavour to confront inequitable urban governance. Concurrently, Harvey's (2008) articulation of the right to the city underscores resistance as integral to reclaiming agency within oppressive spatial systems.

An illustrative case is Dharavi's long-standing opposition to top-down rede-

velopment proposals favouring elites and private developers. Large-scale demolition and forced relocation often undermine social networks, dismantle thriving local economies, and exacerbate inequalities. Through sustained advocacy and collective action, Dharavi's residents have pressured authorities to revise their plans, ensuring greater recognition of community voices and preserving the settlement's spatial and social fabric (Patel et al., 2002). Resistance is thus an iterative process: it not only defends existing socio-spatial arrangements but also reclaims power in shaping urban futures.

Even so, resistance alone cannot resolve chronic socio-spatial neglect. Consequently, communities must also engage in proactive strategies of adaptation.

## Adaptation

Drawing on AbdouMaliq Simone's (2004) notion of people as infrastructure, adaptation reframes infrastructure to include the collective practices that underpin urban resilience in contexts where formal systems fall short. As the culminating dimension of the AURA framework, adaptation underscores how communities creatively reorganise their built environments to meet immediate needs while cultivating long-term aspirations. Sen's (2009) emphasis on agency complements this perspective by highlighting the transformative potential embedded in localised solutions.

In Mumbai's informal settlements, adaptation takes diverse forms: constructing makeshift housing, devising improvised transportation routes, and developing community-led water distribution and waste management systems (Nijman, 2010). These initiatives not only fill infrastructural gaps but also repurpose communal spaces into sites of economic, social, and cultural innovation. In the initial stages, people themselves function as the core infrastructure, leveraging collective skills to address systemic voids. Over time, these adaptive practices reshape the physical environment, creating more durable and community-centred infrastructure.

Adaptation thus transcends mere survival tactics; it is a purposeful transformation of both space and socio-spatial relations, manifesting the community's capacity to engender resilient and equitable urban landscapes.

When viewed collectively, the four dimensions—access, utilisation, resistance, and adaptation—form a cohesive framework for understanding and intervening in spatial injustices. By emphasising both structural analysis and community agency, the AURA framework provides a nuanced tool for examining the multifaceted challenges

of urban inequality. In doing so, it demonstrates how communities not only cope with injustice but actively reshape their urban environments in ways that enhance resilience and equity.

## Conceptual Integration Of The AURA With Spatial Justice

This section extends the AURA framework—comprising access, utilisation, resistance, and adaptation—by situating it within broader debates on spatial justice. The analysis draws on Rocco’s (2024) “spatial justice triangle,” which posits recognitional, procedural, and distributive justice as interlocking dimensions essential for achieving equitable urban outcomes (Rocco, 2023).

### 1. Recognitional Justice

Recognitional justice entails valuing the identities, experiences, and socio-cultural practices of historically marginalised groups. Within the AURA framework, utilisation highlights how communities actively configure and repurpose urban space, thereby affirming their cultural, social, and economic identities. Resistance further solidifies recognitional justice by contesting oppressive governance structures and demanding recognition of marginalised communities’ rights.

### 2. Procedural Justice

Procedural justice emphasises inclusiveness, transparency, and equity in governance. Access aligns with this dimension by advocating fair and inclusive mechanisms to allocate resources such as housing, infrastructure, and public services. Likewise, utilisation underscores the importance of participatory processes, enabling community-driven claims of urban space, in manners best useful for them. Adaptation also contributes to procedural justice through community-led innovations that inform formal planning frameworks.

### 3. Distributive Justice

Distributive justice prioritises the equitable distribution of spatial resources. Access directly addresses this principle by focusing on how essential services are made available to marginalised groups. Resistance speaks to distributive justice when communities challenge exclusionary policies that reinforce spatial inequi-

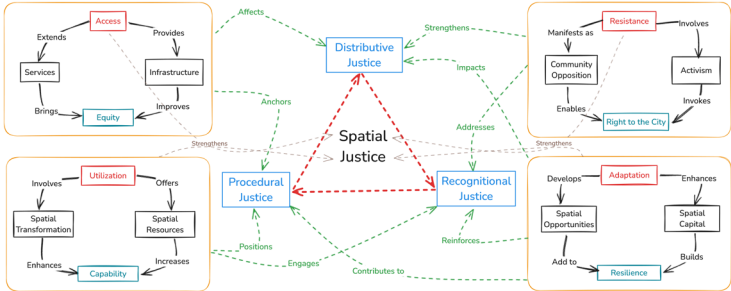


Fig. 1 Diagrammatic conceptualisation of the framework and its relationship with Spatial justice. The Spatial Justice triangle used, was developed by Roberto Rocco (2024). Diagram by author.

ties. Finally, adaptation solidifies the outcomes of distributive justice by transforming shared spaces to meet collective needs sustainably.

The diagrammatic representation (based on Rocco, 2024) illustrates how the AURA framework operationalises these three facets of spatial justice. Collectively, access, utilisation, resistance, and adaptation map onto recognitional, procedural, and distributive dimensions, thereby offering a holistic methodology for examining and addressing urban inequalities. In so doing, the framework highlights the inventive and interdependent strategies—mobilisation of collective knowledge, creative appropriation of spatial resources, and strategic reshaping of urban space—through which communities disrupt poverty cycles and enhance socio-economic mobility.

By integrating the theoretical constructs of spatial justice with on-the-ground practices in informal settlements, the AURA framework reveals how grassroots agency can be harnessed to foster more inclusive urban development. The following section will further demonstrate how this integrated perspective advances both scholarly debates on spatial justice and applied strategies for equitable city-building.

## Towards Advancing Spatial Justice

The A.U.R.A. framework builds on two interrelated yet distinct conceptual underpinnings. First, it draws on Lefebvre’s (1991) spatial triad, which elaborates how space is conceived (representations of space), perceived (spatial practice), and lived (representational space). This triad foregrounds the production and experience of space as a socio-political process. Second, it integrates the spatial



justice triangle, an operationalisation of justice-oriented scholarship (Soja, 2010; Fraser, 2007; Fainstein, 2010), which emphasises recognitional, procedural, and distributive dimensions of justice in urban contexts.

Whereas Lefebvre's spatial triad addresses how space is produced and experienced, the spatial justice triangle focuses on the normative imperatives guiding the fair allocation of resources, inclusive governance processes, and recognition of differences. By aligning with both frameworks, the A.U.R.A. model captures how systemic constraints, symbolic representations, and material practices intersect with struggles for recognition, participation, and equitable resource distribution. Its four dimensions—access, utilisation, resistance, and adaptation—reveal the barriers marginalised communities encounter and unpack their strategies to reclaim and reconfigure spatial rights. Through this dual lens, the A.U.R.A. framework underscores the reciprocal relationship between the socio-political production of space and the ethical obligations to contest and transform spatial inequities.

Crucially, adaptation emerges as a central element of the framework, highlighting the collaborative, often innovative, ways in which communities respond to chronic neglect and structural imbalances. Resistance remains vital to ensuring that marginalized groups actively contest exclusionary policies and reclaim ownership of their urban futures, while access and utilisation describe the foundational conditions and dynamic engagement required to advance this transformative process. Together, these dimensions showcase how localized agency can reconfigure oppressive spatial arrangements into more empowering urban structures. By operationalizing these concepts, the A.U.R.A. framework transitions from a theoretical construct into a practical instrument for diagnosing and addressing spatial injustices.

The A.U.R.A. framework acquires enhanced analytical strength when integrated with the concept of spatial capital. Analysing how individuals utilise and modify spatial resources reveals several fundamental findings:

#### 1. Multidimensional Character of Spatial Resources

Extending beyond conventional discussions of urban inequality, the framework highlights the multifaceted ways in which spatial resources shape community capabilities (Soja, 2010).

#### 2. Empirical and Comparative Utility

By offering measurable components—access, utilisation, resistance, and adaptation—the framework enables rigorous empirical evaluations of spatial justice across diverse contexts, facilitating systematic comparisons (Robinson, 2006).

#### 3. Community Agency in Urban Development

Aligned with participatory paradigms (Miraftab, 2004), the framework underscores the resourcefulness of marginalized groups in mobilizing and transforming spatial capital for socio-economic and cultural needs.

#### 4. Strategic Entry Points for Policy

By pinpointing how systemic barriers intertwine with local innovations, the framework reveals strategic entry points for equitable policy interventions (Fainstein, 2010).

#### 5. Scalability and Holistic Understanding

Spanning from individual households to large-scale urban systems, the framework exposes interconnections between micro-level practices and macro-level structures (Massey, 2005).

These insights collectively position the A.U.R.A. framework as a valuable resource for scholars, policymakers, and practitioners alike. Not only does it advance debates on spatial justice by dissecting the structural bases of inequity, but it also guides interventions aimed at cultivating resilience and equity within urban spaces.

## Operationalizing the A.U.R.A. Framework

Implementing the A.U.R.A. framework calls for a rigorous, multilayered assessment of how each dimension is actualized within a given neighbourhood or spatial milieu. By systematically pinpointing the presence or absence of these elements - and how they manifest themselves -, researchers and practitioners can uncover critical deficits in spatial capital that undermine collective resilience. For instance, insufficient access to essential services can trigger cascading socio-economic challenges, while a weakened capacity for resistance—manifested in limited grassroots mobilization or constrained civic participation—may leave communities vulnerable to exclusionary redevelopment schemes. Having diagnosed these lacunae, strategic interventions can be introduced to reinforce each dimension: cultivating infrastructure and governance mechanisms to expand access; championing co-creation processes to enhance utilisation; galvanizing community-based advocacy to fortify resistance; and adopting design adaptations that bolster adaptive capacities.

Beyond corrective measures, proactively embedding these dimensions in new planning and policy initiatives creates opportunities to mitigate potential injustices and unlock opportunities for iterative, community-driven transformations. This

approach incorporates ‘undesigned’ spaces, allowing for organic appropriation and fostering spatial capital development at individual and collective levels. A.U.R.A. framework thus becomes a powerful tool for advancing spatial justice, equity, and resilience in diverse urban contexts by integrating theoretical precision with empirically grounded strategies. It advocates for a balanced approach, combining structured planning with flexibility, to empower communities to shape their environments and enhance urban responsiveness to diverse needs.

The pursuit of spatial justice, especially amid deepening urban inequalities, demands a fundamental revision of dominant planning paradigms. Such a reorientation calls for shifting away from top-down, technocratic models that often exacerbate spatial injustice, and moving toward participatory and inclusive frameworks that incorporate local knowledge and priorities. Central to this transformation is empowering communities to harness their spatial capital—the collective knowledge, skills, and resilience required to co-create urban environments that are equitable, sustainable, and culturally responsive.

While access to essential resources constitutes a starting point for spatial justice, it must evolve into a form of active engagement that aligns with local economic and socio-cultural realities. In this way, resources become catalysts for empowerment, elevating access from mere availability to a platform for community-driven development. Such elevation allows marginalized groups to wield resources in ways that enhance their spatial capital, ultimately fostering more resilient and equitable urban futures.

At the same time, the capacity for resistance underscores procedural justice by ensuring that vulnerable populations refuse to remain passive recipients of imposed urban policies. Instead, they actively shape their own futures by contesting harmful spatial arrangements and reasserting their agency in local governance. Adaptation complements this process, illustrating the creative responses communities formulate to navigate structural inadequacies. Far from being purely reactive measures, these adaptations reveal the dynamism and ingenuity of local actors and highlight the transformative potential of community-led urban evolution.

Through its interrelated dimensions of access, utilisation, resistance, and adaptation, the A.U.R.A. framework brings conceptual rigour to the study of spatial injustice and offers practical strategies for meaningful, community-centric change. It shifts attention to the ingenuity inherent in informal settlements and other marginalized environments, spotlighting how these spaces are reimagined and renewed

through local initiative. By centring community agency and resilience as the core drivers of urban transformation, the framework reaffirms that genuine spatial justice arises when the contributions and capabilities of marginalized populations are not just recognized but fully integrated into city-building processes.

In line with Harvey’s (2008) observation that just cities must serve as arenas for collective agency and inclusion, the A.U.R.A. framework conceptualizes spatial capital as a tool through which tangible equity can be realized. Spatial justice exposes systemic inequities, while spatial capital reveals the latent resilience and creativity within local environments. Neglecting spatial capital only deepens injustice; cultivating it, however, fosters new possibilities for collaboration, innovation, and ultimately, the co-creation of more inclusive urban landscapes.

This reorientation—shifting from deficit-based approaches to opportunity-driven frameworks—positions spatial capital as a catalyst for transformation. In doing so, the A.U.R.A. framework offers a pathway for shaping urban futures in which marginalized communities serve as principal architects of inclusive, just, and sustainable cities. By harnessing spatial capital to strengthen collective agency, urban systems can evolve into dynamic spaces that both reflect and nurture the aspirations, capacities, and imagination of all their inhabitants.



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# Designing for Justice

## A Manifesto for Epistemic Justice, Integrative Responsibility and Accountability in Transdisciplinary Design

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**Keywords:** Design Justice, Epistemic Justice, Transdisciplinarity, Knowledge Integration, Spatial Design

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The world stands at a crossroads. The challenges we face—climate change, growing social inequality, environmental degradation—are intertwined and immense. No crisis can be solved in isolation. Institutions like the United Nations and the World Bank call for integrated and systemic solutions that unite environmental resilience with social and economic justice (Meadowcroft, 2009). It is time for us, as designers, to heed this call.

Transdisciplinarity (TD) has emerged as the engine to drive these systemic solutions (Pohl et al., 2021; Global Alliance for Inter- and Transdisciplinarity, 2024). Unlike multidisciplinary, which involves the mere collaboration of disciplines, or interdisciplinary, which blurs the boundaries between them (Klein, 2017), transdisciplinarity demands more. It calls for the joint production and integration of knowledge with all actors at the table—community organisations, civil society, academia, and public institutions (Klein, 2010; Hoffmann et al., 2017a; Pohl et al., 2021). This is more than a technical solution; it is a moral imperative. The complexity of real-world issues demands integrating diverse knowledge systems and perspectives to create solutions that truly address the core of societal challenges.

In this context, spatial designers are not merely technicians; we are integrators of knowledge, wielding the power to shape narratives, decide what is visualized, and determine which knowledge is highlighted or remains unseen. This power comes with a responsibility: the responsibility to avoid perpetuating design injustices by excluding knowledge, voices, and perspectives that challenge our comfort zones (Costanza-Chock, 2018).

Sasha Costanza-Chock's work on Design Justice emphasizes that design is not a neutral process but one deeply embedded in power dynamics. These dynamics often manifest when designers' assumptions, biases, positionality, institutional goals, or market forces overshadow the needs and voices of under-represented or marginalized groups. This can occur across various contexts and sectors, including academic or expert-oriented processes, where technocratic biases often overshadow more socio-cultural perspectives. Similarly, when designers overlook the needs of people with disabilities, they may create environments or products that exclude them, such as by neglecting features like ramps, braille signage, or adequate lighting."

Although our privileged position as integrators of knowledge can appear as favourable within power dynamics between different roles and capacities in the design process, we must be accountable for the gravity of our decisions and

conscious about how we might reinforce certain pre-existing inequalities which certain knowledge holders and types of experience. Yet, too often, we fail.

We are complicit in systems that perpetuate inequalities, designing processes that privilege certain forms of knowledge while marginalising others. This must change.

Critical voices have long called for reform in design practices to embrace complexity and democratise decision-making (Beeckmans, 2022; Escobar, 2018; de la Peña, 2027; Doucet & Nel Janssens, 2011;). But if designers continue to maintain a largely exclusive control over the integration of knowledge, —hoarding it in our processes, hidden from scrutiny —we create opaque systems. These systems reproduce inequality, often unknowingly, in both the design process and its outcomes. Sasha Costanza-Chock’s work on design justice makes this abundantly clear: We must advocate for a design process that is ethical, participatory and centred on the knowledge and experience of marginalised voices (Costanza-Chock, 2018). If not, Costanza-Chock reminds us that traditional design practices will continue to serve the interest of dominant groups leading to poorly understood cultural contexts, inaccessible design, and designs that exacerbate discrimination. Integrating multiple forms of knowledge enables possibilities for more inclusive and equitable design outcomes. This underpins the causality between knowledge integration, as central to design decision-making, and implications for justice, both from a process and outcome perspective.

Design Justice demands that we face the uncomfortable truth: **the way we design is unjust.**

We cannot ignore the inherent biases, power imbalances, and systems of exclusion that shape our methods, processes, and outcomes. **We must seek justice.**

We must embrace **epistemic justice**—the fair treatment and recognition of all forms of knowledge. This is especially critical in transdisciplinary work, where the inclusion of diverse epistemologies is not just important; it is essential for just outcomes (Ludwig & Boogard, 2021). Our design processes must not only accommodate but also celebrate the contributions of others: academics, practitioners, local communities, and indigenous knowledge systems.

Miranda Fricker’s concept of **epistemic injustice** exposes the deep-rooted inequities in how knowledge is produced and valued. Epistemic injustice, according to Fricker, refers to the harm done to individuals in their capacity as knowers, particularly when their knowledge or credibility is unjustly diminished due

to prejudice or bias. **It is our responsibility to dismantle these inequities. In transdisciplinary settings**, our task as designers is to amplify the voices of those who have historically been silenced and to ensure their knowledge informs every step of the process because everyone deserves equitable access to the benefits drawn up in the making of our worlds.

We must move beyond superficial collaboration and truly address the biases that underlie our work (Klein et al., 2001; Ludwig & El-Hani, 2021). Spatial design is not just about creating spaces—it is about creating equitable systems of knowledge integration that reflect our spatial reality, here and now. The future of design must focus on how knowledge is treated, valued, and included in every aspect of our practice (Beeckmans, 2022).

As Arturo Escobar reminds us in his call for a “pluriverse,” design must be a process of world-making that honours a plurality of knowledge and realities. Escobar’s concept of the Pluriverse envisions a world where multiple ways of being, knowing, and living coexist, challenging dominant singular worldviews and embracing diverse, interconnected perspectives for a more just and sustainable future.

**Epistemic diversity is non-negotiable.** Epistemic justice is not a peripheral concern—it is central to design justice. Diversity in ways of knowing, understanding, and interpreting the world—is essential to achieving design justice rather than a secondary or optional consideration. Epistemic justice is integral because it addresses how knowledge itself is often unequally valued based on who possesses it. Without this justice, design processes can reinforce existing biases, favour dominant perspectives, and marginalise the voices and experiences of those with less power.

### A Call to All Designers:

We must reform how we approach design! We cannot sit idly by while our practices perpetuate epistemic, spatial and social injustices. We must confront the uncomfortable realities of our discipline, acknowledging that the choices we make about whose knowledge is included or excluded in the design process have real consequences in shaping the world.

With great integrative capacity comes great responsibility. **Who’s involved, which knowledge is highlighted, and how knowledge is integrated into the**

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**design process directly impacts socio-spatial justice and equity.** The way we integrate knowledge affects how we shape our cities, our environments, and our societies. Designers must take ownership of this process, ensuring it is transparent, inclusive, and accountable.

This manifesto operationalises the values of design justice within spatial design, calling for a radical shift in how we approach knowledge integration. It demands that we dismantle the entrenched systems of inequality and exclusion embedded in our current methods, processes, and tools. **We must build anew.**

#### On Processes:

- **Establish checkpoints** throughout the design process to validate integrated knowledge with relevant experts, ensuring inclusivity and accountability.
- **Be transparent** about whose knowledge is included or excluded and why.
- **Acknowledge biases**—disciplinary and implicit—that influence design decision-making.

#### On Methods:

- **Use accessible tools and language** for communication—imagination, visualisation, storytelling—that don't require technical expertise in spatial design.
- **Adapt with agility**, designing methods flexible enough to course-correct and respond to uncertainties.
- **Propose alternatives that reflect a multiplicity of perspectives** and futures, embracing the pluriverse of possible realities.

#### On Capacities:

- **Democratize integration:** allow others—community members, experts from diverse disciplines—to co-design and shape collective perspectives.
- **Act as bridge-builders** between different forms of knowledge, fostering collaboration rather than hierarchy.
- **Translate knowledge**, making it meaningful across divides—academic, practical, Indigenous—ensuring no voice is lost.
- **Amplify marginalised voices**, redistributing power and destabilising the

dominant knowledge systems that perpetuate inequality.

- **Tell stories that unite:** develop a shared understanding and language for the challenges we face, rooted in justice.

We can no longer design in black boxes, hidden from accountability, removed from the voices that matter most. **We cannot afford to integrate knowledge on our terms alone.**

This manifesto calls for a shift—a **call to action** for spatial designers to recognise and embrace their integrative responsibility. We must acknowledge the power imbalances, implicit biases, and epistemic inequalities embedded in our work. Only by doing so can we move toward true design justice.

**This is our moment. This is our responsibility.** We must act now to create a world where design is not just a tool for solving problems but a vehicle for achieving epistemic and socio-spatial justice. Let this manifesto be the catalyst for the shift we desperately need.

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# A GLOBAL CONVERSATION OF EQUALS

# FAIZA DARKHANI

Afghan  
Activist &  
Scholar

Faiza Darkhani, a dedicated environmentalist and women's rights advocate from Afghanistan, previously served as the Director of the National Environmental Protection Agency and an Assistant Professor at Badakhshan University. She graduated from the Faculty of Design and Architecture at UPM Malaysia. Her impactful work earned her a spot on BBC's "100 Influential Women around the World" list in 2021. She has written research papers on sustainable urban landscape management and innovative techniques. Currently, she continues her work as a researcher in Germany. In addition to her research, she has been actively volunteering for women's rights and environmental causes.

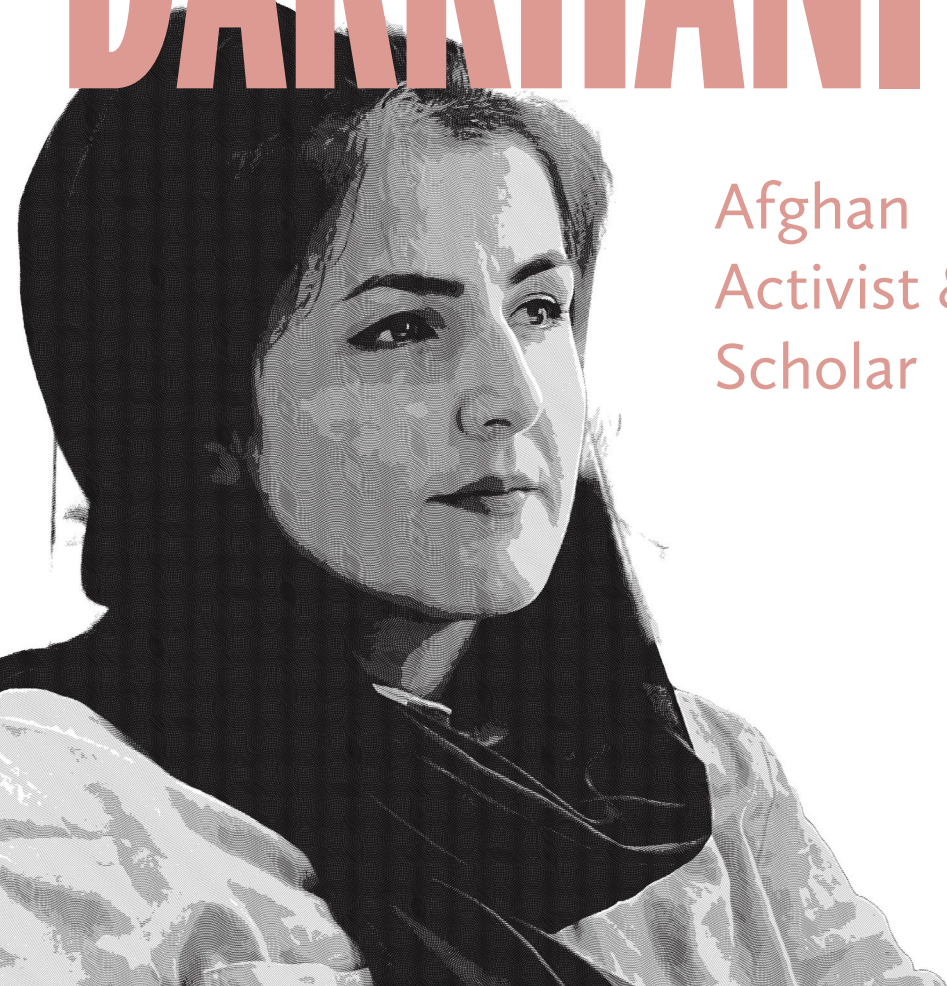


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# Intersectionality of environmental justice, democratic struggles and women's rights

Faiza Darkhani

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## Abstract

This essay focuses on the intersectionality of environmental justice, democratic struggles, and women's rights, underscoring the critical role of women in fostering sustainable futures. The discussion begins by defining environmental justice as equitable participation in environmental policymaking, aiming to protect all communities from environmental hazards and engage them in decision-making processes. Historical perspectives trace environmental justice back to civil rights movements, emphasizing its evolution through significant events and pivotal reports highlighting racial disparities in hazardous waste siting. The author then connects these environmental challenges with democratic struggles and women's rights, illustrating how systemic inequalities exacerbate vulnerabilities, particularly for women, in environmental and climate-related issues. This essay aims to highlight how gender inequalities are intensified by environmental changes, advocating for greater inclusion of women in decision-making to enhance resilience and adaptation strategies. This approach emphasises a holistic view where environmental justice, democratic participation, and gender equality are intertwined, each reinforcing the other to build a just and sustainable world.

**Keywords:** Environmental Justice, Democratic Struggles, Women's Rights, Gender Inequality, Sustainable Development.

True environmental justice is achieved when everyone enjoys equal protection from environmental and health hazards and equal access to the decision-making processes.

First of all, I'm thrilled to discuss our work and experiences here together. In a world where our actions have significant impacts on the planet, and where environmental and ecological challenges are becoming more urgent every day, I invite you to join me on a journey. Today, we embark on an exploration

into the heart of ecological democracy, environmental sustainability, and transformation, emphasising the pivotal role of women in creating a more sustainable future. Today's discussion will focus on the intersectionality of environmental justice, democratic struggles, and women's rights. You may be familiar with these terms, but today, we'll delve into their definitions and how they function in practice. During this presentation, I will outline the concepts of environmental justice, democratic struggles, women's rights, and share insights from my own research and experiences, including work we have conducted in Afghanistan.

To begin, let's discuss the term "environmental justice." What comes to mind when you hear it? What does it signify to you, or what do you already know about it? Today, I want to explain that environmental justice involves ensuring the equitable participation of all individuals, regardless of their race, origin, or income, in the development, execution, and enforcement of environmental laws and policies. True environmental justice is achieved when everyone enjoys equal protection from environmental and

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health hazards and equal access to the decision-making processes that shape a healthy environment in which to live, learn, work, and educate.

Environmental justice encompasses a broad range of rights including disability rights, the rights of children and young people, racial justice, gender equality, and the rights of refugees and asylum seekers, as well as health. When we achieve environmental justice, all these rights are being met. Conversely, the absence of these rights signals an injustice.

Let's delve into the origins and evolution of the environmental justice movement.

The concept of environmental justice first emerged in the United States during the 20th century, with roots tracing back to the civil rights movements of the 1960s. These movements initially focused on ending racial segregation and discrimination and paved the way for future advocacy in the United States and around the world. Notably, civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. highlighted the link between environmental and civil justice.

One of the pivotal moments in the history of environmental justice was in Warren County, North Carolina in 1982. The residents protested against the establishment of a hazardous waste landfill in their area, marking this event as the birth of the modern environmental justice movement.

Another significant milestone was the 1987 United Church of Christ's report titled "Toxic Waste and Race in the United States." This report documented the disproportionate siting of hazardous landfills in communities of colour, raising greater awareness about environmental justice.

The movement also saw the convening of the first National People of Colour Environmental Leadership Summits, which led to the establishment of formal principles of environmental jus-

tice.

The principles of environmental justice gained further recognition following an executive order signed by President Bill Clinton in 1994. This act spurred the global expansion of the movement, emphasising that environmental justice was a global issue needing worldwide attention. Among the 21 principles of environmental justice, key elements include ensuring that impacted communities are represented in decision-making processes, that these processes are transparent, and that environmental burdens and benefits are equally distributed. The principles also stress the importance of preserving nature, respecting diverse cultures without discrimination, educating people about environmental issues, and ensuring everyone has a voice in decisions affecting their environment.

As I mentioned earlier, there are about 21 principles of environmental justice. A key principle is the inclusion of impacted communities in the decision-making process. Environmental justice acknowledges a profound connection between humans and the environment. It emphasises the need for conserving resources, understanding sustainability, and ensuring that resource distribution is equitable across all communities. It also calls for strengthening environmental laws so that they are fairly applied to people from different communities.

When discussing environmental justice or injustice, we focus on the equitable distribution of both the impacts and the benefits of environmental policies. This means ensuring that all people have access to the benefits derived from environmental protection.

To illustrate this, let me share some examples where environmental justice is needed: These include issues like lack of access to clean water, various forms of pollution, the dumping of

electronic waste, pollution due to oil extraction, deforestation, exposure to pesticides, and the pervasive problem of plastic pollution. These examples highlight the range of environmental challenges that disproportionately affect certain communities and demonstrate the necessity for environmental justice.

People from various communities are experiencing significant injustices, and the severity of these issues can vary widely from one country or community to another. Therefore, it's crucial to recognise how environmental changes, particularly climate change, affect these communities.

Research highlights both direct and indirect effects on populations, notably on women and children. These effects include the destruction of educational infrastructure, degradation of learning environments, pressure on water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities, and negative household coping strategies. Such impacts contribute to reduced physical and mental health, which can lead to increased migration and displacement. Consequently, these challenges often escalate gender inequality, conflict, and poverty.

Moreover, environmental injustice directly correlates with gender inequality. Studies show that environmental and climatic changes disproportionately affect women. This vulnerability is largely due to women's limited access to financial resources and their generally lower wages compared to men. Discriminatory laws also restrict women's participation in the workforce and limit their land ownership rights. Additionally, women often lack representation in decision-making processes and have fewer opportunities for capacity building. This combination of factors explains why environmental changes impact women more severely.

There are numerous reasons why women are often the first and most vulnerable group affected by environmental changes.

Children, too, are significantly impacted by environmental and climate changes. As research indicates, women, children, minority groups, and the elderly are among those most susceptible to these shifts. For instance, children are particularly vulnerable to both indoor and outdoor pollution, which can lead to severe health issues.

This brings us to the concept of environmental justice, which must be actively pursued rather than expected to occur naturally. Environmental justice does not spontaneously arise; it requires concerted effort and struggle.

Democratic struggles are essential for establishing and protecting democracy within a political system. These struggles support the principles of political equality, the rule of law, civil liberties, and public participation in government.

For example, consider the women's suffrage movement, which significantly expanded political participation. Historically, women in many countries were unable to vote and were not considered part of the population with decision-making rights. Through their persistent democratic struggles, they gained these rights.

Today, we benefit from these efforts, highlighting the importance of political participation in democratic struggles. When there is active political involvement, voting rights for women can be secured, ensuring their perspectives are included in government and advocating for inclusive democratic systems that promote gender equality.

This inclusion is crucial for environmental justice, especially in developing countries where democratic struggles are vital.

Turning to women's rights, it's a widely discussed topic globally. Yet, many women still fight for their basic rights, which remain inaccessible to them. The foundations of the women's

rights movement in the 19th and 20th centuries led to various movements striving for these rights and basic needs, but challenges persist.

In terms of climate change, environmental justice, and women's rights, women are more vulnerable than other groups for several reasons. Research shows economic disadvantages play a significant role. For instance, women face unique reproductive health risks—they give birth, get pregnant, care for their children, and educate them. These responsibilities make women particularly susceptible to adverse effects when environmental changes occur. Women also tend to have longer lifespans than men, making them more vulnerable when they lose their spouses and may struggle to support themselves financially.

Overall, women's involvement in climate change decision-making at national, European, and international levels remains low, underscoring the need for greater inclusion and support.

As I mentioned earlier, when we discuss climate change and gender inequality, it becomes clear that gender inequality intensifies with climate change. Research indicates that women face significantly greater health risks due to climate change compared to men. For instance, studies show that 60% of women are impacted by climate change, compared to only 22% of men, highlighting that women are the most vulnerable group in terms of climate change and environmental injustice. Further analysis from 120 academic papers reveals that women and girls around the world often face disproportionately high health risks from the impacts of climate change compared to men.

This leads us to question what roles women can play, what their significance is, and how they can participate in addressing these issues. Women play a crucial role in climate resilience and

adaptation. For example, when a girl receives an education, it leads to healthier, better-educated, more financially secure families.

Women's leadership is also vital for sustainable and low-carbon pathways to prosperity and improved adaptation and resilience to climate change effects. The involvement of women often means stronger adaptation strategies to climate change.

I've also stressed the importance of inclusive participation. Women make up half of the world's population and thus hold a substantial responsibility for climate adaptation. Their representation is crucial. Their participation enhances decision quality, increases the legitimacy and trust in decisions, and boosts social cohesion, accountability, equity, and social justice. It also brings more innovation, resilience in adaptation, empowerment, conflict resolution, learning, and global cooperation.

Women not only make up half of the population but their responsibilities often exceed this proportion. They educate their children, nourish them, and take on significant caregiving roles, ensuring that their children become valuable members of the community.

However, it's important to note that environmental justice is not a reality everywhere. There are still many environmental challenges and democratic struggles across the globe. Unequal environmental impacts, low access to information and participation, inadequate legal advocacy and activism, economic inequity, compromised health and well-being, and a lack of collaborative solutions, particularly in developing countries, are all prevalent issues. Even where policies exist, they often remain merely on paper, and climate justice is notably absent, especially in the developing world.

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Now, let's discuss intersectionality within environmental justice. As we know, climate justice faces escalating challenges such as extreme weather events, health risks, food and water scarcity, threats to livelihoods, migration, and cultural risks. These challenges particularly affect vulnerable groups including family-headed households, children, persons with disabilities, indigenous people, migrants, women, and children who work as displaced persons.

It's important to recognise that this intersectional environmental vulnerability varies based on geographic locations, financial status, socioeconomic factors, and cultural identities, which are often gender-based. These are the root causes of people's vulnerability.

So, with environmental justice, women's rights justice, and women's rights in focus, what is happening with the legal and policy frameworks worldwide? There are international conventions related to women's rights and the environment that play a critical role. As you may know, numerous frameworks support these efforts, including the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement, among others that are still in effect.

We can acknowledge that these international frameworks are not very effective. Globally, they fall short, and even at a national level, they are insufficient for ensuring that women have access to their basic rights, environmental justice, and involvement in decision-making processes.

We are still grappling with various legal and policy frameworks that continue to evolve, as people, particularly in disadvantaged communities, strive for aid. However, significant barriers persist within this realm. The challenges include inequality and discrimination, which are particularly acute for women. They also face a lack of access to information, financial barriers, gen-

der-based violence, legal and policy constraints, inadequate representation, and cultural and social norms that perpetuate these issues. Additionally, environmental racism, economic interests, limited access to justice, the impacts of climate change, environmental degradation, deforestation, lack of education, and institutional barriers further complicate these issues. These are substantial obstacles that hinder women's ability to access their basic rights and participate fully in their communities. Such challenges are not isolated to one region but are a global concern. Moreover, I would like to share insights from my own experience in Afghanistan, where these issues are particularly pressing.

Afghanistan is a country where the challenges of the climate crisis intersect with severe gender inequality. It is an Asian country that many of you might be familiar with, often highlighted in the news due to ongoing internal situations. Afghanistan has a large population, significantly impacted by environmental issues and the effects of climate change.

During my time in Afghanistan, I served as the Director of the National Environmental Protection Agency and also as an assistant professor at a university from 2014 to 2021. My work covered various areas, including environmental protection and agriculture.

One particular study we undertook aimed to assess urban green spaces. We observed that in Afghanistan, the urban green spaces amounted to only 0.69 square meters per capita. This measurement was part of our broader research into how the environment and landscape are managed, specifically from an urban perspective.

In Kabul City, we conducted research to understand the challenges in achieving adequate urban green spaces. According to the World Health Organisation, there should be at least 9

square meters of green space per person, but our findings showed only 0.69 square meters per person in the city. We sought to uncover why this deficiency existed. Our investigation revealed multiple issues, including a shortage of urban residential areas, inadequate green zones, significant air pollution, and a general lack of engagement between the populace, particularly women, and the government. Other factors included high rates of immigration and population growth, climate change, exploitation of natural resources, security issues, and the fact that over 70% of the city was unplanned. These conditions have led to a reduction in green spaces and environmental injustice.

To address these challenges, we proposed a comprehensive strategy to the local authorities and academic communities. Our proposal aimed to enhance the urban green spaces per capita. We suggested establishing a specific organisation dedicated to this goal, alongside developing new policies and precise planning to realise this vision. Additionally, we recommended specific operational steps that could lead to an increase in urban green spaces, thereby promoting environmental justice and improving urban landscape management.

This is what we focused on in our research for environmental justice and urban landscape management. While I was working there, we also engaged in numerous activities such as online and offline webinars and seminars. These events involved both international and national participants and aimed to identify specific challenges related to the webinars, as well as to understand the broader environmental challenges faced by the country.

Additionally, a fundamental aspect of our work was empowering women in environmental protection. I frequently spoke with women to enhance their understanding of their critical roles in environmental protection and conservation. Our core efforts



centered around environmental protection, climate change, sustainable development, women's empowerment, and environmental justice.

I worked closely with high-ranking individuals on environmental protection and women's rights, collaborating with government officials and local authorities to develop new policies aimed at improving and protecting the environment. We had ambitious plans, hoping to achieve significant outcomes within five to ten years, and things were progressing well. We managed to meet our initial goals, and our academic work was thriving. Additionally, I engaged extensively with social media, using platforms like radio and TV to educate the public—particularly women—about their rights and the importance of their involvement in environmental issues.

However, despite our efforts and initial success, things did not turn out as planned. The situation took an unexpected turn, altering the trajectory of our mission. Before 2021, we had successfully integrated women into the community, empowering them and encouraging their participation in various activities. Women were actively involved, whether at home, in the environment, at parks, in public places, or on social media. Unfortunately, the changes that occurred shifted this dynamic dramatically, limiting the roles and presence of women in these areas.

Women were increasingly active in their communities, engaging more in decision-making processes. However, this progress was halted when the regime changed, and the Taliban took over power. Following this shift, significant restrictions were imposed on women; they were gradually forced to stay at home and were barred from participating publicly in society. Work opportunities for women and girls were also severely curtailed.

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One of the immediate actions taken by the new regime was to ban education for women and girls and to prohibit their employment. They even went so far as to forbid women from visiting parks for recreational purposes, effectively confining them to their homes. As a result, all the progress and efforts that had been made over the years came to a standstill and were lost.

Previously, women and girls were active participants in educational activities, attending schools and universities freely. Now, those educational institutions have empty classrooms where girls are no longer permitted to attend. The bans have erased the advances in women's education and broader social participation, marking a significant regression in gender equality in the region.

So now, I can highlight how women's rights, environmental justice, and democratic struggles are deeply interconnected. For a society to achieve environmental justice, there needs to be a concerted effort and struggle. However, in a country where women are not permitted to advocate for themselves, educate themselves, or work towards their own rights, how can they possibly fight for environmental justice or their own empowerment? Currently, Afghanistan is a unique case where half the population is essentially not recognised as part of the population, meaning they have no active role in shaping their society or its policies. This situation has led to a point where, following the shift in power, those of us who could, have left the country. We now face an uncertain future about how or if progress can continue under these circumstances.

It is incredibly challenging for girls who are working and living in Afghanistan without any clear future or direction. In response to this, I would like to propose some solutions and strategies. Internationally, we have legal reforms, but it is crucial to tailor these reforms to the specific challenges faced by each coun-

try. Women often cannot participate fully due to various barriers.

To effectively address these issues and achieve environmental justice, women's rights, and democratic engagement, we need comprehensive measures including education, awareness, capacity building, access to information, community mobilisation, and adequate representation. Policies should focus on eliminating gender-based violence and promoting inclusive governance. Additionally, environmental justice assessments, collaboration and partnerships, climate adaptation and mitigation, resource allocation, empowerment, institutional reforms, research, data collection, advocacy, and activism are all essential. These strategies are necessary to ensure proper women's rights and environmental justice in every country.

In conclusion, advocating for equal environmental protection policies is crucial for achieving environmental justice. This includes promoting sustainable and fair resource management, raising awareness of environmental inequalities, and encouraging democratic participation to influence environmental policies. Additionally, it's important to champion women's rights, advocating for gender-inclusive climate responses and promoting women's leadership in environmental sectors. These efforts underscore the interconnectedness of environmental justice, democratic engagement, and women's rights.

If any of these elements are lacking, the others will inevitably suffer. Therefore, we must mobilise individuals, communities, and governments to take collective action towards a sustainable, equitable, and just future. This action should consider both local and international perspectives, ensuring that women worldwide have access to their rights and can live in peace. Thank you.

# TITUS KALOKI

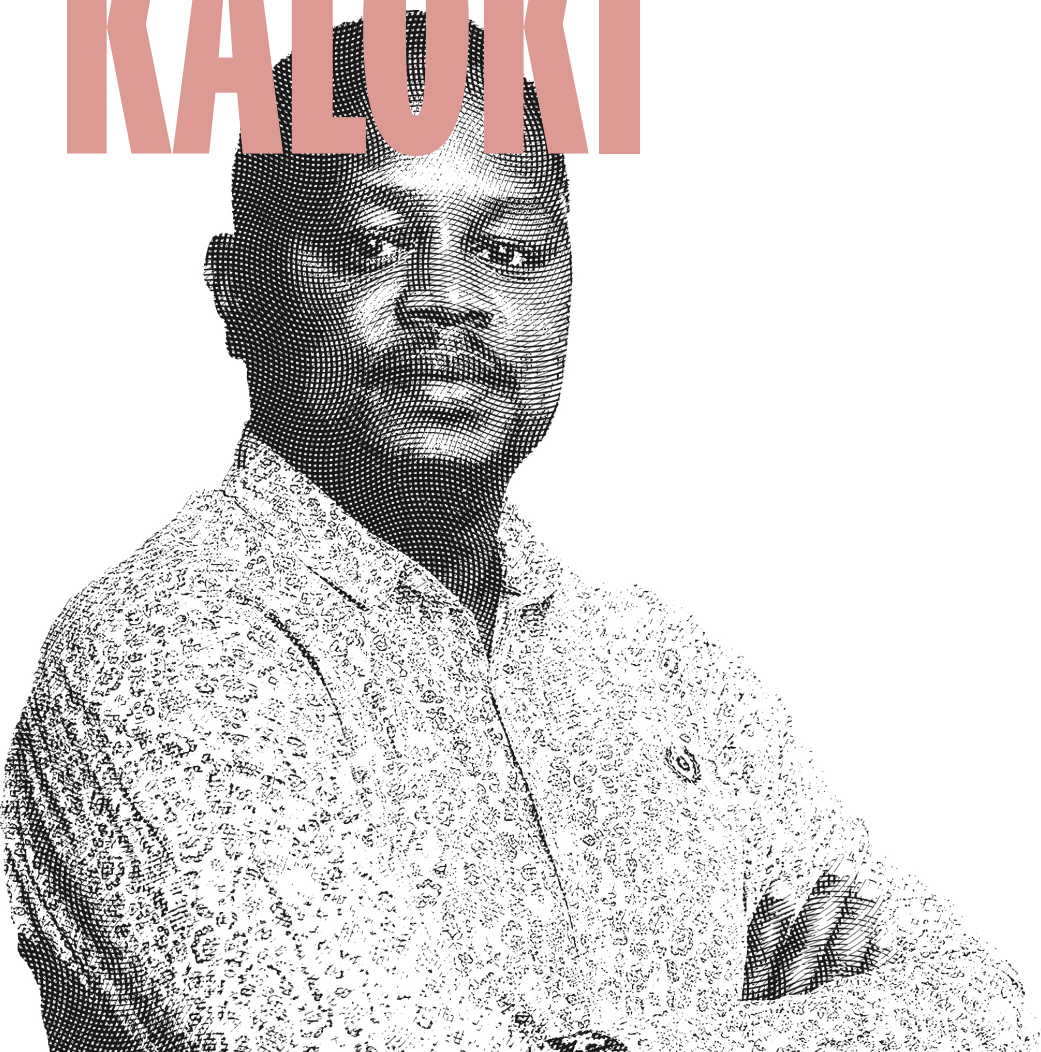


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Titus Kaloki is Programme Coordinator at the FES, The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Kenya Office, where he leads the Just City programme, which engages the concept of a social and inclusive just city to facilitate innovative discussions among political decision-makers, civil society representatives and others on issues such as affordable housing, fair and clean public transport, and meaningful civic engagement in urban spaces. FES is the oldest political foundation in Germany, with a rich tradition in social democracy dating back to its birth in 1925. The foundation owes its formation and mission to the political legacy of its namesake, Friedrich Ebert, the first democratically elected German President. The work of FES focuses on the core ideas and values of social democracy – freedom, justice and solidarity. FES is a non-profit institution that organises its work autonomously and independently.

Just City Programme  
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# Transformative Change-Making Alliances for the Just City

Titus Kaloki

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## Abstract

Titus Kaloki offers a comprehensive view on the development of “Just City” concepts, particularly in the context of Kenya. Titus begins by outlining the conceptual foundation of the Just City, inspired by international theorists like Fainstein and Lefebvre and contextualised within local frameworks such as Kenya’s constitution and Agenda 2063. He addresses the disparities evident in urban planning, showcased through the dichotomy within Nairobi’s planned and informal settlements. He then critiques current investments like Nairobi’s expressway, which, although economically sensible, fail to serve the broader public reliant on non-vehicular transportation, highlighting a prevalent urban injustice. The discussion moves into a detailed description of the processes employed to ideate and realise a Just City, emphasising the importance of a visionary approach at the macro level, where questions of identity, citizenship, and inclusivity are crucial. This level of planning seeks to ensure that all city developments provide public goods and encourage active participation from citizens, reflecting a shift from traditional exclusionary practices. At the practical implementation stage, the text illustrates the use of a transformative change-making methodology applied in Nakuru City. This involves engaging a diverse working group, including stakeholders from various sectors to co-design urban spaces that reflect the community’s needs and aspirations. The lessons shared underscore the necessity of collaborative efforts grounded in solid and relatable narratives that can pivot public and governmental support towards more just urban environments.

**Keywords:** Just City, Inclusive Urban Planning, Spatial Justice, Public Participation, Catalytic Projects, the Just City in Kenya.

I am a program coordinator at the FES, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, and I've been working on the Just City program for the last four to five years. This is because of what I'm going to lay out next. In Kenya, FES has a very particular focus on how you achieve public goods through public participation, and this will make sense as I continue to share.

But let me give you a brief background on Just City in Kenya. How did we start conceptualising this? How did we become aware of this? We had a significant influence from the works of Dr Susan Fainstein from Harvard, who wrote about the Just City based on her experiences in Amsterdam, London, and New York, where she wondered: 'How come these rich cities have people who are homeless?' We also looked at the works of Henri Lefebvre, the Right to the City. We looked at Sustainable Development Goal 11 because it speaks about cities. We also looked at our own context, at our own Constitution, which has an article (article 43) that guarantees public goods and services by this time in education, health, water, public transport, and affordable housing. However, we also looked at the African continent to align ourselves with other African countries and saw that Agenda 2063 also had this just vision of our urban areas. We have, of course, consulted many other sources.

In order to bring what I call experiential influence on our conceptualisation, to bring lived experience to this discussion, let's talk about Nairobi, the capital city in Kenya. Large parts of it are well-planned residential neighborhoods, and large parts are not so well-planned, what we call informal settlements here in Kenya. This, for us, symbolises that something is not right in this city. There is a form of injustice because all parts of the city should be able to be well-planned and well-resourced.

We looked at what we as a nation are really investing in right now, and one of the biggest things that Nairobi is proud of is an expressway. This elevated expressway caters to those who can pay, those who can drive a car, which in Nairobi is less than 13% of the population. If you

look under that elevated highway, you can see that it's not well-designed. There are no paved cycling ways; motorbikes are actually competing for space with cars. You can't imagine a pedestrian trying to cross it.

So, for us, this was an aspect of injustice: that, well, yes, we have an expressway that makes economic sense by cutting traffic and reducing travel time. But at the same time, we don't have investments for those who don't own cars, who rely on motorbikes, and those who walk. Therefore, this made us think we may need to find out through research whether this unjustness that we see in our urban areas is true, and if

So, for us, this was an aspect of injustice: that, well, yes, we have an expressway that makes economic sense by cutting traffic and reducing travel time.

it's true, what are the drivers of this injustice?

We realise, first of all, that urbanisation is unstoppable. I think this has been reiterated a lot in Africa; it's even more rapid there than in many other areas of the world. We also realised that a quarter of people who are moving or considering moving to urban areas in five years are moving

because they want to access economic opportunities, be closer to family members, and access better public goods and services. Therefore, we realise that, okay, let's see: is it true that they can access these better services and economic opportunities? We found that they were eight times more likely to access these than their rural compatriots.

These factors of rapid urbanisation, people wanting better economic opportunities, and accessing public goods and services, are real drivers for our organisation in East Africa and Kenya in particular. This means that people come to urban areas with all these dreams and aspirations, but then they are disappointed because they may end up in an informal settlement lacking water and sanitation; they may not have public transport that works; they may not have access to quality education.

So, we said we wanted to discuss the idea of the just city and move from conceptualising it to unpacking it into a methodology. We borrowed a methodology from a colleague called Transformative Change-Making, and this is important because I want to share a bit about how we get people actors to come together around this issue of addressing or achieving a Just City. Basically, this Transformative Change-Making process entails that you need to first think of an alternative vision because the just city must be different from what exists.

If we agree that a lot of urbanisation is unjust, and therefore, at that very high level of visioning, you need to ask questions about the identity of this just city, who is a citizen there, who actually belongs there, for whom is this city being built? These are very key questions. After that, you come to the middle level, and say, 'Okay, what kind of city would it look like?' because now you have an idea about the identity and the citizenship. Therefore, you start to say, 'Okay, for people to feel they belong to a city as citizens, then this city would have public goods, there would be public participation, it would be inclusive.'

It started to make sense to us, which meant that we had to be able to tell this story of what kind of city the just city looked like because people had to be able to visualise it. And for this, you need a strong narrative. You need a strong story that sells hope and shows, using drawings or even audio-visuals, what kind of city it would look like. But finally, you need to convince people that it's doable. How do we achieve this? That's where it gets to the micro level; you have to think about what policies you would require, what kind of projects you would need to design, and what platforms you would use to engage, generate knowledge, or even shape the processes.

So, it's very important for you to know that it starts with the alternative vision upon which we build a change narrative and, finally, demonstrate it's doable with a small project, what we call a catalytic project. This is because we change how we envision our political structures.

After all, at the end of the day, the city is made up of its citizens and its leadership, and all of these want public services, goods, and a share of resources. But we also have those who want to make a profit, achieve efficiency, and have security. And we realise that, yes, for us to achieve a just city, we are in the middle of a struggle between the status quo—those who are benefiting from things the way they are—and the change, people who are progressives, who are already convinced that a just city is possible. Therefore, we realise that to win this struggle, we must build a Transformative Alliance.

I'll unpack this concept shortly. So, how do you move from a few people who are convinced that a just city is possible—and this, we refer to them as a seed community or a working group, like those of us who have contributed to the Manifesto—how do you move from that group to be able to influence other actors that this just city is possible? This is the support coalition, mainly comprised of your near collaborators. It could be people in media and civil society who champion human rights and who want just cities.

Then, how do you move from that support coalition of your usual friends to a truly Transformative Alliance where you have a few other allies who are not your traditional friends? Some progressive people from the private sector, some progressive politicians maybe, can then help you twist and win this struggle with the status quo by supporting this story of yours, this narrative that you have that sells the vision of the just city. There is a method you could apply.

So, we asked ourselves, what makes a narrative very strong? And we realise that a narrative is strong if the majority of society thinks of what it's proposing as either common sense, fact, or the main belief. This public discourse is what has the power to shift what society is supporting or opposing. Therefore, we ask ourselves, what is the dominant narrative in urbanisation in Kenya and Africa in general? And we realise it was the Smart City, because we even have a smart city being built in Kenya, the



Konza Technopolis. We have seen many other African countries go on with these ideas of smart cities, and we feel it's the dominant narrative, but it's also business centred. It emphasises efficiency, security, centralised control instead of privacy, self-determination, decentralised control, and public participation.

We saw it as our opposite because the just city is more people-centred, and therefore, we wanted to find out who lies very close to a business-centred and smart city because those are people we would need to win over in the long term, but they are currently not our friends. When we did that, we realised that, okay, it's the big banks, the financiers, and the government who are pro-smart cities and who are business centred. On the opposite, in people-centred, just cities, we have the gender justice movement and the protesters for human rights. Somewhere towards the centre, we found the built environment professionals, the urban planners, the architects, the engineers, and also the academia.

We realised that these were the immediate group of people we needed to engage because they could help tilt the balance. That's how we formed what we call a just city working group. This working group is diverse; academia, media, built environment professionals, grassroots, women's movements, professionals, and NGOs are all represented here because they have a stake in urbanisation in Kenya.

I want to first recap and just say, yes, even though we borrowed the just city concept through a consultative process, through looking at other people's work on the topic, we were able to conceptualise it within our context—context is key. Then, once we knew our context, we were able to start looking at who are the influential actors and how can we get them on board, and that's how we ended up with a working group.

So, you may want to ask yourself, what's the role then of this working group we have? Yes, the general idea of a just city; their work was to break it down. First, we need to build this alternative vision, that is, the long-term view of the bigger picture. The second is to start in-

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fluencing relevant policy processes through evidence and dialogue that would be needed to achieve a just city or this alternative vision. But also, this is used to inform the discourse, to shape the dominant narrative, and to convince a majority of Kenyans that a just city is better than a smart city, or you can have a smart and a just city, but not just a smart city. After that, they have to design a convincing project at the local level that would actually convince and shift the paradigm.

It's doable, but to be able to do this in a simple way, using very effective communication, guiding principles are needed. Why? Citizens would be able to stand on these principles to tell whether a project, a plan, and an approach are just or not, and that's how they came up with these Just City principles for Kenya. I will not go into too much detail about them. Still, I will share dignity as a highlight because we feel that every person has the inherent right to dignity. Therefore, whatever is being planned, whatever projects are being built, they must work towards dignifying the residents. Also, equity and diversity because urban residents, actors are diverse; they all have their own needs. They cannot be given one-suit-fits-all solutions. You need to understand the person with a disability, how do you build a house for them? How do you plan public transport for them, different from those who are able-bodied? And rights and responsibilities, because as much as we say we have a right to a just city as citizens, we have responsibilities. For example, public participation, giving our voice to policy processes, or ideas to decision-making processes. And finally, democracy, because a just city means that people are able to shape the urbanisation process; it's not just top-down, it's also bottom-up.

I want to now bring you to practice because that was just the introduction of how we got people around the idea of the just city, and now I just want to share with you the actual implementation so that you can translate the theory into practice. Take Nakuru City, a city in the Rift Valley in Kenya. It has a lake bordering it that unfortunately is swelling,

thanks to climate change, and it's posing a danger to the city. It's the newest city in Kenya, and that's why we chose it because there's an opportunity to shape how it grows, and we applied that method, the TCM, the Transformative Change Making method.

So, we were able, through the working group, to start a process of developing Nakuru's Vision 2050, exploring how citizens would like the city to look like, and then start putting in the required research, the policy recommendations, engaging with the Nakuru City Board, the urban stakeholders, and hosting just city dialogues to win them over. And finally, we did a catalytic project based on spatial justice through inclusive urban planning. This project was a partnership between Nakuru County, FES, and the Technical University of Dresden. It's called Urban Collective Design, and the short form is U-CODE, which is a tool and a process that I will explain shortly.

We chose this project because we have parameters that tell us whether a project is catalytic or not. We don't just do any project, and therefore, it has to be transformative—that it has to introduce new ideas, new ways of doing things that would be game-changers if they were to be scaled up, and therefore it has to be scalable, but also it needs at least a critical mass of early supporters. So for us, we have the Just City Working Group, then our City Board; they were already sold into trying this, but also it must be able to exemplify the narrative that is sold to the people—that it is actually an example of that narrative, that it can become a success story because you will need this to be able to replicate it elsewhere.

Also, it might meet all technical parameters, but is it doable? Because you're dealing with governments, you're dealing with the private sector, you're dealing with other actors, so it must be technically doable. It must be commercially viable because, at the end of the day, even if it's a service provided by the government, it requires real demand, and it has to be self-sustaining, either through people paying for services or through taxation. Is it politically saleable? This is important because, oftentimes,

government institutions may be considering this a lot because, at the end of the day, the regime in power has a manifesto or a political promise to sell. Therefore, this is how we conducted the project: we started by going to this informal settlement in Nakuru called Kenya Meat Commission (KMC).

We did a baseline study. We wanted to know what are the key concerns in terms of public goods and services. We also took photographs, you know, both aerial and street view. We collected as much data as possible, and that was the first stage because then we analysed this data to be able to integrate it with a 3D online planning platform, basically an AR rendition of their settlement as it is. This was important because it would be able to tell us, for example, which icons to use for which kind of services. This is information they would give us. For example, we would know what kind of issues rank very highly and, therefore, what kind of planning possibilities there could be. We could also use the process to have planning guidelines for Nakuru City integrated into the 3D online platform so that we make sure that this 3D rendition of the settlement adheres to planning guidelines. And that is when we were able to have the final 3D environment we used.

Then we did what we call a co-design campaign. Basically, it consisted of going to the informal settlement, setting up laptops and MiFi gadgets, and getting a few young people trained so that they could take the other people through this process. And finally, when they were finished dragging and dropping and saying, 'I want a streetlight here, I want a playground here, I want my water to be here in this kind of playground,' KMC residents were able to answer some of their design wishes.

But we also provided them with an option for written input where they could, for example, rank some of the things that we collected during the baseline survey for us to validate and see whether they think those things are important. For example, if they had talked about a place where they wanted a garbage burning site, they would tell us what's important

for them—is it safety, is it access, pollution? And finally, we got to the inauguration day.

What came out was a short-term plan that shows all the wishes from citizens, especially those that a majority of residents had selected, and is compliant with planning guidelines. The short-term plan captures what they would want immediately and what they have for their long-term vision. Therefore, they were able to hand these plans to the City Board, and the City Board has set aside funding to carry out some of their wishes.

In the following year, 2024, we are going to scale this inclusive urban planning project to cover a greater area of Nakuru City, in preparation for the second Kenya Urban Support Program by the World Bank.

I conclude, I would like to just share a few important lessons for us. One is those working groups that allow you to bring these various actors are important for you to be able to build alliances that will actually convince society that the Just City is the way to go. It's also important to have doable small projects that can be scaled up—the catalytic projects—because some people can only be convinced by seeing. For us, pushing the idea that the Just City guarantees better public goods provision, is inclusive, and is more accessible will convince more people to support the citizen-centred rather than the business-centred organisation.

So, my suggestion is to have very key thematic campaigns. Choose something around the Just City; if you're passionate about housing, you can go for that, build a compelling narrative around it based on research and dialogues, and then showcase a project on it to convince those who are fence-sitters to form an alliance. Therefore, we continue to work with our partners on this, and I hope to make more policy impact and see real public investments that actualise the Just City. Thank you for listening to me, and I hope to answer some questions. Thank you so much.

# MONTAGU MURRAY



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Montagu Murray attained a DD degree (Doctor of Divinity) in Systematic Theology from the University of Pretoria, South Africa. His academic studies included pre-graduate studies in Minnesota in the USA and post-graduate research at the universities of Utrecht and Leiden in the Netherlands. He is a Research Associate of the Faculty of Theology of the University of Pretoria. He is particularly interested in transdisciplinary approaches to poverty alleviation, quality of life improvement and sustainable lifestyles. He is a Director of the Nova Institute, a not-for-profit organisation that endeavours to co-create with household and networks, ways to improve the quality of life of low-income households in Southern Africa.

Director of the Nova  
Institute, South Africa

# Towards a Place to Feel at Home: Imagine Low- Income Households Breathing Clean Air

Montagu Murray

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## Abstract

Montagu discusses the integration of theoretical concepts and practical solutions in addressing spatial justice and environmental quality, particularly in low-income households. Initially inspired by a perspective on spatial justice as a practical act of solidarity, the discussion acknowledges the tangible impacts of environmental and spatial injustices on everyday life, such as health and transportation systems, which are material to daily living and community well-being. The narrative transitions from theoretical discourse to practical implementations by detailing the activities of the Nova Institute. Established in 1994, this not-for-profit organisation focuses on enhancing the quality of life in southern Africa by treating household as a central social institution. The discussion elaborates on the institute's approach to integrating academic rigour with practical interventions that address real-world problems, such as air quality and energy poverty. The methods and strategies employed to measure and improve environmental conditions within these communities are further detailed. The institute's transdisciplinary approach involves stakeholders at all levels to ensure that interventions are both effective and sustainable, emphasising the need for solutions that are scientifically sound and community-driven. This underscores the importance of practical outcomes that directly enhance living conditions, demonstrating high retention rates of improved practices within communities. The text calls for a sustained, evidence-based approach to environmental and spatial justice that not only addresses immediate health impacts but also fosters long-term resilience and quality-of-life improvements for low-income households.

**Keywords:** Spatial Justice, Environmental Quality, Low-Income Households, Sustainable Development, Community Engagement.

The title of this text was inspired by a quote from Juliana Gonçalves on ‘Spatial Justice as a Practice of Solidarity in Everyday Life.’ She mentions that while academic discussions on spatial justice might seem abstract, the impacts of injustice are very tangible and affect everyday life, such as the transportation and health systems we rely on. Injustices are very much material in everyday life. The transportation and health systems we use, the house we live in, the productive and reproductive work we do and so on. Addressing injustices thus means imagining another everyday life, and I think that is what I would like to do when I talk about air quality.

The first part of my text will be quite theoretical, and then it will become more practical. I will talk about the particular programs that we work on, such as air quality offset programs, and then lastly, I will conclude the text with some practical examples of some of the surveys we are doing.

Just to start off with the Nova Institute— the Nova Institute was established in 1994 as a not-for-profit company with a vision of a healthy household culture in southern Africa. We decided to focus on the household as a social institution because it’s not really ultimately the State, the church, or non-governmental organisations that do the most for the quality of life of households and families. It’s mostly families and households themselves that actually care for their members. That’s why we wanted to understand better how the household as a social institution functions and works. And so, we also said to each other that our overarching goal is to be the professional partner of choice for households and other stakeholders working towards improving the quality of life in low-income communities in a responsible way.

Our approach, then, is that both the mother in the kitchen and the professor at the university must agree that a stove works as it should. What that means is that, often, for example, in the academic world, the product one produces might be an academic

article, a scientific article, or the training of students. But, in the context of designing solutions for households, the product has to be a practice that works in the context of the household itself.

I was also inspired by a quote from Caroline Newton that says, “We must recognise our roles as proactive participants within the process of urban development, grounded not just in the technical aspects of our practice but also in a clear set of values. These values aren’t external constructs but rather integral elements woven into our professional identity, shaping our perspectives and driving our actions. As such, they are situated within a broader humanistic framework, inspired by a deep understanding of, and empathy for, the diverse range of human experiences that occur within cities.”

So, taking her emphasis on values, I would like to share our values at Nova with you. Hopefully, this text will also give you an idea of how these values actually play a role in the decisions we have to make when we work on air quality.

As an organisation, we follow a transdisciplinary approach where solutions to improve quality of life are co-created with households and stakeholders. We work towards building Nova as a resilient organisation. Resilience is important because the organisation can only continue with its vision as long as it exists. It’s very important for us to survive in the first place, and in order to do so, you have to have a competent team and you have to be open to new opportunities. That means one has to be innovative and constantly try to improve solutions. We are also guided by our core values, in which we ask ourselves the question, “Am I compassionately doing what is right that’s relevant in air quality assets”?

You will see a bit later that the government has certain policies, and you have to decide: are you, for example, willing to work with a large industry, or are you just going to criticise the



industry for the way it functions? Or are you taking a more pragmatic approach and trying to see if they are making an investment? Can you do the most with that particular investment? “Am I applying scientific methods?” That’s very important to us, to be rigorous, because it’s important for all stakeholders. I mean, when human health, for example, is at stake, you want to make sure that the methods you are using are scientific. “Am I effective?” That’s something that links quite a lot with business culture, whereas scientific methods, I think, link with institutions such as a university. And “to do what is right” is an ethical thing.

Lastly, “Am I delighted in my work?” I think if you like what you are doing, you are much more motivated. And I think for this project, where you are working on manifestos, it will make a huge difference. I mean, if you’re just completing a manifesto because you have to, it’s totally different than really getting inspired and putting something of yourself into it.

Lastly, “do what we say and say what we do.” “Do what we say” is the whole issue of trust. I mean, if you have clients, you want to keep your word and you have to be trustworthy so that they ask you again to work for them. “Say what we do,” you know, communication—internal and external communication—is very important.

I would also like to say something about our approach, which is perhaps more philosophical. I think that will enable you to evaluate better what we are doing when I get to the more practical side. Just in terms of our views with regard to development, Francis Fukuyama says, “To study development is to study the change in human societies over time.” That’s quite a broad definition.

Particularly in economic development, there’s a nuance of advancement, of progress with someone or something, and of growing as you go over time. So, you can see that the Cambridge Dictionary definition includes that element of growth.

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I would just briefly like to mention the ‘50s, the ‘80s, and the turn of the century. In terms of development economics in the ‘50s, you had an approach articulated by the famous speech of Harry Truman, the American president, in his inaugural speech of 1949. He said, “More than half of the people of the world are living in conditions approaching misery. I believe that we should make available to peace-loving people the benefits of our store of technical knowledge in order to help them realise their aspirations for a better life. Greater production is the key to prosperity and peace, and the key to greater production is a wider and more vigorous application of modern scientific-technical knowledge.” So, as you can see, there was quite a positive attitude toward, and a belief in, what technology can do to uplift poverty and inequality, which is what we are talking about when we now reflect on spatial justice. We all know that it was maybe too optimistic, and this type of optimistic approach was continued when Kennedy proclaimed in the 1960s the ‘development decade’ and increased the budget for foreign assistance in the late ‘70s, closer to the ‘80s.

They came, I think, to realise more and more that development cannot be equated with economic growth only. One academic or philosopher and economist that I am quite fond of is the work of Manfred Max-Neef, and Max-Neef takes Aristotle’s distinction between *oikonomia*—the art of household management—and *chrematistics*—the art of acquisition. He says the reduction of economics to *chrematistics* has shaped the modern idea of development by equating it to growth in monetary terms. He takes a critical stance towards that and says it should be the other way around: the economy should serve the people, and the best development process will be that which allows the greatest improvement in people’s quality of life.

Then, Max-Neef works out what quality of life means, and for Max-Neef, it is the satisfaction of fundamental human needs. Fundamental human needs are universal values, and satisfiers are

existential categories; they have ways of being, doing, having, and interacting. Max-Neef has a very interesting way of working it out, and we've also used Max-Neef's theory quite a bit in developing our own instruments to assess impact of quality-of-life further.

I'll show you a bit later on, and then also the approach of Amartya Sen that you know about—capabilities to achieve a fulfilling life. The freedom to choose various options is there; that insight broke through. Then, around the turn of the century, I think the whole concept of sustainable development is becoming more and more important. "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". So, in the language of what we are reflecting on, if we say that spatial justice also has to do with having a place to feel at home, then it means future generations should also be able to feel at home on the Earth's system, as well as locally.

This brings us to the concept of planetary well-being, which I like a lot. I think the post-2030 agenda will move in the direction of not just Sustainable Development Goals but planetary well-being. Planetary well-being, according to Josep Antó, is the highest attainable standard of well-being for human and non-human beings and their social and natural systems.

I think progress is a shift from just focusing on economic growth towards quality of life and human needs. It's also saying, yes, human needs remain important, but we also have to think of the planet. Then, the whole concept of the Anthropocene, coined by Paul Crutzen and Eugene Stoermer in 2000, denotes the present geological time interval in which many conditions and processes on Earth are profoundly altered by human impact. They proposed a new epoch to be added to the geological time scale, succeeding the Holocene, which was the last 10,000 years of quite stable climate. It's interesting.

Clive Hamilton, in his book, notes that it's not just the con-

tinued spread of the human impacts on the landscapes that are at stake here, but we are actually talking about the whole Earth system. There's a rupture in the functioning of the Earth system as a whole, so much so that it's the first time that the human species is actually impacting the whole Earth system. He goes on by saying, "The arrival of the Anthropocene contradicts all narratives, philosophies, and theologies of a pre-ordered and continuous rise of humankind to ever higher levels of material, social, and spiritual development. We must learn to live in this world as it really is."

What I was trying to do with this theoretical part is show that, at some point in time, people thought of development as just a continuous, almost linear progress going forward with modern technology. But I think we are realising more and more that these are really complex issues that we are dealing with when we think about the whole Earth system.

Also, a quote from Roberto Rocco: "If public discourse is driven by short-term bias, sensationalism, and distortion, or if it's smothered by political confusion and violence, it becomes difficult to address complex, slow-developing challenges that require sustained effort and rational analysis anchored on evidence." I think the formulation that Roberto has made here is exactly what we are, in a certain sense, trying to do.

My conclusion from this more theoretical part is that to learn to live in this world, as Hamilton says, and to work towards sustained effort and rational analysis anchored on evidence, as Roberto says, are tough tasks. There's no place for arrogance or triumphalism in tackling these tough tasks. We have to learn as we go.

Let's link up now again with Juliana's suggestion of everyday life: imagine low-income households breathing clean air.

I would like to say something about the problem of air pollution in dense, low-income settlements in South Africa and how we are trying to tackle this complex problem in the manner that

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we've just reflected on theoretically. In the first place, the reason why this happens is because of energy poverty. Energy poverty is the lack of access to modern energy services, and you often find in these households that people stack energy. You'll find that even in houses where there's electricity, it may be prepaid electricity, and when the prepaid money runs out, people may revert to wood that is free. Sometimes, if there's very low thermal efficiency in the homes, people might revert to the cheapest way of heating the house, or sometimes people might heat water for bathing outside on an open fire. There are different reasons why people stack energy.

What you also find in these communities is often a lack of waste removal services. The only way to manage your domestic waste is to either dump it in public or to dump it in public and then burn it, or to burn the waste on your own property. These are the types of things that we look at.

So, how does an air quality program work? I'm not going to look at the technical definition here, but it's quite complex. From a human health perspective, you often find that because human lungs are close to where the emissions are when people make fires in their home, the health impact in many instances can be ten-fold, or even much more severe than the high stack emissions of industries that are dispersed quite well. In South Africa, there is one policy mechanism they call offsets, where they make room for a situation where an industry can invest in cleaning up a low-income community with an exponentially better health outcome than if they had immediately complied. They will typically give a brief postponement for the industry before they have to comply with the minimum emission standard.

But, like I said, it's a complex discussion because the way in which the minimum standards are determined has to do with the available technology, whereas the air quality regulations are often related to human health impacts. When and there, it is important

to make sure that these things are being done scientifically, and that is what we also try to do.

So, how does the air quality offset program work? Typically, you would have a preparation phase, you would have a baseline establishment. Then, you will have an intervention development process where you have to find the intervention that has to comply with certain criteria. Then, you have implementation, and then impact monitoring and evaluation.

The baseline establishment—I'm not going to be too long on this one— you need that information to identify the sourcing of the emissions and to understand the drivers. To give a very practical example: if you have a community of, let's say, 20,000 households or 80,000 people, and you want to know how many of those households make fire with wood, and then you also need to know if you want to design an intervention, the questions are: do people use wood to heat water, or do they use wood for cooking, or do they use wood for space heating or a combination of all three? In all those instances, you will have to design different solutions if you want to actually be successful in terms of impacting the usage pattern of the end user.

Then, there's intervention development. Usually, an intervention will be feasible if it reduces emissions efficiently. It has to have a positive, or at least neutral, quality of life impact on the end user, and that is tremendously important because one cannot intervene in low-income households' practices and not make sure that the solution proposed has the same utility and lower costs than pre-intervention. Those parameters are very important to check.

Then, the monitoring and evaluation. I'm going to give you a few practical survey results just to show you how we do it. The baseline we work with is quite comprehensive. We often work in transdisciplinary teams. When we do the technical air quality monitoring, we often work with knowledge institutions like

universities to do the ambient air quality monitoring, indoor air quality monitoring, and sometimes even chemical source apportionment. We would typically do the comprehensive household surveys, the household interviews, the group interviews, the management of the whole program, and then we would also do things like, for example, solid fuel use monitoring. We would have a public and domestic waste analysis to look at the composition of the waste. We would sometimes do remote sensing and satellite imaging, and we would do traffic measurements, so to cover all the sources in a community.

A comprehensive household survey would typically include the type of indicators that you find in the census. So, there's demographic, health, and well-being, services, and infrastructure, and so on. The demographics are quite important because, as you can imagine, if you have larger families, the waste per capita would, for example, be higher in dense areas. Air pollution has a certain impact; the energy needs of a family of two are different than the energy needs of a family of six. All these kinds of information are important for us to plan the intervention as well as to measure impacts. If you look at health and well-being, we would typically also include satisfaction-type questions in these larger samples.

We did a very comprehensive baseline for a community in 2013 and then repeated the impact measurement in 2022, 10 years later, with very large samples. The service indicators are also very important. Just to give you one indication: access to waste collection service. In community A, in 2013, 100% of households had access to waste collection, and that figure went down to 75% in 2022. In the community B, it was 97% in 2013, and it went down to 74% in 2022. The reason for that was an increase in informality. There were 6,000 informal houses that were erected in that period, and where the informal settlements formed, they don't have formal access to waste collection at the moment. You can imagine the impact because people have to manage their waste, and they

burn it, typically.

When we gathered information on waste burning and domestic burning, the devil is in the detail. You want to know the quantities; you want to know about seasonality—are people only burning in winter, or in summer? You want to know the number of households, the proportions; there's quite a lot of detail. We prepare all our questions; we train people from local communities to do the questions on our mobile phones with a GIS functionality, so we can also map things. In those communities we surveyed, coal burning is an informal problem. So, if you design an intervention, you have to design an intervention that's appropriate for an informal area.

We are not interested only in the amount of waste that is generated; we also want to know, from an air quality perspective, how much of the waste actually gets burned actively but also occasionally.

Whereas you can see that most of the burning takes place in the informal areas, it's not always like that. In community C, waste is not only an informal problem; this actually shows that there's a waste collection failure problem. The service provider is not doing their job.

We also ask about domain satisfaction. We would typically ask people how satisfied they are with the air they breathe or the water they have, on a scale of 0 to 10, in these larger samples.

But this is domain satisfaction, one of the ways in which we bring more qualitative types of perceptions into discussion with more quantitative ones.

Then, we also focus on the particular impact on quality of life. Most of the time in research, you actually know what you should have asked after you've done the research, so it's very important to generate the best possible questions as early as possible. We have a tool that helps us to generate questions, and we would typically ask narrative-type questions.

Then, we have satisfaction rates. We usually start as open as possible; if we want to know something about water in the households, we will just ask the respondent, “Can you please tell me about the water you have?” Then, the respondent will reflect on it, and we will use typical qualitative probing techniques. But after that, you sometimes want to know more specific information about water—do people pay for water, what does the water taste like, are there any conflicts about water, etc?

This is just an example of narrative feedback. One person, for example, says, “I feel like a real human in South Africa.” That’s a positive type of feedback.

We asked on a scale of 0 to 10 for example, “How satisfied are you that your family can cook the way you want to?” We get scores pre and post-intervention.

We will also sometimes use the technique of Likert-style type of questions. In this particular instance, you can see, “I sometimes worry that I can get burned when I work with hot water in my house.” So, pre-intervention, more than 80% of the respondents were worried about safety, but post-intervention, the safety situation was better.

Lastly, perceptions of households are not always the only thing that one has to consider. In a particular program, we tested rocket stoves. The pre-intervention situation was an open fire outside, but some people took the rocket stoves indoors, which from a thermal comfort perspective is very comfortable to the end user. However, from a health perspective, it is very bad to take an open fire indoors. In such an instance, we have to go back to the household and warn them not to do it.

We sometimes place sensors. We place temperature sensors on the stove. What we found is that these stoves often are not used, rarely or not at all. In 105 samples of 20 each, we found that people do not actually use this rocket stove, and if you ask them if they use it, they will say yes because they feel polite, or

they may feel they received it for free. But if you place the sensors on the stove and triangulate the information, you actually realise that people are not using those stoves.

We recently did a program where we assisted a large industry to implement improved retrofitting of thermal insulation on what you call in South Africa RDP houses—a simple, very smallish formal house, but originally built without ceilings. Then, the program went and installed ceilings, and there was a stove swap. It was very successful, so we got a chance to go back three to five years later, and the retention rate was very high: 97% of the addresses still did not use coal. This is one of the highest retention rates that we’ve actually ever achieved. The reason for that is we worked at addresses, so even when the owner changed, the new owners that came into the house also did not revert to coal use. That was a very successful project.

To conclude, “Towards a Place to Feel at Home—Imagine Low-Income Households Breathing Clean Air.” I think we’ve got a very long way to go, and the whole issue of air quality in dense, low-income settlements in South Africa is a tremendously complex problem. But I think, at some point, one has to try and do what you can, and see and measure the results, and try your best to see if you cannot get to a situation where the post-intervention situation is better for the end-users than the pre-intervention situation. With that, I will conclude. Thank you so much.



# MARTINE DOPPEN

Martine, is an energetic activist who fights for a clean and fair world, including at Milieudefensie. This young queer woman has an idealistic vision of climate justice and radical justice. Martine was born 27 years ago in a small village in the Achterhoek region of the Netherlands. Eighteen years later, as a student in Amsterdam, she found the space to speak out against gender inequality, racism and the climate crisis. While studying International Public Health at the VU, she worked on innovative projects in-home care. She set up a training programme on climate justice and worked on the climate case against Shell. She is one of the boosters of the 2019 Climate March and supported school strikes.



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Activist at Reclame  
Fossielvrij



# Challenging the Giants: The Fight Against Fossil Fuel Propaganda and the Path to Climate Justice

Martine Doppen

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Woman, Life, Freedom Protest in Teheran. Source: [Twitter/@chesham\\_abi](https://twitter.com/chesham_abi) Public domain.

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## Abstract

Martine Doppen's talk delves into the pervasive influence of fossil fuel propaganda and its historical roots, dating back to early 20th-century tactics employed by public relations pioneer Ivy Lee. Lee's strategies, originally designed to improve the image of coal and railroad companies, evolved into a broad manipulation tool used by industries to shape public perception and policy. Doppen highlights how these early methods of "truth management" laid the groundwork for contemporary greenwashing practices, particularly within the fossil fuel sector. Doppen shares her journey from participating in grassroots climate actions to challenging major oil companies like Shell through legal and public campaigns. Her narrative underscores the evolution of environmental activism, emphasising the shift from direct action to strategic litigation and public engagement to counteract misleading corporate narratives. The text addresses the critical need for stringent regulations to curb fossil fuel advertising, drawing parallels between tactics used by the tobacco and fossil fuel industries to obfuscate public health impacts. Doppen calls for a systemic change in how fossil fuels are marketed, advocating for a ban on fossil fuel advertising similar to tobacco. She argues for the redirection of public funds from fossil fuel subsidies to community-based energy solutions, highlighting the role of public awareness and legal action in dismantling the propaganda networks that sustain these industries. Her vision extends beyond mere advertising bans, envisioning a societal shift towards genuine sustainability and public participation in climate action.

**Keywords:** Fossil Fuel Propaganda, Greenwashing, Ivy Lee, Environmental Activism, Advertising Bans

The topics we are discussing today, as always, involve a lot of propaganda. We will dive into that from a historical perspective today, but I just wanted to express my deep respect and support for those speaking up during this difficult time of war. We are together in this, and together, we will ensure that all people have access to basic human rights and the right to exist in this world. I am honoured to be here and speak to you about fossil fuel propaganda.

We will first dive into the history of the propaganda machine of Big Oil. Then, I will explain how we developed our strategy for our campaign on fossil fuel-free advertising, or 'Reclame Fossielvrij,' which is the Dutch name of our organisation. At the end, we will explore what a city could look like if we ban the propaganda machine of the fossil fuel industry.

First, I would like to share a little bit about the history of my activism. After my studies, I became involved in the youth climate movement in the Netherlands and abroad. I was a board member of the Young Friends of the Earth, Netherlands, and we were connected to many grassroots groups around the world. Then, I went to my first COP—the Conference of Parties of the United Nations—in Kyoto. There, I got to know the stories of people around the world who are fighting the climate crisis, and I was like, “Wow, I have so much to learn to understand how we are going to do this.” I was really inspired, and I also participated in my first climate action ever at the COP building.

Using a sign saying, “Which side are you on?” we blocked the entire hallway to the negotiation spaces so that the negotiators couldn't enter anymore; they had first to have a conversation with us about what real climate justice is. That was really inspiring.

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Then, I got involved more and more with the movement in the Netherlands. We brought a lot of people together, and the momentum really took off. I learned a lot from my friends at the Friends of the Earth Netherlands. It's a big NGO I also worked with afterwards. First with Young Friends of the Earth, and later on with Friends of the Earth, Netherlands.

We organised this big climate march, and for the first time, 40,000 people came together in the rain, fighting for climate justice. A lot of new people got involved with climate activism and with Milieu Defense. We also started a court case against Shell, the biggest oil company from the Netherlands, and we won. This court case is now being copied by a lot of organisations around the world.

This initiative was very new because, instead of asking for money, we asked them to change their policy in line with the Paris Agreement. Currently, they are not doing it, so we continue to push for it, but this has inspired many other court cases around the world. Additionally, I'm involved in international intersectional climate activism, framing the climate crisis as a colonial crisis, and examining the context of colonial history. This includes exploring how companies like Shell have gained so much power and their historical impact in places like Nigeria.

I'm also engaged in actions with Extinction Rebellion and participate in a variety of activities, like talking with politicians. I will delve deeper into the strategy of movement building, which involves bringing many people together to demonstrate the power of the people. This includes organising direct actions—creative actions that attract a lot of media attention. Interestingly, these actions don't require many people, but they need to be disruptive enough to gain significant attention. Simultaneously, I engage in lobbying, maintaining direct contact with politicians.

In these roles, I try to maintain multiple identities: participating in both disruptive actions and dialogues with politicians while also being an organiser focused on movement building.

I just want to share these things beforehand because they will also come back later in the strategy of our campaign against fossil fuel advertising and the big propaganda of the fossil fuel industry. Currently, I'm working for Reclame Fossielvrij or Fossil Free Advertising, and we have conducted a lot of research on the propaganda machine of the big oil, gas, and coal industry. We also learned a lot from the anti-lobby against the big tobacco industry. We say, "Hey, the climate crisis is a health crisis," because, due to fossil fuels and air pollution, many people die around the world. Actually, 13 million people die every year from preventable environmental causes, including air pollution, primarily caused by major companies, though also by groups of people, for example, those using cars. However, we particularly point out those companies as they also influence production.

If you look at smoking these days, there are already a lot of regulations, and everyone knows that smoking is bad. There's an agreement that we don't advertise for it. Yet, nowadays, more people die because of fossil fuels than because of smoking. We make these comparisons, as the history of the propaganda machines of both industries looks very similar, and they have learned from each other along the way.

So first, I'd like to take you to this man named Ivy Lee. This was back when the First World War was just beginning in the early 20th century. Ivy Lee used to work for a lot of coal companies but also for railroad companies. There were many problems with these railroad companies; they were very often understaffed, which led to numerous issues, and people died because it was unsafe. These companies were held responsible and faced

significant problems. So, the local governments made regulations for it. The railroad companies weren't really happy because these regulations meant they had to ensure full coverage of employees working, and the crews were fully staffed. They went to Ivy Lee, and he had a good solution for this; he slightly changed the story. He found out that words really did matter and also that whoever told the story first actually held the truth.

Ivy Lee was proactive; before anyone could criticise the railroad companies negatively, he was already crafting their narrative. For example, they used to use the term "full crew," but he changed it to "extra crew," which implies that the company was already doing its best and even going beyond. Thus, they couldn't be held responsible anymore. This strategy influenced many people, often unconsciously, marking the beginning of the propaganda machine. Lee effectively used the truth to sell lies, a tactic still employed by a few companies today. Indeed, Ivy Lee is considered one of the fathers of public relations and propaganda.

He also discovered that sending mixed messages could create confusion, which was beneficial if confusion was your goal. Initially, people believed that railroad and coal companies were in the wrong. However, by sending out mixed messages, Lee made people question that assumption, thereby changing the narrative. In 1914, he started working for the Rockefellers. The Rockefeller name was not seen positively as they were involved in big oil and had monopolistic practices, making it an unpopular name.

John D. Rockefeller Jr., the son of the old Rockefeller, owned the Colorado coal mine where workers endured terrible conditions, often working until death. This led to significant public outrage, and workers began organising into a union, leading to numerous strikes in Colorado. The strikes worried Rockefeller as they were detrimental to his company's operations. In re-

sponse, he sent armed guards to the strike, who not only shot at the protesters but also set fires, resulting in the deaths of 22 people, including 11 children and two women. The children died from smoke inhalation, not direct violence. This event went down in history as the Ludlow Massacre and made the Rockefeller family, particularly the son, even more unpopular, if that was possible. Ivy Lee was then tasked with giving the family a new image.

And that's exactly what he did. In just 20 years, Ivy Lee transformed John D. Rockefeller from being routinely described as "the most hated man in America" into a widely admired, kindly philanthropist. He achieved this through a combination of tactics that have been used by everyone from dictators to CEOs ever since and are still very much in use by the fossil fuel industry today. This entire story about Ivy Lee can also be found in a podcast called "Drill," specifically in season 3, titled "Madman of Climate Denial."

During those years when he was transforming the Rockefellers from the most hated figures in the US to philanthropists, Ivy Lee was also involved with many oil companies. He was instrumental in the birth of the American Petroleum Institute. During the First World War, the American Petroleum Institute collaborated to supply the war with oil and gas, as such resources are crucial during wartime. The API brought these oil companies together, ensuring enough oil and gas for the war. They thought, "If we can work together in times of war, then we can also collaborate in times of peace."

After World War I, they worked together to make the world addicted to oil and gas, ensuring that everyone understood that oil was necessary to build a strong economy and that one could not live without it. Therefore, they needed a big propaganda machine. They didn't choose between media relations and lobbying;

they did everything. They influenced the film industry and the press and invested a lot of money into these efforts. For example, Shell, the company we are still fighting today, provided the American Petroleum Institute with \$10 million in 2020. These oil companies also served on the board of the American Petroleum Institute, shaping its direction.

For more than a century, the API has run a multi-pronged PR propaganda campaign, indoctrinating people around the world with the idea that the oil industry is fundamental to our lives.

Ivy Lee was involved in both the First and Second World Wars and his influence is still being felt today. Additionally, there are two more figures in the propaganda machine that are particularly noteworthy. They belong to two of the world's largest PR companies, Adan and Hill & Knowlton. Adan is notably involved in Shell's greenwashing efforts.

Adam N. discovered Lee's strategies during World War II and began working on psychological warfare—strategies to sway public opinion to support war, even if the prevailing sentiment was for peace. He utilised propaganda extensively to garner support for war. Moreover, he was also instrumental in creating fake grassroots groups. This tactic involves setting up groups that appear to be grassroots citizen movements concerned about various issues but are actually funded and manipulated by industries.

For example, I am involved in a genuine grassroots group concerned about the climate crisis. We started as volunteers, unfunded, which lends credibility and garners public trust and support. However, Adam N.'s fake grassroots groups, though appearing similar, were funded heavily by industries, skewing public perception and influencing policies under the guise of genuine community support. This tactic is still employed, even by the to-

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bacco industry.

Despite stringent regulations, the tobacco industry continuously seeks loopholes. I learned from an activist in the Netherlands, B. G., a lung physician with decades of experience fighting the tobacco industry. She explained how the industry now forms volunteer groups to pick up cigarette butts from the streets. While seemingly reducing litter, they use this data to better understand where cigarettes are most frequently smoked, thereby strategically placing sales points in these areas.

This manipulation shows how such tactics are still prevalent today, and often, without deep investigation, the public remains unaware. Adam N. continues to employ these methods in promoting Shell's greenwashing, which we will explore in more depth later on.

I would also like to mention John W. Hill, who notably brought the tobacco, oil, and plastic industries together. He was the founder of Hill & Knowlton, and that PR company advised at COP 27 in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, last year. They orchestrated all the greenwashing at COP 27; it was a substantial greenwashing campaign. I went there, and it really was significant.

These companies still hold most of the power in PR today. Hill's strategy involved grouping these companies together in the same trade groups. Initially, the oil and gas companies were closer to the invention of PR and the press release, and later, the tobacco industry joined them. John Hill was instrumental in bringing them together, which explains why cigarettes are so commonly sold at gas stations, the most popular venue for cigarette sales.

In collaboration with Exxon and Shell, they also invented the cigarette filter. The cigarette filter is somewhat of a façade; it doesn't really work, or maybe it filters out just a little. It was more so invented as a smokescreen. They conducted a lot of fake re-

search claiming that the filter would filter out harmful substances. There's also a major court case by V de, the activist lung physician, who started a lawsuit against the tobacco industry because they put small holes in the filters. When tested on machines, most of the toxins would escape through these little holes, resulting in lower toxin measurements. However, when a person smokes, their fingers cover these holes, so they still inhale the toxins and nicotine. This filter was a smokescreen invented by Exxon and Shell to divert attention; if people believed that the filter helped mitigate smoking's adverse effects, research would not focus so much on the negative health impacts of fossil fuels.

Hill also worked with Dr. Cook Little, a physician who conducted some cancer research, but not extensively. Initially, just as they turned Rockefeller into a philanthropist, they first made him into a somewhat famous doctor. Then, they paid him a substantial amount to publish research claiming that smoking and fossil fuels are not so bad for your health—a completely falsified study. This kind of misinformation is still widely used by the fossil fuel industry. There's a lot of missing information about the climate crisis; we're getting through it now, but a decade ago, it was pervasive. So, this is also where this misinformation with Hill was born. These days, you still see a lot of greenwashing and misinformation, albeit on a different scale.

I think for most people, the concept of greenwashing might seem less egregious than paying a doctor to conduct fake research, but the reality of greenwashing is very serious. I will delve into a few examples later. Additionally, I would like to highlight an example that some of you may already be familiar with. It involves Edward Bernays, who was late in his career when he orchestrated the "Torches of Freedom" campaign—a notoriously effective campaign by the tobacco industry.

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This campaign epitomises how various elements like press releases and powerful imagery can converge. At that time, a significant issue was that many smokers were dying from cancer, which paradoxically reduced cigarette sales. Another problem was that women generally did not smoke. Bernays ingeniously linked smoking to women's emancipation, paying many women to smoke publicly on W Street during the middle of the day. He ensured widespread publicity through press releases, so the event was covered extensively on TV and in newspapers. The imagery of women smoking the "Torches of Freedom" was so compelling that it led many women to start smoking. This campaign is now historically regarded as a potent example of effective marketing, even though today we view it as appalling.

Over the past few decades, there has been significant inaction on climate issues, and this doesn't just start or end with climate change. There's an entire propaganda machine built previously that we need to understand in order to dismantle it. The practice of science denial has been effective, following on the heels of a century-long propaganda campaign. The fossil fuel industry helped to create the PR industry, which devised disinformation and manipulation tactics that were developed for the oil, tobacco, and chemical industries over decades. This overview gives us insight into how it all started and what we are still working to dismantle today.

Therefore, there is a pressing need for activism against this propaganda machine, especially in times of climate catastrophe. We know that the fossil fuel industries are endangering lives, not only due to air pollution but also because of the broader climate crisis.

The climate crisis is the biggest threat to human health in our century, so viewing it from a health perspective is a particu-

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larly powerful approach. That's what we focus on in our campaign because discussing a future crisis can seem intangible — people often don't grasp what it will mean for them. However, linking it to health helps people understand how it will impact their lives.

Yet, the advertising and propaganda of the fossil fuel industry tell a very different story. They promote the idea that green growth will save us and claim they are already part of this change. Due to such advertising, a lot of public money still flows to these industries. Just last week, in the Netherlands, a motion on fossil fuel subsidies was adopted in Parliament for the first time. At Extinction Rebellion, we've been pushing hard against fossil fuel subsidies because every year, \$46 billions of our public money goes to the fossil fuel industry. This isn't just direct funding; it also includes tax breaks, effectively giving them a subsidy or discount between \$37 billion and \$46 billion.

After 100 years of psychological warfare, we've been led to believe that we still need these fossil fuel companies. While we're starting to realise that we don't need fossil fuels, there's still a pervasive belief that these companies will provide solutions to the climate crisis. These industries still collaborate closely with our politicians. As an activist, or within any NGO, we have nine times less access to our politicians than these industries do.

Banning all advertising in public spaces, online, and ending these fake narratives is crucial. It removes one of the pillars of the fossil fuel industry that sustains them and maintains their power. Our movement, the fossil-free movement in the Netherlands and beyond, is focused on dismantling all these pillars. One major pillar is advertising, but another is their access to our politicians. For example, the tobacco industry is no longer able to lobby, but at COP 27 in Sharm el-Sheikh, there were 64 people from fossil fuel industries actively lobbying against climate policy. They are



just everywhere.

Stopping the greenwashing propaganda also allows us to reclaim our public spaces, which are ubiquitously influenced by such campaigns. These are often designed to affect us unconsciously; we might not notice them all day, but they significantly impact us. By reclaiming our public spaces, we can transform them into something positive. I'll share a few examples of that. Similarly, the tobacco industry learned much from the fossil fuel industry, and vice versa. We, in turn, are learning from the anti-tobacco lobby. After 25 years, a treaty has been established that imposes significant restrictions on tobacco in many countries. However, we don't have 25 years to create a similar treaty for fossil fuels, so we are trying to learn quickly and act more efficiently.

The anti-tobacco lobby is strongly supported by healthcare workers. In our campaign, we collaborate extensively with healthcare professionals to highlight how fossil fuel industries compromise our health and threaten our lives, necessitating urgent action against them. For instance, the image of the Marlboro Man looms over a children's schoolyard, targeting very young people to start smoking. Nowadays, they do this with vapes. Vapes were invented by the tobacco industry to get children addicted to nicotine, making it easier for them to transition to tobacco later. Although vapes bring in less money than traditional tobacco, it's still lucrative for them to promote this switch.

We're still not done with targeting the tobacco industry. I remain in close contact with activists, and our collaborative efforts are crucial. Here's an example of how effective such measures can be: In the 1970s, the U.S. banned cigarette ads on radio and television, which cleared the way for other preventive measures. This ban didn't just lower cancer rates and tobacco usage on its own; it kick-started a series of actions that accelerated these

declines, including imposing taxes and banning smoking in public places like cafes.

Similarly, with the fossil fuel industry, most companies don't advertise their fuels but their purported green initiatives. An example is an advertisement from Shell claiming, "You can now drive carbon neutral." We've conducted extensive research to demonstrate that carbon neutrality doesn't work like this. Additionally, in most cities and countries, advertising watchdogs oppose greenwashing. However, there's no concrete law defining greenwashing, making it difficult to regulate. In the Netherlands, the advertising watchdog has the authority to assess and act on misleading advertisements. For example, we've taken Shell and other companies to this watchdog, arguing that their ads are misleading. We've won about 15 cases against Shell and others, using these victories to gain publicity. Initiating such cases, even with our small grassroots group, helps attract a lot of attention with just minimal actions.

But then you win the case, and in the meantime, they are already launching the next campaign. It always feels like we're playing catch-up, so while it's not a solution, by persistently tackling these issues, we can highlight how the current system is failing. Fossil fuel advertising is pervasive—it's in newspapers, public spaces, on TV, and online a lot, especially on platforms like LinkedIn. You'll also notice that during critical political decision-making times, there's an uptick in advertising from the fossil fuel industry. Sometimes, even companies that don't sell directly to consumers still advertise when regulatory threats arise. These ads are not just about selling more but often aim to influence politics. If the public has a favorable view of your company, it's easier to block regulations against it.

In cities, propaganda often looks just like advertising for oil, gas, and coal companies. Coal companies may not sell directly to citizens but advertise to influence regulations, often against them. Other heavily fossil fuel-dependent industries like aviation, car companies, and cruise ships also participate. For example, NRC, a well-regarded newspaper in the Netherlands, had numerous ads for Antarctic cruise trips claiming you could see climate change in real life. This is, of course, ridiculous—the ad suggests taking a fossil fuel-heavy cruise to witness the melting ice.

At the moment, we're also campaigning against big publishers that control many of these newspapers, giving them the opportunity to reject these ads. The newspapers themselves don't have much influence; they can only speak against the publisher who sets their advertising policies. There's also a lot of sponsorship from fossil fuel companies at sports events, museums, and collaborations with universities, hospitals, and other public institutions neglected by the government. These institutions become financially dependent on fossil fuel money, making it unlikely they'll speak out against these companies.

For example, Shell is notorious for its activities in Nigeria, particularly in the Niger Delta, and they sponsor a lot of local initiatives, making the local economy heavily dependent on them. This makes activism difficult. There's also a lot of education aimed at youth and children. Our campaign actually started in Den Haag, where Shell organised a festival called Generation Discover. The festival had a Ferris wheel displaying all the sustainable development goals, misleadingly promoting oil and gas as essential for achieving these goals and teaching children that we will always need fossil fuels.

They even had the Prime Minister and many ministers for climate and economy attend. It was a whole show, and they

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invited children from neighbourhood schools who had to sign a contract allowing their photos to be used indefinitely for Shell's campaigns—many were unaware of what they were signing.

And then we had conversations with Marjan van Loon, the CEO of Shell, who said, "Why do this action? Just have a coffee with me." But we know from experience that a simple coffee doesn't solve these issues. Our campaign eventually led to the shutdown of the festival the following year, and we discovered that this festival had won one of the most important EU lobbying prizes—a children's festival winning a lobbying prize really showed us this was serious business. This information helped us get the festival banned the next year in The Hague municipality. But then we realised we didn't have the capacity to shut down all the festivals and educational materials from the fossil fuel industry at schools, so we needed a better, bigger strategy.

That led us to launch a national campaign demanding regulations against the fossil fuel industry similar to those for the tobacco industry. We need a "tobacco law" for the fossil fuel, aviation, and fossil car industries—essentially, anything running on fossil fuels.

Our campaign started in Amsterdam, which was the first city in the world to adopt a motion to ban fossil fuel advertisements in public spaces. This initiative quickly gained international attention, with figures like Greta Thunberg, Maria Neira from the WHO, and Kate Raworth discussing it. Their involvement helped inspire people globally with our focused campaign aimed at one clear policy outcome: a ban on fossil fuel ads. Since then, nine cities and one province in the Netherlands have adopted similar motions, and globally, we've secured 25 victories, including a national law in France. However, this law primarily targets fossil fuel advertising, which is minimal as the industry focuses

more on greenwashing. Thus, the impact of this law is somewhat limited. It originated from a citizen's initiative, which the government initially ignored, showing the challenges we face, but it's a start. A law can always be expanded.

Currently, there are 50 campaigns worldwide, with notable ones in Australia and Canada. In Australia, the advertising industry supports the campaign, often featuring healthcare workers in their ads. In Canada, the campaign is led by the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment. These professionals bring credibility and urgency to the campaign because of their direct experiences with the health impacts of air pollution and the climate crisis. You can find details of all these initiatives on the website [worldwifossilads.org](http://worldwifossilads.org).

In the Netherlands, we are building a movement with healthcare workers, leveraging their trustworthiness and the symbolic power of the white coat, which represents trust and knowledge. These workers share powerful personal stories about the health effects they witness daily.

Looking beyond fossil fuel propaganda in cities, one approach involves adbusting by activist collectives. These activists open advertising spaces, remove the existing posters, and replace them with artwork or messages that tell the real story—though it's not legally permitted, it's an effective way to confront misleading ads directly. For example, a fake ad from Shell that we placed read, "Burn now, pay later" as a critique of their climate policy.

In the UK, activists use large banners against SUV ads, with messages like, "Ignore the kids, burn the planet." Meanwhile, in the Netherlands, we've initiated a lawsuit against KLM, the national airline, over their "Fly Responsibly" campaign. This case might take years, but winning could prevent KLM from using such misleading advertising in the future. Our strategy employs a

mix of movement building, court cases, direct actions, and lobbying to achieve our goals.

Another point from Fort, and I think this marks a nice turning point, is that if we remove advertisements from the streets, there will initially be so much empty space. "The joy of not being sold anything" is a beautiful phrase that captures this sentiment. We don't truly know what it would be like if we remove these ads, which influence us very unconsciously, yet they are omnipresent. As we discussed earlier, there's also a place in France where the mayor decided to replace all the street advertising with trees to create more community spaces. This shift is crucial, as removing advertisements not only reveals the real influence of the fossil fuel industry but also forces us to confront how the climate crisis threatens our daily lives and future.

In response, we must come together to create communal solutions. If our cityscapes are free from propaganda—where advertising is the most obvious form but also subtly present in many other aspects, such as Amsterdam's economic board's ties to the fossil fuel industry—the real story of these industries will come to the forefront. People will start to believe this real story because the misleading advertisements will no longer be around. Moreover, big companies are currently using a significant amount of our public money under the guise of transitioning to sustainable energy solutions. This money would be better invested in community-based energy corporations, ensuring that citizens benefit from the energy transition, not just large energy companies profiting from it.

Without the influence of the fossil fuel industry, we open doors to new ideas and envision what a world without fossil fuels might look like. Mark Fisher once said it's easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism. Advertising heavily

influences this because we are constantly bombarded by it, obscuring our ability to envision alternative futures.

Advertising is also one of the pillars keeping the capitalist system alive. I am particularly interested in, and part of, the degrowth movement, which critically questions the role of advertising. We're nearing an hour, and I apologise for the length of this discussion.

If there's less propaganda, there will also be room for more trains and fewer airplanes because airplane advertisements are designed to encourage more flying. Without these ads, we can increase space for trains. Similarly, if we stop the growth of SUVs and big cars, there will be more room for car-sharing initiatives. Fewer cars also mean more public space for the community. Moreover, with fewer misleading messages from the fossil fuel industry, politicians will be less targeted with false solutions, leading to better climate policy.

As society is less influenced by fossil fuel propaganda, there will be increased support for phasing out fossil fuels. To make this happen, we need national and international laws to ban all advertising and propaganda from the fossil fuel industry. Thank you so much.

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# Nurhan Abujidi



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Nurhan Abujidi is a graduate of the Faculty of Architectural Engineering at Bir Zeit University, Palestine, in 1996. She worked as the chief architect for the Palestinian Department of Antiquities and Cultural Heritage from 1996 to 2000. She received two postgraduate master's degrees from the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium (one in the conservation of historic towns and buildings and the other in the architecture of human settlement). In 2007, she received her PhD from the Engineering Faculty, Department of Architecture, Regional and Urban Planning at KU Leuven in Belgium. She taught in graduate and international post-graduate Master programs in several universities and with different research groups such as at COSMOPOLIS; City, Culture and Society at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel. She was the academic coordinator of the Erasmus Mundus UII urban studies module at the VUB Brussels. She worked as a senior researcher on sustainable urban development at Zaragoza University, guiding several Ph.D. research projects. She was the vice dean of the Faculty of Architecture at San Jorge University in Zaragoza, Spain, where she directed research and was the professor of Urban Design Theory and studio. Currently, she is head of the Smart Urban Redesign Research Centre - at Zuyd University of Applied Science in the Netherlands.

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Sciences

# The atrocities of war leave profound impacts

not only on the built environment—  
cities and living spaces—but also  
deeply affect the infrastructure  
and the physical aspect of our  
environment.

Nurhan Abujidi

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## Abstract

This essay delves into the profound impacts of urbicide in Palestine, exploring the intersection of urban planning, military strategy, and resistance within a colonial context. The author, a Palestinian architect and activist, introduces the concept of ‘design by destruction,’ where urban environments are manipulated for surveillance, control, and systematic destruction. The work outlines how Palestinian cities, characterised as scenes of catastrophic deaths, become strategic targets in warfare, suffering massive and often total destruction akin to the historical devastations in Hiroshima and Dresden. Additionally, the research highlights the complicit role of military elites in exploiting architectural and urban planning skills to fortify dominance, turning professional practices into instruments of oppression. The discourse extends to the manipulation of urban landscapes in Europe, accentuated by increased surveillance post-September 11. The exploration is framed within the broader discourse of resistance and survival, where urbicide not only reshapes physical spaces but also deeply influences the socio spatial and cultural fabric of Palestinian communities and their everyday life. By examining the layered narratives of urbicide, the research articulates a compelling critique of spatial and social injustices perpetuated under the guise of security and urban development in colonial contexts.

**Keywords:** Urbicide, Palestinian resistance, military urbanism, spatial justice, architectural manipulation.



I am a Palestinian architect, urbanist, and activist, and today I will share my research on Palestine, for which I published a book titled "Urbicide in Palestine: Spaces of Oppression and Resilience" (Abujidi, 2014). In the comfort of our living rooms, we watch TV every night, confronted with scenes we have seen for decades. The atrocities of war leave profound impacts not only on the built environment—cities and living spaces—but also deeply affect the infrastructure and the physical aspect of our environment. More tragically, they impact people's lives; those who have lost not only their living environments and the places they shared with their families but also endure lifelong trauma.

We, as researchers and academics, tend to celebrate our cities as sites of civilisation and progress. However, we often shy away from understanding how cities act, react, and experience the atrocities of war. It is crucial to recognise that while cities are icons of civilisation, their inception and development have progressed hand in hand with the development of the war machine—an aspect we must remember.

My work focuses on military urbanism and the architecture of resistance. I delve into how cities become scenes of catastrophic deaths and targets in warfare in colonial contexts. I aim to highlight and bring to discussion how the military exploits our professions—urban planning, design, and architecture—for surveillance and control, a practice I term 'design by destruction'. This manipulation turns our professional skills into tools for enforcing dominance, illustrating a stark misuse of urban planning and architectural design.

In Europe, since September 11th, 2001, we've witnessed an escalation of the surveillance machinery within our cities. Today, I aim to highlight four main points: the city itself, the discourses surrounding it, the political violence, and specifically, the focus on urbicide in the context of Palestine. Additionally, I'll explore the discourse of Palestinian resistance.

In scenarios of war and urban destruction, a commonly articulated pretext for destruction is that it's either collateral damage or necessary for security reasons. It's crucial to recognise that specific regulations and laws of war permit targeted attacks on infrastructure to impede the enemy. Such military actions, justified for security, often result in incidental casualties and damage to property. Important targets typically include bridges and military compounds but not hospitals or schools and other social infrastructure.

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The discussion also extends to understanding the human aspects of war atrocities, such as ethnic cleansing and genocide, particularly within the Palestinian context. Ethnic cleansing involves the removal of people and, often, the erasure of their traces from a specific territory. In extreme cases, this can lead to the extermination of whole populations leading to genocide. These discourses provide a critical lens through which we examine the interplay of urban warfare and its justifications, highlighting the profound impacts on cities and their inhabitants.

The term "urbicide," or the annihilation of a place or nation, was coined in the 1980s by Berman (1983). He describes it as the massive, and in many cases total, destruction that has occurred in many major cities globally, with extreme cases like Hiroshima and Dresden. I'm focusing on urbicide because it encompasses many other discourses that emerged post-Balkan Wars, such as memorycide, identitycide, and cultural cleansing.

I find Coward's definition (2009) particularly interesting and informative. Urbicide aims to destroy plurality, diversity, and heterogeneity in favour of homogeneity. A stark example of this can be seen in the Palestinian context, where the Israeli government established zones of separation. These zones naturalise the perception that Palestinians and Jews are distinct and separate entities. This separation solidifies Israel as a homogeneous entity where Palestinians are unwelcome, underscored by the apartheid wall.

The scale of the apartheid wall, which separates Israel from the occupied territories, exemplifies this ideology of anti-heterogeneity. It's not only through these systematic tools but also through the actual destruction of Palestinian places that this homogeneity is further inscribed.

If we consider all the systems that the Israeli government has implemented since its inception to achieve a Jewish State—a homogeneous state intended solely for Israelis and Jews—it becomes evident that various regulations have been developed to accomplish this.

Under the Israeli colonial regime, different identity card colours identify a person's origin. One can see the disparity in what individuals are allowed to enjoy in terms of rights: the right to vote, access to certain resources, and use of specific infrastructure. Even car plates in Palestine and various locations in Israel are coloured. In the 1980s, car plates were used to identify people from villages or cities. This represents the apparatus of divide and rule exercised at different

levels in the Palestinian occupied territories.

There are different forms of urbicide. The indirect urbicide, which we refer to as urbicide by design, involves control and strangulation. This encompasses all actions that undermine urbanity with slow, less visible forms of physical destruction. This is manifested through laws, measures, and actions that potentially cause indirect destruction of urban territories, such as the apartheid wall.

I will elaborate later on the case of Nablus, where all the Jewish colonies are strategically positioned atop mountains to oversee and control Palestinian urbanity, simultaneously undermining its expansion. All the colonies impose several types of zoning that prohibit Palestinians from engaging in various activities, from agriculture to the expansion of cities for any other type of activity. These are some examples of how this apparatus of control functions in different forms and on different scales.

On the other hand, direct urbicide, or urbicide by destruction, involves the deliberate physical destruction of the built environment. This phenomenon, much discussed and taking place alongside other forms of political violence such as genocide and ethnic cleansing, is currently being witnessed in Gaza.

Palestinian urbanity is often depicted as backward and uncivilised. It's important to note that what we see on a map as coordinates for a single building in a densely populated area like Gaza might represent a building with 10 or 12 floors, housing an entire extended family or bloodline. In Palestinian society, social networks are structured such that complete families live in close clusters, so a single building might house 50 to 100 people.

Regarding the destruction in Gaza, the characteristics are clear: there is widespread destruction or damage, and the place of destruction is often demonised or dehumanised before it is destroyed. This destruction is executed to achieve spatial reconfiguration and control and is always premeditated, intentional, and planned.

These are the conditions that define urbicide, a concept I have developed over 20 years of research. I aim for urbicide to be recognised similarly to genocide, where, with forensic material, one can prove it as a war crime or a crime against humanity because it targets people's places and heritage.

In an interview at BBC, Lt Col Brandl described the Fallujah battle and the city" (Wood, 2004)

"The enemy has got a face - he's called Satan, he's in Falluja, and we're going to destroy him"

This demonisation of the enemy considered inhuman with an eternal,

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Satan-like nature, is often accompanied by propaganda. For example, before the invasion of Fallujah in Iraq, the enemy was depicted as Satan, residing in Fallujah, with intentions to destroy him. This systematic propaganda prepares for the event of destruction, the event of urbicide, by demonising and dehumanising the other. This portrayal constructs and casts the enemy and his habitat beyond any judicial, legal, and humanitarian consideration, justifying and perceiving their destruction of his habitat as a necessary act of purification and cleansing from a cancerous danger.

In October 2023, the Israeli Minister of Defence intended to "kill the human animals" living in Gaza—a rhetoric reflecting a systematic propaganda campaign aimed at justifying the intentional destruction of Gaza, which we are currently witnessing (Middle East Eye, 2023)

However, urbicide is not solely about the physical destruction of habitats; its impact is profound, causing a sense of loss and tragic experiences that leave significant impacts on the inhabitants' recognition of self, place, and others. The destruction transforms not only the urban form of the city but also its meanings and perceptions.

Looking at the historical background is crucial to understanding this context. The events of October 7th are not isolated; they are part of a 75-year history of Zionist Israeli colonialism in Palestine, beginning in the late 19th century with the Zionist movement's ambition to establish a Jewish state for Jews worldwide. This pretext was the first to fabricate the propaganda of Palestine as "a land without people for a people without land," underpinning the actions taken by European Jewish migrants received in Palestine during the British mandate.

This intensified during the First World War when Britain, ruling Palestine, decided to give Palestine as a gift with the Balfour Declaration of 1917. This was intended to establish the state of Israel. Subsequently, the United Nations, in negotiations with European governments, looked into how Palestine could be divided for both Palestinians and Israelis, culminating with the establishment of Israel in 1948 (UN, no date).

However, as I mentioned earlier, to ensure there was sufficient space for a Jewish State and a Jewish identity, about 500 cities, towns, and villages were completely erased during the 1948 Arab Israeli War (Haddad, 2022). This

made space for the Jewish state to be established. This systematic destruction, construction, reconstruction, and transformation of the territory has been ongoing from the end of the 19th century until now. Thus, you can observe how the Palestinian space is gradually shrinking to make space for the state of Israel to function and flourish, but also to facilitate complete control over the Palestinian space.

This process of destruction, construction, reconstruction, and transformation required many actions, including land confiscation, military laws, the use of force, occupation, invasion, and destruction. The development of the Jewish colonialist project in the 1970s by Sharon and all the surveillance and control networks that have been developed—Israel is well-known for its high technology in arms—, which it exports to other countries after testing them in Palestine.

What I call 'urbicide by construction and control' forms what I term the 'Matrix of control.' This was evidenced in my research starting in 2002. 65 years into this systematic enforcement of the Matrix of Control—the intensive development of Jewish colonies in the occupied Palestinian territories, now known as the West Bank, and the infrastructure needed to link all these colonies without any contact, interconnection, or interaction with the Palestinians took place. The West Bank became an archipelago, with Palestinian cities appearing as if floating in an Israeli-controlled area, acting as aliens to their own natural environment. See fig. 1. Regarding the borders, the ceasefire borders from the 1967 war were built according to the agreement between the parties. However, after discovering that all the natural groundwater resources were on the Palestinian side, Israel decided to develop the apartheid wall. This was shifted to the eastern part of that armistice line to ensure that these areas were now under



Fig. 1: The West Bank became an archipelago, with Palestinian cities appearing as if floating in an Israeli-controlled area, acting as aliens to their own natural environment. Map by author.

Israeli control.

Some examples of the daily challenges Palestinians face include navigating numerous checkpoints to enter or leave their cities. Sometimes, travelling from Nablus to Ramallah can take two to twelve hours, and occasionally, individuals never reach their destinations—a university, hospital, or workplace. Many people work in Ramallah, as most government ministries are located there.

Given this context, discussing Palestine in terms of a two-state solution becomes impractical on a territorial level due to the lack of geographical continuity between Palestinian cities. Instead, I focus on Palestinian spaces, which are all the sites that host and produce the Palestinian experience. Within these spaces, we might theorise boundaries as rapidly collapsing, shifting, and re-emerging. The Palestinian spaces are spaces of exile and refuge, as illustrated on the map showing all the Palestinian refugee camps resulting from the wars of 1948 and 1967, located inside the West Bank, Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria.

As Edward Said notes, the Arab Israeli Wars, with the explosion, destruction of Palestinian cities, towns, and villages, loss of life, and the resulting exile, marked a conclusive chapter for local communities, testifying to the disappearance of what was once Palestine. Palestine vanished from the geopolitical map of the Middle East, while the emerging state of Israel began to formulate new urbanities and identities. At the same time, new Palestinian-Jewish spaces were constructed and physically manifested in their exile and out of their original context, as is most evident in refugee camps inside Palestine and other areas.

Not all Palestinians left during the events of 1948 and 1967 wars; for instance, in 1948, 700,000 Palestinians were displaced to refugee camps, as previously mentioned. However, many Palestinians in Haifa, Nazareth, and Acre remained in their cities under Israeli state control, becoming Israeli citizens. This creates a paradoxical space, as Palestinian Arab Israelis are perceived as Arabs and enemies by Jewish Israelis despite possessing Israeli papers. Meanwhile, Palestinians living in the occupied territories view them as Israeli and therefore as adversaries.

These conflicting and contradicting experiences shape the Palestinian reality across various spaces. Gaza serves as an extreme example, with a siege lasting 15 years now, culminating in the current dire circumstances. These states are experienced by Palestinians residing in the occupied territories, within boundaries defined post-1967 war and the 2002 reoccupation, with different lev-

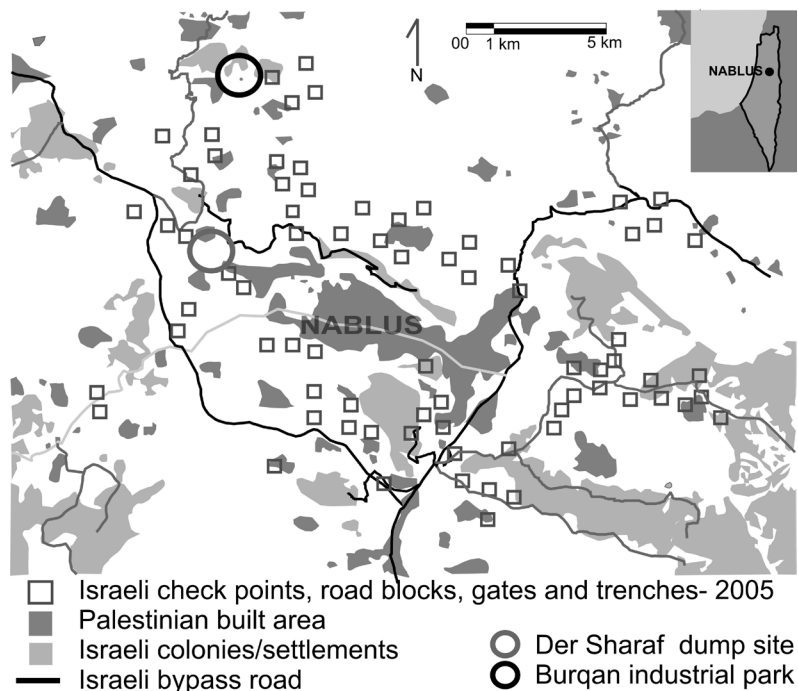


Fig. 2: There are 14 Israeli settlements encircling the city, two major military bases, and a total of 117 checkpoints and trenches sieging the city. Map by author.

els, intensities, and scales of siege clearly recognisable.

From the territorial level, I will now shift our focus to the urban dynamics, particularly examining the events of 2002, which marked the reoccupation and reinvasion of several Palestinian cities, most notably Jenin and Nablus. Nablus is the largest Palestinian city in the West Bank, serving as the economic capital of Palestine. It is renowned for its traditional industries, particularly in its old town, a heritage site dating back to Roman times.

Nablus is situated in a valley between two mountains, making it a strategic target during the invasion. To illustrate the invasion's dynamics, I mapped all the different points of control or the "Matrix of Control" at the urban scale. Within this framework, there are 14 Israeli settlements encircling the city, two major military bases, and a total of 117 checkpoints and trenches sieging the city. Additionally, there is an Israeli dump site where industrial waste from Israeli industrial parks is transported to the West Bank. See Fig. 2.

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A crucial aspect of my research was reconstructing and understanding how the city coped and collapsed during the military invasion. The mentioned Matrix of Control was strategically utilised to concentrate the army troops that converged on the city from all directions. Another system of control was implemented to divide the city—East, West, the Old City, and refugee camps—introducing temporary matrices of control during the invasion. This division, referred to as Tabor land, was inspired by tactics used in the Afghanistan War.

Interestingly, the military elites did not traverse the city using conventional roads or public spaces but created alternative routes through the urban fabric, a strategy we term 'forced routes' or 'walking through walls.' This approach illustrates how houses, closely intertwined in the urban cluster, lead into each other, facilitating movement through walls. A critical tool in my analysis was assessing whether the destruction was intentional, for security reasons, or collateral damage. The frequent openings created by bombs in heritage sites, within fragile structures, indicate a deliberate intention to damage the urban fabric. These actions were performed in areas densely packed with historical buildings, including a 17th-century palace with structural elements like cross vaults in the Old City. See Fig. 3

The use of explosive devices in such a compact and historically significant area, despite the availability of cadastral maps and GPS data, underscores a

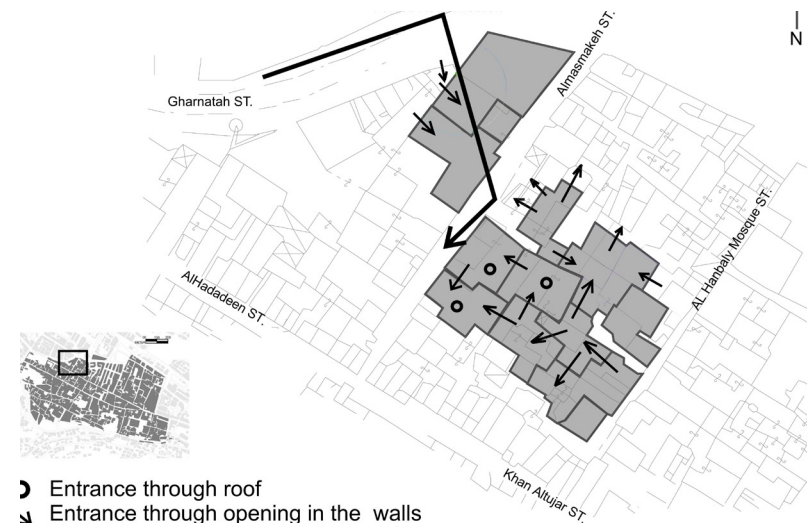


Fig. 3: Alternative routes through the urban fabric, a strategy we term 'forced routes' or 'walking through walls.' This approach illustrates how houses, closely intertwined in the urban cluster, lead into each other, facilitating movement through walls. Map by author.



targeted strategy for maximum destruction. This is supported by my colleague Abdurrahman K's work, which explores how architectural duality functions within this complex urban fabric, serving both to facilitate Israeli military control and to empower Palestinian resistance manoeuvres within the same spaces.

The concept of 'walking through walls' represents a tactical reinterpretation of the city not just as a battleground but as the very medium of warfare. Another aspect of my mapping highlighted how Nablus, a known hub of Palestinian resistance, became dotted with snipers and military outposts. Strategically positioned military outposts throughout Nablus underscored its significance; the city's intricate urban fabric played a crucial role in supporting Palestinian resistance activities, especially during curfews and military invasions. This dense occupation meant entire families were confined to a single room while Israeli soldiers commandeered their homes as operational bases for days or weeks at a time.

I also meticulously mapped the various weapons used for destruction in this densely populated area. The city stretches about 1 kilometre in length and approximately 600 meters in width, making it an extremely compact city. A wide array of military machinery was deployed, including explosives, Apache helicopters, bulldozers, and even F-16 jet fighters, all of which were used to attack and bomb the city. Notably, the bulldozer was a critical tool, often referred to by the nickname "Sharon," reflecting its primary role in demolishing Palestinian homes.

In this heritage site, the significance of the destroyed buildings spans various domains, from homes to religious sites. Nablus is known as the centre of the three major religions, similar to Jerusalem, reflected in the city's urban fabric and landscape, encompassing mosques, churches, and synagogues. Additionally, the city is famed for its soap factories and significant industrial heritage sites from the 16th and 17th centuries.

The destruction primarily occurred in residential areas. The buildings that were totally demolished were not merely collateral damage; they were strategically targeted locations intended to fracture both the urban and social fabrics. This tactic severed the connections between neighbours, as people within this complex urban fabric previously could visit each other and move around the neighbourhood without using the streets. The primary purpose of clearing specific city areas was to methodically disrupt all these connections in the urban and social fabrics. See Fig. 4.

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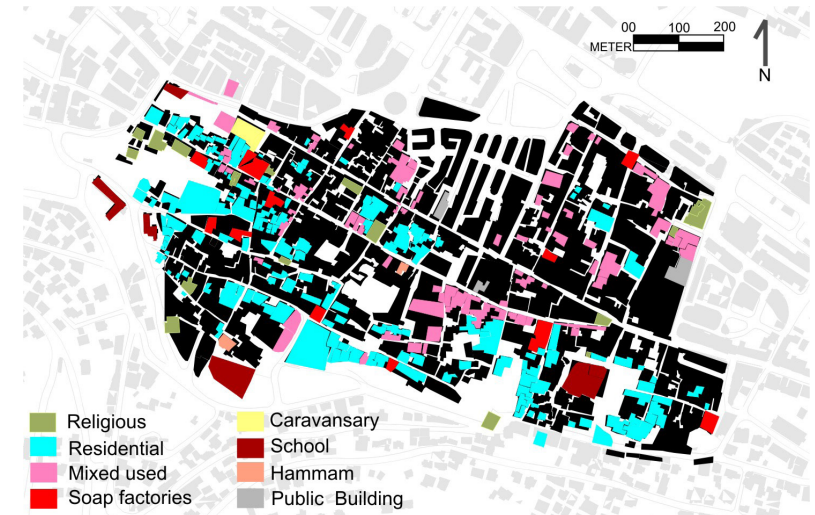


Fig.4: Buildings uses in Nablus neighbourhood. Map by author.

This quote encapsulates how planning and design are crucial elements in Israeli military doctrines, which view spatial engineering as a key tool for military control. Kavi, the chief of the military units, was fascinated by Nablus and its urban environment. For him, controlling the city involved employing fundamental urban planning techniques to reorganise the complexities he admired into a simplified urban layout tailored to his operational needs. His strategy included digging deep trenches around the city and constructing a road that cut across, linking the East to the West. This setup funnelled all ingress and egress through two checkpoints, one at each end of the city. This building strategy included targeting historical structures, such as soap factories from the 16th and 17th centuries, which were systematically emptied by bombing from Apache helicopters.

Let's now consider the impact of urbicide on the human experience. My research did not just document the physical destruction; it also envisioned how the city's collapse affected its residents.

I also documented how people experience this environment. Over the course of 2002 and 2001, I conducted 3,000 hours of surveys during periods of closure and siege when everything was shut down. Sometimes, people endured up to 100 days of curfews, were confined to their houses and prohibited from leaving the city. When they were allowed to move—since Nablus served as

the commercial and economic centre for many surrounding villages—residents sought essential services. They needed to visit hospitals or shops, and thus, they had to navigate secondary agricultural routes through the mountains. This period was marked by collective detention, collective death, and an unceasing loss of livelihood.

Another significant point I want to highlight is the Israeli Army's actions before invading the city: they collected all men aged 15 to 50 and detained them in a nearby camp. The city they invaded was predominantly populated by women and children. This narrative is important to understand the context and the justification given for the level of destruction that ensued. Subsequently, the entire urban fabric was transformed into a military domain, blurring the lines between public and private spaces.

Here, I quote an incident during the curfews: Khoury testifies during the military curfew in Nablus old Town on February 11, 2024: "Go inside," he ordered, in his broken English. "Inside, I am inside," I responded. It took me a few seconds to realise that the young soldier was redefining 'inside' to mean anywhere not visible to him. My being 'outside' within what was considered 'inside' was problematic for him. Not only was he enforcing a curfew, but he was also redefining the boundaries of inside and outside within my own space (Khoury, 2004).

These conditions represent a state of exception, as explained in his book. Another quote I recall vividly captures the invasion of privacy: "It was more than I could bear to think of them using our bathrooms, opening my drawers, and misplacing our clothes or personal items. Total strangers had access to every room, helping themselves to our belongings, seeing themselves in our mirrors, and using our sheets and towels. It felt like a violation—our private lives and intimate secrets were forcibly exposed to strangers, leaving us utterly helpless to do anything about it." Abu Shumais (2004).

Feeling hopeless and helpless inflicts both mental and physical pain, especially prolonged under such conditions as experienced in Nablus and now in Gaza. For over a decade, children in Gaza have been confined to their city, asking me when I visited, "What does the sea look like? What does it smell like? Do you in Europe also have to go through checkpoints to travel from one city to another?" These conversations highlighted how things we take for granted are deeply questioned by Palestinians living under systematic oppression and control.

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I spoke with M, who admitted, "I no longer have a dream or big expectations. Most of what I look forward to are the small decisions I make each year, hoping I can fulfil them because whenever I have a big dream, the occupation devastates it. My only dream now is to visit Hebron in the West Bank, but from Gaza, it seems an impossible dream to accomplish."

This sentiment underpins my research, where I conducted a mental exercise with children aged six to fifteen. I asked them to draw the city as they experienced it. Shockingly, not only had they forgotten what the damaged areas looked like before destruction, but they were also unable to express anything other than damage—shootings, explosions, and ruins. This destruction has become the new milieu of memory for future generations.

It's sometimes difficult to explain to Europeans why Palestinians cannot meet Israelis on the same level. For all their lives, Palestinians have seen Israelis in military uniforms coming to destroy, conduct military invasions, to arrest their relatives. This has been the perception for 75 years, affecting how Palestinians can idealise their space, viewing it as a heavenly place before the invasions—an almost utopian idea shattered by continuous destruction.

This general context helps to understand that what's happening in Gaza is not a separate incident; it's a continuation of the conflict experienced in Palestine for 75 years. In Gaza, 56% of the population are refugees from cities that are now part of Israel. Gaza, with its 2.3 million inhabitants and an average age of 18, is a highly populated area under siege for 17 years. Israel controls all natural resources, including aquifers in Gaza, using the water for their own land and then selling it back to Palestinians.

Gaza is encircled by a formidable wall, and its seven types of entrances are tightly controlled by the Israeli military, making it resemble not just an open-air prison—I refuse to use this term because they are not criminals—but a large concentration camp.

Especially for the children, whom we call 'war zone generation'—now experiencing their fifth conflict—trauma is a constant companion. Reports from UNICEF and other United Nations organisations indicate that there is no post-traumatic therapy in Gaza because the trauma is repetitive, ongoing, and multifaceted. Just last month, the level of destruction in northern Gaza, especially in refugee camps, showed the scale of devastation. This continuous exposure to violence shapes every aspect of life in Gaza, embedding deep psycholog-



ical scars that affect generations.

I just watched Al Jazeera before this presentation, and the latest figures are harrowing: 10,000 people were killed, including 5,000 children and 3,000 women, with 25,000 injuries reported. Among these, 2,260 are missing, at least 200,000 buildings are damaged, and all four universities in Gaza have been destroyed, along with schools, houses, bakeries, markets, hospitals, clinics, mosques, and churches. Sixteen out of 35 hospitals are non-functional.

In conclusion, I emphasise that Palestinians are not passive; they are active agents shaping the contours of their struggle with a resistance discourse developed over many years. One form is resistance through knowledge. The absolute use of power reaches into the minds and bodies of Palestinian individuals, influencing their actions, attitudes, discourses, and everyday lives. They have developed many tactics, such as 'sumud' in Arabic—steadfastness. Continuing daily life activities amidst destruction is a form of resistance. After the primary school in Nablus was destroyed, teachers held classes in the streets, highlighting the community's valuation of knowledge.

Resistance through reconstruction is vital, too. Heritage is a crucial part of the Palestinian national and collective identity. People actively participate in the reconstruction, renovation, and regeneration of old Nablus, commemorating the martyred youth who sacrificed their lives. In Nablus's Old Town, what you now see is a celebration of those who resisted and reclaimed their right to their land. This redefinition of public space in Palestine contrasts sharply with European norms—it becomes the icon of Palestinian resistance, hosting demonstrations, funerals, and marches.

The last form of resistance I observed, particularly in Gaza, is the decolonising of space and architecture. Palestinians claim back spaces theoretically under Israeli control, returning to the sites of their original cities and villages left in 1948. The tunnels of Gaza and the March of Return, involving the 700,000 Palestinians displaced in 1948—now numbering six million in the diaspora—emphasise the basic right of return.

In these landscapes, I urge us as intellectuals, academics, and researchers to work towards emancipation and social justice not only in Palestine but globally. We must decolonise knowledge and universities. Coming to Europe and learning about urbanism, I was taught that largely thanks to the colonial era, there is modern infrastructure and universities. This confronts us with how aca-

demia produces knowledge that justifies and whitewashes colonisation, framing it from an orientalist perspective. Edward Said illustrates how Western systematic knowledge production painted the colonies during this period as beneficial.

Influenced by the BDS movement, which we learned from South Africa, we see a significant push in many European universities to boycott relationships with Israeli academia. They are criticised not only for their complicity but for their active engagement in justifying the actions I've described. The military technologies and theories provided by academics to the Israeli Army, as explained by Weissman, were developed and tested in Nablus and Jenin.

In memory of all those who have lost their lives, I reflect on the words of Dr Bilal, a young doctor in Gaza. He embodies the aspirations and desires to live beyond mere survival, challenging the portrayal of Palestinians as mere numbers or sub-humans by the Western media.

Let's keep talking about Palestine. Thank you.

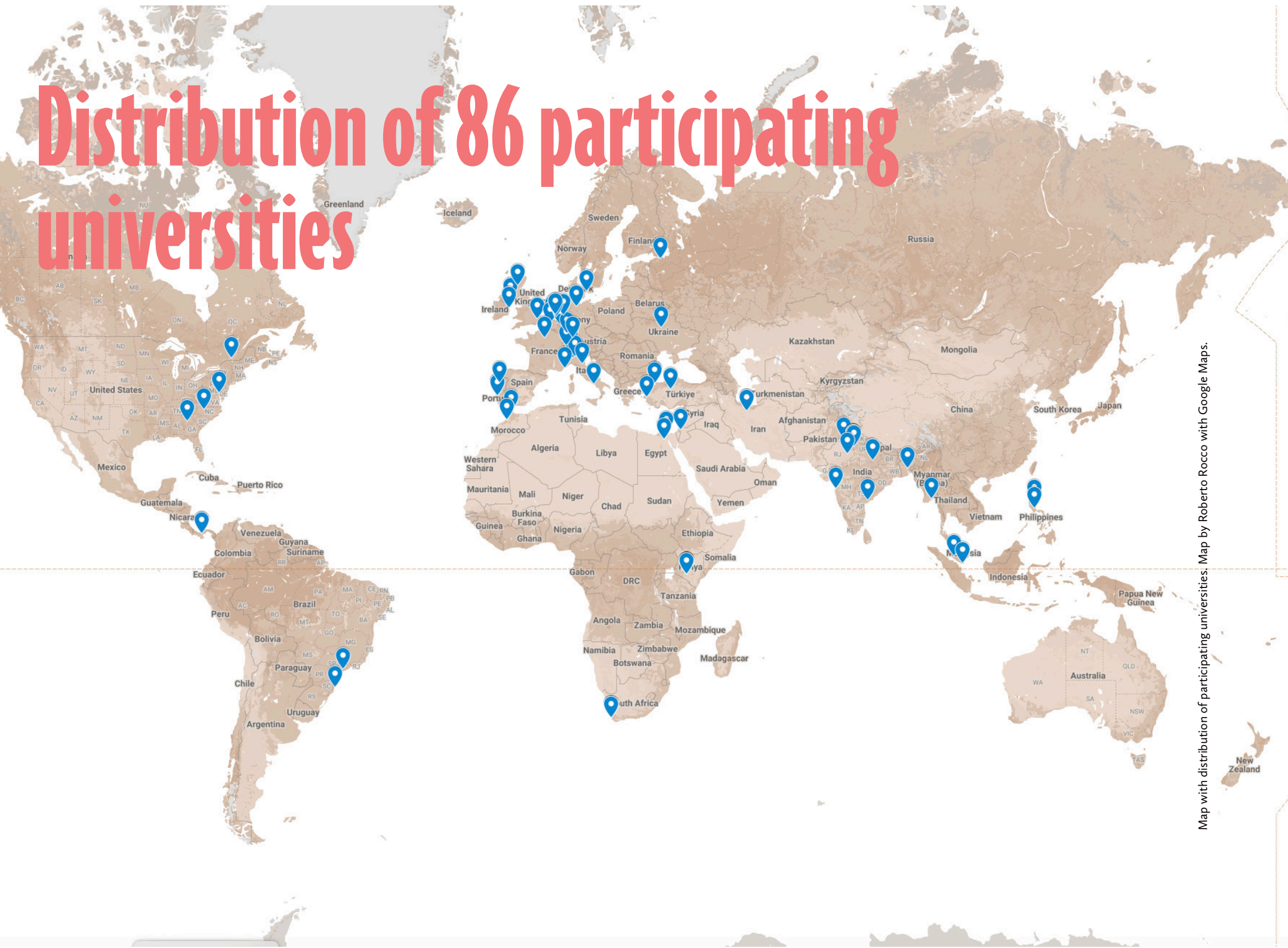
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# Distribution of 86 participating universities



Map with distribution of participating universities. Map by Roberto Rocco with Google Maps.



**From Aaoubadi to Zeynep** **73 manifestos written by**  
**273 contributors from 86 universities**

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# Manifestos for a Just City

# TOWARD A JUST CITY

## A Manifesto for Eco-Equitable Socio-Spatial Transformation in Kashmir

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In Kashmir's crucible of protracted and deep-rooted political conflict, compounded by the pervasive effects of militarisation, the imperative to forge a path of just and equitable urban development emerges as a critical mandate. The complex patterns interwoven within the urban landscapes of the region have undergone significant changes due to the relentless passage of time marked by violence. This has led to a need for a comprehensive re-evaluation and transformation of existing planning paradigms and governance systems. The prolonged conflict's consequences stretch far beyond the urban physical environment and affect the core of societal structures and dynamics. Ecology has been utilized to either exploit or safeguard natural resources that are indispensable for sustaining the livelihoods and security of diverse communities (Graham, 2004; Bhan and Trisal, 2017). It is in this complicated historical and contemporary context that this manifesto seeks to shed light on a path towards a future where concepts of fairness, justice, and collaboration are fundamental to urban development. The dispute has implicated multiple nearby parties, including independence, pro-India, and pro-Pakistan groups, as well as global participants such as China, the United States, and the United Nations (Mukhtar, 2021; Bose, 2003).

The current urban planning paradigm in Kashmir is now exposed, stripped of noble intentions, and has transformed into a sinister instrument of security, control, and ethnic dominance. The ominous spectre of militarized encampments and infrastructure projects driven by economic gain looms large, casting a dark shadow over Kashmiri communities. Spatial violence is a disturbing manifestation of this distorted paradigm, which not only deprives residents of their land but also alienates them from their public areas, ultimately destroying the foundation of community life.

To address the inequalities present within the urban terrain, a substantial transformation is necessary - one that goes beyond symbolic gestures. Inclusiveness, participation, and responsibility must be at the forefront of any planning model. This is not a mere invitation for conversation; it is a requirement for a thorough reconfiguration of power dynamics. Recognising historical trauma, promoting reconciliation and demilitarising urban spaces are crucial prerequisites. The decision-making power must be decentralised, firmly placed in the hands of communities through respectful deliberation, ensuring free prior informed consent, and categorically rejecting the imposition of top-

down directives.

Efforts to rectify the effects of displacement and cultural erasure are not only reparative but also revolutionary. The restoration of authority over natural resources to their original custodians is not open to negotiation but is instead a declaration of the right to recoup what was wrongly taken. Community land trusts and cooperatives are not mere substitutes, but instead offer models for a future where land is de-commodified, ensuring accessibility and affordability for all. Land-use policies must no longer serve as tools of displacement; rather, they should be transformed into vehicles of restitution and cultural conservation.

Environmental sustainability is not an ancillary issue; it is the foundation on which a future is built. It is not only concerned with environmentally friendly industries; it is about rehabilitating biodiversity without making concessions. Advocating for ecotourism is not a capricious want; it is a tactical measure to balance economic advancement whilst safeguarding delicate ecosystems. The restoration of deteriorated habitats is not a luxury; it is an essential action to reconnect local communities with their shared natural inheritance, promoting environmental responsibility as an unalterable origin of communal pride and intention.

The pursuit of this transformative vision is not a solitary effort; it requires long-term collaboration among a diverse range of stakeholders. Academia is not a passive bystander; rather, it plays an active role in researching conflict-sensitive planning, providing training to local practitioners, and conducting policy research with concrete results. Public agencies have a responsibility that goes beyond mere administration; they must adopt “healing-centred” approaches that prioritise the psychosocial well-being of communities. International organizations are not simply distant benefactors; they are partners that offer technical support for innovative solutions that are grounded in local needs. Philanthropy, the private sector and policymakers are not separate entities, but instead, are vital components that encourage grassroots leadership, promote economic growth, and establish legal frameworks that prioritize people over profit.

Policymakers are not just legislators; they construct societal frameworks. Rewriting legal frameworks, while discarding incentives for gentrification and prioritizing affordability, accessibility, and democratic decision-making, is a

privilege rather than a burden. Security forces have more responsibility than just guarding their territory; they have been entrusted with safeguarding civilians through lawfulness and community partnerships. The shift from defending territory to enabling resident self-governance is not a superficial one; rather, it represents a fundamental restructuring of their public role.

Rectifying spatial violence and disinvestment requires a steadfast and enduring commitment that demands sustained collaboration. This is not a passive undertaking; it requires active engagement, rooted in the tangible and psychosocial requirements defined by the community. Pluralistic yet cohesive communities do not emerge overnight; they cultivate over time, anchored in mutual concern and shared stewardship. The sustained dedication needed is not a mere indication; it is a sincere promise to develop a future that surpasses the effects of conflict and arises as a confirmation of the persistent tenacity of communities committed to regaining control of their narrative.

When manoeuvring this altering terrain, there is no room for half-hearted actions. Bravery is not an option; it is the sole course to progress. The need for stakeholders to act is not in some remote future; it is present, in the midst of an opportunity and urgency, where justice, healing, and urban reinvention meet.

The obligation to empower the persevering and innovative Kashmiri population in shaping their collective aspirations is a crucial pillar within the transformative vision defined in this manifesto. This resounding declaration acknowledges the rich tapestry of their history and unyielding spirit. The Kashmiri people must take responsibility for their urban future, as external interventions should no longer dictate the trajectory of development. The Kashmiri people themselves must become the architects of their narrative.

Foreign partners, whether international agencies, organisations or states, must approach the path of cooperation with deep humility. Acknowledging the intricacies on the ground is not simply a diplomatic formality but an essential recognition of nuanced realities that shape the lives of those living amidst conflict. It is imperative to listen, learn and support the gradual evolution of a society seeking to regain agency and rebuild from within.

Boldly prioritising justice, sustainability, and mutual empowerment is not merely a desirable stance; it is an absolute mandate. The objective for the urban regions in Kashmir exceeds the immediate needs of post-conflict

reconciliation. The aim is to transform these cityscapes into representations of resilience, justice, and inclusiveness, prompting the global community to reassess the significance of urban environments after societal wounds run deep.

The expansive vista ahead is not simply a metaphorical terrain awaiting discovery. It is an open invitation for all parties, both within and outside, to embark on unexplored avenues of justice, recovery, and urban renewal. The proposal expressed here is not a mere ambition, but a decisive call for a paradigm shift, where urban progress no longer entails a top-down imposition, but becomes a collaborative enterprise driven by the collective desire of a community eager to redefine its future.

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# A Just Co-City

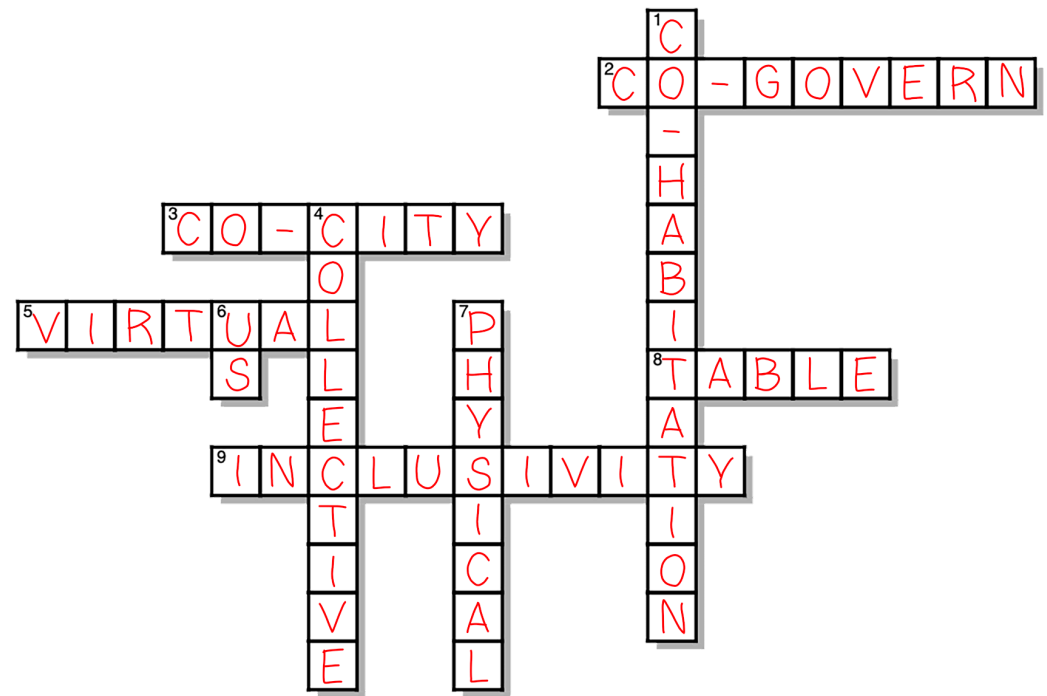
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CO — GOVERNANCE  
CREATION  
HABITATION  
OVER PHYSICAL AND VIRTUAL MEDIUMS



## “to be able to be ourselves”

How do we engage with the community through our true selves? So, what kind of creative process is required for us to be ourselves together? We say that we should all be together, let's be united. Let's support the practice of **co-creating** shared ideas, discussing, deconstructing, and reassembling them each time.

So, who are we and how do we produce? Every individual, expert, city user, association, and state collaborator is invited to participate in our initiative to listen to each other and integrate it into the fabric of the city, creating a co-city for all of us: the **Collective Design Initiative**.

## “to be able to govern ourselves”

Wouldn't it be nice if we collectively governed the city, which was shaped by dominant decisions stemming from individualism? We reject the homogeneous order imposed by a single voice and our obligation to conform to the constraints of that voice, and instead celebrate polyphony with all of our voices. We become both the governed and the governor.

The Co-City manifesto calls for transparent and participatory decision-making processes. To ensure that governance is a collective effort, there are ways for actors to contribute to urban policies, budget allocations, and development plans for their cities.

## “to be able to live in cohabitation”

What do all urban actors do together when they sit around a table? It is essential to leverage current media to advance collaborative policies through idea generation, discussions, discourses, and actions. We aim to exist within both physical and virtual mediums covering both planned and spontaneous variations. While we are in the process of **co-creating our micro-habitat**, we do not proceed independently of what is happening on the macro scale.

We propose that each project for Co-City be created and replicated through collective efforts (Iaione, 2016).

We are all searching for ways to find something from ourselves within the city that we dwell in. Most importantly, we have the opportunity to get to know and celebrate with each other. We can learn from each other. While we celebrate the co-existence of different cultures, we make space for differences for inclusivity. We create platforms for sharing our education, experience and skills. We not only stay within ourselves but also advance through

**Co-governance** does not only encourage citizens' input, but rather integrally invites the actors to the table where they shape every decision together. The issue is not only the co-creation process but also the ability to make decisions collectively (Ansell & Torfing, 2021). We aim to engage and advance alongside grassroots movements. To accomplish this, the initial step is to be true to ourselves. Afterward, it becomes important to be able to establish common expectations and values that encompass all of our voices. At this point, we need to consider what we can do to support

We should be covering every scale. Without separation, while we construct our production on the city streets, we should also connect to the rest of the world through the digital realm. While we assert our opinions, we also ensure that everyone's voices are included by emphasizing active participation, encouraging critical thinking, and often fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment.

collaboration with the actors of the city and also collaboration with other cities and diverse urban cultures.

We support the transfer of knowledge and skills from individuals to society and from society to individuals as a two-way relationship. We postulate on the potential of individuals to drive societal progress and the ability of society to offset individual limitations and open new horizons. As we embrace our differences, we complement each other with our unique perspectives. **We are all different, but we can unite at a table.**

local values. Political discourses need to be translated into action and action needs to be done by all. The most important thing is for them to establish commissions that include urban users, and for their discourses and actions to evolve continuously. In other words, the process of speaking out, creating discussions, and implementing actions for society requires persistence and consistency for grassroots movements to expand and gain visibility over time. We need to sit side by side at this table at every stage, without overseeing, with hearing, accepting, and acting on it.

**Co-city, our habitat**, embraces all the voices without any limitations of existence and any borders both physical and virtual. We are aiming to sit at a table where actors are the owner and the host, in a table that co-exists in over mediums (Arendt, 1958; Foster & Iaione, 2022).



# Imagining a Co-City

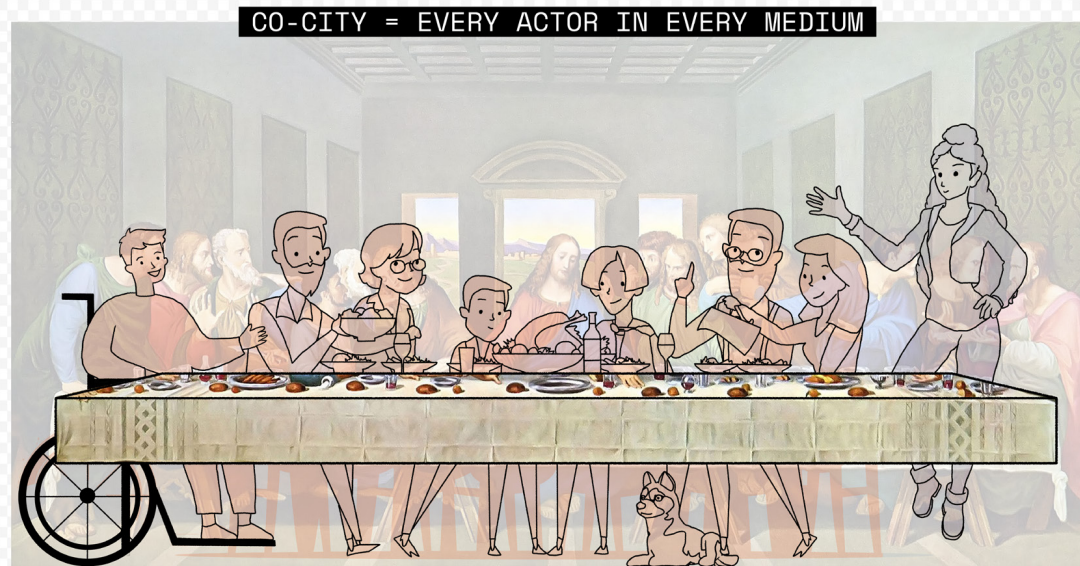
Described as the interaction between the individuals sitting at the table, this metaphorical table applies to every public sphere. The table brings individuals sitting around it together and separates them by giving them a personal space to sit. This Human Condition in the public sphere enables us to be seen and heard by many, and also to be exposed to new ways of thinking.

In our **Co-City manifesto**, we encourage everyone to understand the profound value of accepting “us” over “me.” The strength of us lies in collective awareness, where the synergy of diverse minds coalesces. By honoring the collective identity, we transcend individualism, highlighting a common spirit that enriches the fabric of our city and empowering every citizen to be a vital actor in this united journey (Foster & Iaione, 2022).

This understanding considers the modern-day city as a critical infrastructure in which urban actors cohabitate, co-design, and co-govern common values and resources in innovative ways including physical and virtual mediums in their built environment.

We believe in the essence of communal life where collective thinking and shared design of our lives shape our environment. We should navigate our collective path, fostering a community-driven approach to coexistence. We will create our destiny together, unifying diverse views to build a city of unity and inclusion. We are together. We are moving away from universal definitions of equality and striving to assert **our right to the city**.

All images in this Manifesto were created by the group. Some images include elements derived from photographs that are either in the Public Domain or labelled as Free for Use



**“to be able to be ourselves”**  
**“to be able to govern ourselves”**  
**“to be able to live in cohabitation”**

“ To live together in the world means essentially that a world of things is between those who have it in common, as a table is located between those who sit around it; the world, like every in-between, relates and separates human\* at the same time.”

*\*word of men replaced with human by authors*

Hannah Arendt (1958)

## References

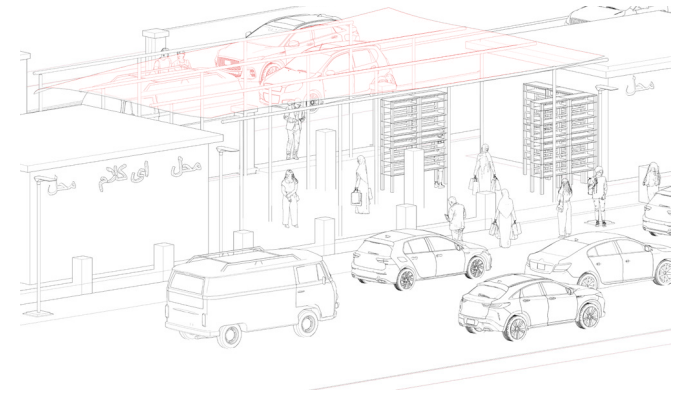
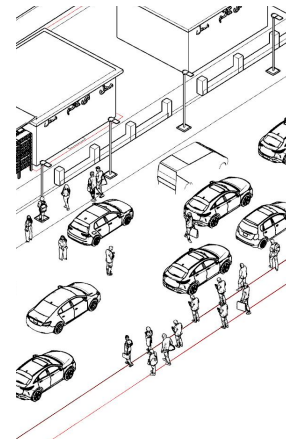
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# Urban Kiosks

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## Urban Kiosks



In this manifesto, we are focusing on a scene on Elremaya Street, a street beside one of the most recognized monuments in the world, the Great Pyramids of Giza. This scene features from left to right: a 2-lane street, a bridge, and a sidewalk. A 3-lane street and an unplanned zone where people wait for minibuses. To reach the nearest pick-up point, one should cross the 2-lane street and climb the makeshift stairs fixated to the flyover. Only to pass haphazardly between the cars and reach an opening curated in the bridge's fence that allows access to the "sidewalk" and then cross the 3-lane street in the same chaotic way to reach the pickup point. The once walkable "sidewalk" is now inhabited by stacked kiosks, contributing to the shrinking of the pedestrians' right of way.

In Egypt, the recent development of infrastructures and mega projects represented key future shapers and catalysts. This uncompromising focus on megaprojects has often come at the expense of urban fabric, public spaces, and cultural heritage. The leftover voids and distorted public spaces represented a new gap awaiting resolution. In response to these unplanned "gaps," a peculiar hero emerged to rescue the "Urban kiosk".

On the contrary, under-bridge spaces are perceived as leftovers in other countries, whereas in Egypt, they are considered potential areas for the economic industry's uprising. From cafes to "outlets" that provide products at affordable prices to confront monopolistic practices and high prices. Sticking to the mass-produced kiosk "prototype", which follows a modular morphology marked with distasteful aluminium cladding and fixed small windows to showcase the variety of functions and activities that occur inside in an attempt to franchise its exceptionality. This picks up on an increasing phenomenon that resulted after the government's rapid urban infrastructure "developments" to compact the increasing density and traffic jams in Cairo and the governorates by building bridges and land use patterns that favour automobile access and provide relatively inferior alternatives for public transport modes. Kiosks became an effective way to fill in the "under-bridge voids."

Urban kiosks used to serve standard functions, such as a flower/book booth or a mini market selling refreshments and snacks to passersby. Recently, these kiosks have evolved from mere landmarks at street intersections to serve multiple purposes, such as aiding in wayfinding or functioning as gathering spots along the sidewalk. Kiosks are small infrastructures deployed as a quick fix to fill leftover spaces, representing a new prototype for all the empty leftover voids under flyovers, regardless of their functions or suitability.

Starting to take a new adapted unorthodox enterprise, kiosks have morphed into selling everything from meat to coffee. Following the Profit off despite haphazard entrance, function opportunities, and necessities relevant to the users' needs. Although unclaimed, these Kiosks served as a makeshift solution to all problems created by a flyover,mpoor public space design, or lack of it there is.

This observation endeavors to raise questions to understand the phenomena of the aforementioned repeated scene, which focuses on spreading the prototypes of urban kiosks. Is it a response to the community's needs, or is it a lousy way to profit from capitalism? Were feasibility studies implemented before the projects were produced in different contexts? That being said, were there data that deemed each project succession in each context after it was constructed? Do sidewalks have to have a bigger sense than only walking? It is functional that voids under flyovers are being used if it is designed right what about "voids" beside the flyover?

**Decision makers and urban planners should adhere to the following:**

Considering the negative impact of several urban kiosks on the environment, as they may be visually unappealing and harmful. As a result, it is crucial to focus on designing sustainable kiosks that utilise solar power that are both smart and interactive while still serving their intended purpose.

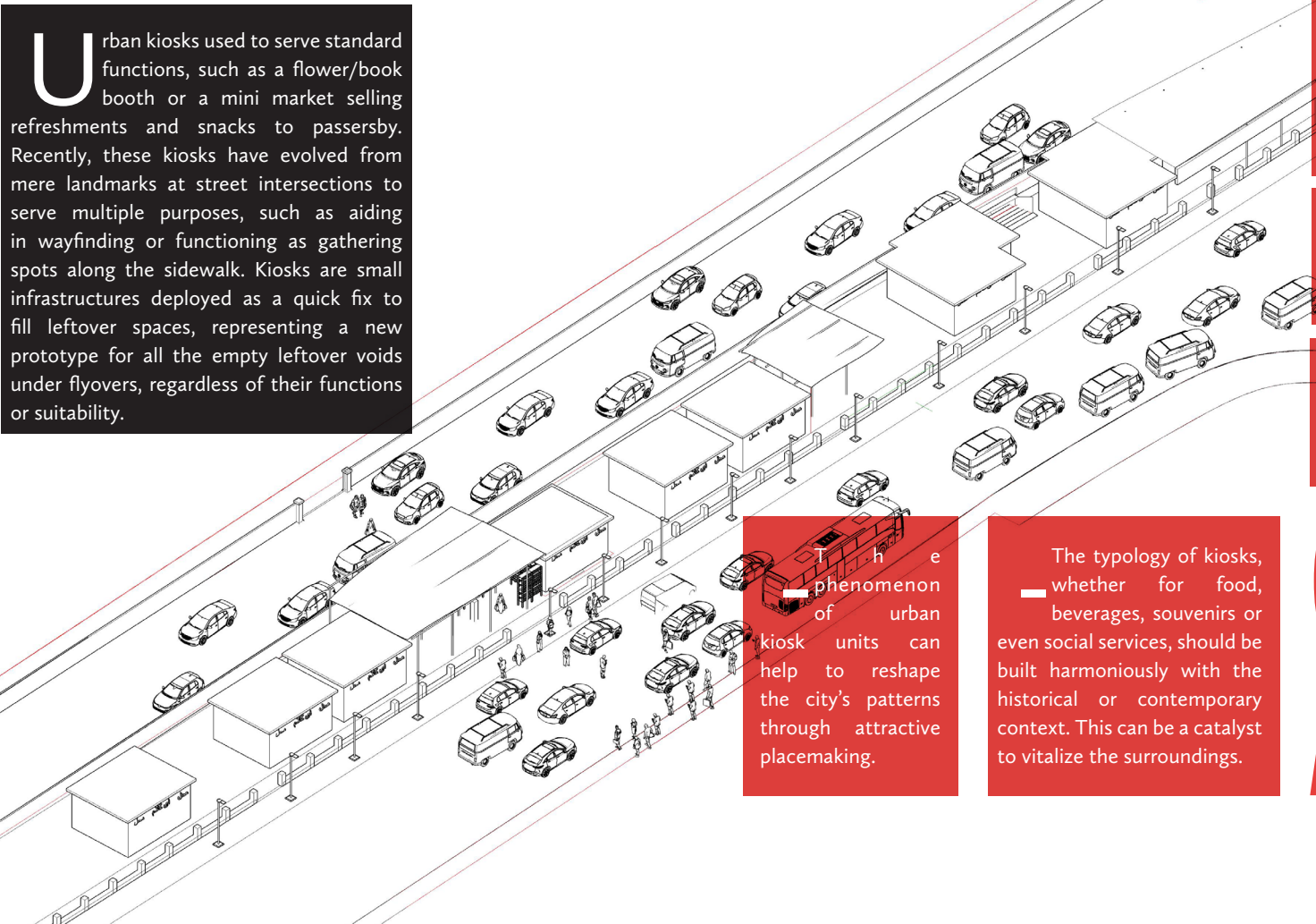
using kiosks as an urban unit to enhance the quality of life in the city.

Deep research is needed to help with the design criteria and evaluation of these onsite urban kiosks.

The phenomenon of urban kiosk units can help to reshape the city's patterns through attractive placemaking.

The typology of kiosks, whether for food, beverages, souvenirs or even social services, should be built harmoniously with the historical or contemporary context. This can be a catalyst to vitalize the surroundings.

# Call of Action





# This line is mine

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## The Gold Line myth **THIS LINE IS MINE**

### Injustice On The Waterfront

a manifesto by

Mona Maria

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## Intro

People had always lived and coexisted around water surfaces where they got attached to this land emotionally. These water surfaces helped to flourish commerce, cultures and all life aspects, as a result people saw water as their source of life, and the emotional bond grew bigger day by day. Land owners away from their beloved land. This emphasizes the pressing need to address the diverse injustices afflicting these golden waterfront lands. People living by the water, for example, cannot imagine their life or survive away from it. This attachment and appreciation of lands surrounding water surfaces made them coveted by the invaders throughout history, and Egypt because of its strategic location and water surfaces variations, had witness a lot of invasions. The golden lands along the life-giving Nile or the coastline of Egypt had always been preferred either by the invaders or the capitalists. National Projects had further contributed to move the original land owners away from their beloved land. This emphasizes the pressing need to address the diverse injustices afflicting these golden waterfront lands.



## Capitalist ideology

Waterfronts are designed in a way that is unjust and exclusionary. For example, **Maspero Triangle** in Cairo, Egypt was a vibrant community of low income residents who used to live close to the Nile. In 2017, the Egyptian government began to redevelop the area, displacing the residents and replacing their homes with high-rise towers. Redevelopment Projects like this was driven by capitalist ideology, which prioritizes profit over social justice. These projects are usually designed for the rich without taking into consideration the original land residents. As a result, the people who were most connected to the Nile River have been cut off from it.

Another example of the Capitalist ideology in Egypt is Alexandria waterfront, that is occupied by the private properties preventing the public from reaching the sea. In **Hurghada** also its public tourist promenade is separated from the beach by a line of expensive resorts. This is a trend that is happening all over the world, and it is having a negative impact on the people who are most connected to the water.

## National projects

**Aswan Dam** is a very important nation project built in 1960, despite its significant benefits, its construction required to relocate 100,000 Nubians from their original lands. Nubians were emotionally connected to the Nile, they used to live near it and can't survive anywhere else. Their Relocation was a traumatic experience. They were forced to leave their homes, land and their beloved Nile and live in a new location away in the desert.

They did not get adapted to the new environment and many of them didn't survive. The Nubian people have never forgotten their homeland. They have continued to fight for the right to return to the Nile.

In case of Egypt, the injustice of waterfront can be seen in three main aspects;

Historical injustice, Capitalist invasion, and National projects. Economic inequality appeared clearly when waterfront properties became more expensive than others, which made people with lower incomes are less likely to afford to live near their beloved water. Another form of the economic injustice is the private developers taking over the waterfront properties that have cultural and historical values and making them inaccessible to public.

## Urban colonial practices (Historical Injustice)

Port Said, for example, is a city of a strategic geographical location. As a result, it had always been exposed to political and economic greed, such as the tripartite aggression. The French engineer Ferdinand de Lesseps tried to exploit the city location and proposed the construction of the **Suez Canal** where the Egyptians died digging it with their own hands. During the city colonization, its reconstruction and urban planning was based on social segregation. The city is divided into districts: "Foreigners' Quarter" with a French layout, and perfect location overlooking the sea and the canal, and the "Arab Quarter" with its narrow streets and poor location away from the water. The colonial urban planning is also seen in other canal cities like **Ismailia** and **Suez**. These colonial practices are very familiar and can be seen nowadays in Israeli settlements in **Palestine**, where locals are displaced from their lands away from the sea, and settlements were established that perpetuate division and inequality.

Our call for the right to return to the golden land, to water and our life all over the world.

What can we do to address injustice?

Ensure that waterfront redevelopment projects and the stakeholders consider the original land owners in their development plan.

This means that they should be designed to benefit all people, regardless of their income or social status.

Promote public access to waterfronts. This can be done by creating public spaces, such as parks and promenades, that are accessible to everyone.

Finally, it is important to raise awareness about the waterfront injustice and taking it into consideration during the design process so we can help to create a more just and equitable future for waterfronts.



# Self-Worth Revolution

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**BUILDING A JUST CITY IN A WORLD OF INJUSTICE !**



**STRIVING FOR EQUILIBRIUM.....**

# LET ME TELL YOU SAD STORY

**IMAGINE**..with me for a moment that you are a seagull soaring east over the Mediterranean Sea, discovering the enchanting coastal area between Jaffa (known as Tel Aviv after 1948) and Haifa known as Dor. This idyllic resort rivals the beauty of Greece, Cyprus, and Sicily, boasting soft sandy beaches, a pleasant ambiance, coral reefs, and lush greenery. Amidst the scenery are archaeological sites dating back to the Bronze Age, a museum, and houses reminiscent of Florida.

Since you're still a seagull who knows nothing about the place, you'll see NAHSHOLIM, a modern resort, standing alongside a peculiar structure—an old Arab-style house that starkly contrasts with its Western and modern surroundings. This unexpected architectural blend adds a unique touch to the coastal landscape, where tradition and modernity coexist in a captivating harmony.

In 1991, a resident of that place decided to build a diving center next to this house. And indeed, he brought workers and equipment and started the drilling. But they suddenly stopped when they found the remains of human bones buried at a shallow depth. So, they back-filled the site, left, and never came back again. Fisherman Fouad Hasadiyeh disputed this, claiming they were Palestinians\_

killed in a 1948 massacre, with mass graves beneath the resort. Tantura, a serene Palestinian fishing village, transformed into Dor in 1998.

Teddy Katz's 1998 thesis, based on interviews with Alexandroni Brigade soldiers who invaded Tantura, revealed a brutal massacre. The invasion on May 22, 1948, was not a typical battle but a massacre. After the villagers' surrender, women were stripped of valuables and expelled, while men were gathered near an Arab House for execution. Boys over 13 were considered men. Soldiers described horrific acts in Katz's interviews, featured in the film "Tantura" by Alon Schwarz. Soldiers shot individuals placed in barrels, and a soldier named Amitzur Cohen said literally while laughing, "I was a murderer. when, He asked "how many do you think he killed?" Actually, he doesn't know and neither do we. He says while **laughing**:

**"I DIDN'T COUNT. I HAD A MACHINE GUN WITH 250 BULLETS, AND I FINISHED THEM, I CAN'T SAY HOW MANY."**

What I am telling you is not the testimonies of the victims, but those of the killers! These are the ones who are supposed to try and tone down the severity of their actions, so imagine it's this horrific after being "toned down". The victims' testimonies are far more horrific.

Until May 2023, "Forensic Architecture" investigated the burial sites of these victims, seeking answers to the haunting question:

**"WHERE WERE THESE PEOPLE BURIED?"**

They brought air-shot photographs of the Tantura village between the years 1946 and 1949. Pictures before and after the massacre. They did an analysis of these images and compared it with current maps of the place and recent satellite images. They did 3D modeling of the changes that occurred and also collected testimonies from people who survived the massacre. They produced a report that accurately identifies the locations of mass graves. The largest two of them, one is located next to the cemeteries of the old village and the second one is located under the parking lot serving a beach and resort.

If you go to Google now and search for these places, the first thing you will encounter is hotel reservations and places for activities.

**THAT IS ALL DESPITE THE FACT THAT ALL OF THIS IS BUILT LITERALLY ON TOP OF EXECUTION FIELDS AND MASS GRAVES, AS IF TANTURA IS A METAPHOR FOR ALL OF ISRAEL..**

Which is a very thin and fragile layer of "Western urbanization" and only meter below

that fragile layer is evidence of **KILLING, ETHNIC CLEANSING, and GENOCIDE.**



## WHY ARE WE TELLING YOU THIS STORY?!

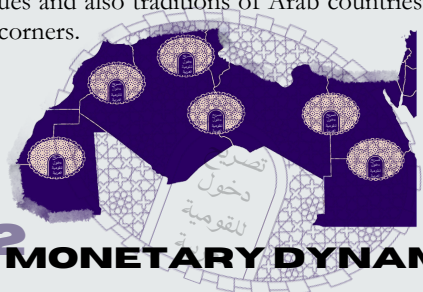
Through Tantura's tale, we attempted to provide a single example of the injustice that has persisted in Palestine and the Arab world as a whole. We began our manifesto with this tragic narrative because we think that stories promote stronger human ties.

For years, we've been taught that we live in the Third World, and that Arabs struggle to enjoy the same basic human rights as people in the West. As a result, over time, these ideals were firmly instilled in us, to the point that we conducted our lives accordingly. However, recent events in the Middle East have made the younger generation conscious of the inequities in treatment, and we have felt compelled to consider methods to create a better and more equitable future.

No longer confined by external ideologies, it presents itself as a solution—a beacon illuminating a path towards unity, transcending divisive narratives and fostering a collective identity rooted in shared heritage and resilience.

## 01 ECLIPSING BORDERS

UNITY has proven to be one of the most powerful ways humans can seek value for themselves. Establishing a common visa system for entry into the Arab countries may become one of the key strategies to enhance regional power and promote unity among dissimilar states. This visa initiative would make it easy to travel across the borders, bringing down barriers such as those preventing economic, cultural and also social affairs. Through the simplification of the entry process, the area will promote a greater tourism flow and trade in collaboration paving for resilient Arabia. Through their free movement across the states, travelers are now diplomats who market the common heritage, values and also traditions of Arab countries to all corners.



## 02 MONETARY DYNAMIC

**HOWEVER**, one of the most essential and powerful strategies unifying Arab countries economically and building a sense of unity among significantly different states is to impose a single currency between all nations. This common currency, temporarily referred to as the "Arab Dinar" for convenience's sake, would facilitate financial operations; promote monetary stability and also foster economic growth in those countries that use it. By preventing the ambiguities arising from changing exchange rates and also minimizing transaction costs, trade conditions would be more easily traversed for businesses across the Arab world thus creating a stable regional economic environment. The Arab Dinar adoption indicates some concrete steps towards economic partnership, thereby establishing a strong posture for joint development and growth.



## 03 PANARAB DIPLOMA

**THE POTENTIAL** of a united Arab diploma system lies in the creation of an integrated and educated region, fostering a strong national identity and enabling individuals to pursue learning freely. The harmonization of diplomas across Arab nations would streamline academic recognition and extend to uniform educational qualifications. This approach not only simplifies the process for students and professionals seeking opportunities abroad but also cultivates a highly skilled workforce with diverse exposure. By eliminating educational barriers and aligning accreditation standards, this system empowers individuals to access learning opportunities anytime and anywhere, cultivating a culture of lifelong knowledge and intellectual exchange.



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# Spatial Justice Manifesto

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# The Manifesto

Our vision for the Just City is as simple and as complicated as the human heart. We want a City that is clean, safe, and beautiful not because it's built or transformed according to the latest trends in Urban Planning or because politicians or the academic community say so. We want a City that feels comfortable and welcoming to all.

A City that anyone can consider their own, defend, and draw inspiration from; a City where no one feels out of place at any moment, day or night. The culture of inclusion is crucial. The recent experience of Covid-19 highlighted the impact of social injustice during critical situations. The differences among the inhabitants of the city in the way they experienced lockdown eloquently demonstrate that despite claims that we've reached the end of history, that day is far from over, and it's not even in sight yet.

Our manifesto consists of four pillars: Safety, Social Equity, Sustainability, Accessibility.

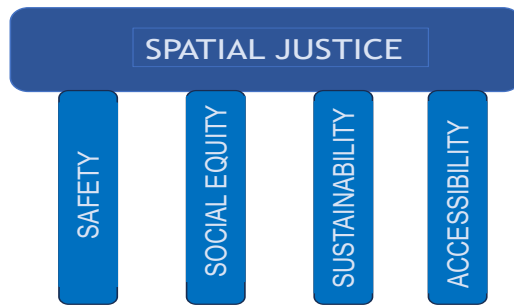


Fig.1: Our Manifesto's four pillars: Safety, Social Equity, Sustainability, Accessibility.

I98  
A Manifesto for the Just City

Volume 4  
I99

## Pillar one: Safety

The manifesto highlights the importance of walkability, mixed-use neighbourhoods, and efficient public transport systems to make cities more liveable and conducive to a better quality of life. It advocates for sustainable urban expansion while considering the well-being of both people and the environment. Careful planning that emphasizes mixed-use neighbourhoods, with residential, commercial, and social spaces, and compact, pedestrian-friendly cities with excellent public transportation, can contribute to the development of better cities.

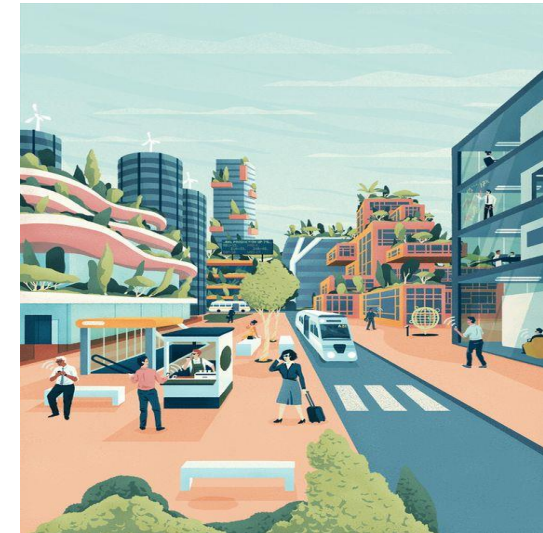


Fig.2: Studio MUTI. Available at: <https://studiomuti.co.za/suddeutsche-zeitung>  
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For cities to be walkable, they should have an active street level, unique architecture, plenty of entrances, a human scale, visual interest, areas where people can gather, green spaces, and a primary pedestrian path. To reduce the impact on the environment, a range of transportation methods should be employed, including larger and faster systems, slower buses, and small-scale services such as bike infrastructure. Avoiding physical barriers to public transit could help reduce its impact on the environment.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the critical importance of care ethics for minority health, especially for Black and Latino populations. Municipalities and cities need to proactively monitor the needs of those who fall through the

cracks of the current system and help those whose rights and interests are not being protected by the status quo. The renewed sense of shared vulnerability and solidarity resulting from the crisis makes progressive planning possible now. This includes care planning that rejects neoliberal individualism, long-term planning that focuses on non-human others, and inclusive planning that addresses ignorance. In the aftermath of COVID-19, planning should reconstruct and re-evaluate human-environment relationships by determining what is most important to each local community.

## Pillar two: Social Equity

Given the unprecedented fact that over half of the Earth's population lives in urban environments, the imperative to persist in securing everyone's right to live with dignity in an environment that permits and promotes social equity, is the paramount target. Our manifesto's conviction is that in order to achieve that goal, we as planners and urban designers, must:

- \* Fight feverishly for the right for good housing for everyone. It's not merely about bricks and mortar; it's about fostering environments where every person, irrespective of their background, can thrive and find sanctuary.
- \* Dare to pursue the seemingly unattainable and confront conflicts when no alternative exists. Our role demands a boldness to question the status quo and challenge norms when they inhibit progress towards an equitable society.
- \* Embrace accountability if plans deviate and be prepared with contingency strategies. We acknowledge that plans might not always unfold as envisioned. Hence, we vow to shoulder responsibility, adapt, and proactively devise alternate strategies (Plan B) when needed, ensuring our commitment to



(Photo by K. Zangelidou)

Fig.3: Photo by K. Zangelidou

social equity perseveres.

- \* Continuously champion the well-being of the vulnerable. Beyond infrastructure and policies, it's about fostering a culture of empathy and support, ensuring that those at risk are not overlooked or left behind.

- \* Evaluate the success of schemes and programmes not solely through financial metrics but also in aspects of prosperity, happiness and satisfaction of people and communities. Our metrics encompass the flourishing lives and cohesive communities that emerge from our initiatives.

- \* Our manifesto delineates not just a set of goals but a philosophy—a dedication to weaving a fabric of society where every individual finds dignity, every community thrives, and equity prevails as an inherent right.

## Pillar three: Sustainability

Cities face numerous sustainability challenges stemming from rapid urbanization, population growth, and resource consumption.

Unsustainable linear models of resource consumption and waste dumping have already strained planetary boundaries, with profound environmental impacts now evident in biodiversity loss, deforestation, freshwater depletion, toxification of lands and waters, and accelerating climate change.

We need a paradigm shift.

Our vision is of resilient, circular, and equitable cities where both citizens and ecology thrive in symbiotic balance.

This requires reimagining the urban landscape around circular metabolic flows that regenerate natural systems; distributed renewable energy grids that free dependence on fossil fuels; accessible public transit linking vibrant walkable neighbourhood's; and climate-wise infrastructure fostering adaptation and resilience.

To achieve urban sustainability, we need:

- \* Renewable Energy Transition Cities must shift to decentralized renewable energy systems at the neighbourhood level based around solar, wind, and geothermal integrated in microgrids with battery storage and innovative thermal grids to radically reduce emissions.

- \* Circular Metabolism Establish closed-loop reuse, recycling, and composting of all organic matter to end wasteful linear flows.

- \* Regenerative Design Mainstream regenerative building practices like green roofs, forested spaces, and passive solar and permeable surfaces enrich soils, absorb emissions, foster biodiversity, boost resilience, and nurture human health through daily contact with nature.

\* Sustainable Mobility Give streets back to people by creating citywide integrated networks for safe walking, cycling, and cleaner, renewable energy-powered public transit to facilitate vibrant neighbourhood's and reduce automobile dependence.

\* Resilient and Just Societies As climate disruption intensifies, critical infrastructure must build preparedness against weather extremes and supply chain disruptions while focusing on social equity, where all residents have fair access to healthcare, affordable housing, green spaces, clean air, nutritious foods, and pathways for realising their full potential.

\* Cities are complex adaptive ecosystems. By aligning cutting-edge design, renewable technology, and nature-based solutions with inclusive community ownership and participation, cities can demonstrate enlightened sustainability leadership. This urban transformation is essential for the planet and for future generations who will live in humanity's shared metropolis. The time to begin is now.

## Pillar four: Accessibility

An accessible city is one that enables mobility and involvement for all people regardless of age, gender, physical ability or other factors. The manifesto's vision of highly walkable, pedestrian friendly cities with robust public transit points directly to accessibility. Compact neighbourhood and human-scale design makes it easier for people with mobility impairments to navigate the urban landscape. Also, the radical change towards renewable energy, regenerative design and resilient infrastructure outlined in this vision provides a vital opportunity to address accessibility barriers in the metropolitan setting. Similarly, minimizing physical barriers and ensuring transportation access for all is key for an inclusive city.

More broadly, an accessible city should be consciously designed for people of all abilities. Creating distributed renewable energy grids at neighbourhood level offers the ability to prioritize access for most vulnerable communities first. Green spaces and infrastructure upgrades should count for accessible pathways and signage from inception through enforceable design standards. Most crucially, resilient and just societies place accessibility at the centre providing healthcare, affordable housing, clean air, nutritious food and pathways for realizing human potential. Accessibility cuts across all dimensions of social equity. Decision making process should include representatives from disability advocacy groups and designers specializing in inclusive practices. The proposed shift towards circular, sustainable cities offers immense promise. But the commitment to inclusive community ownership and participation will only be fulfilled if accessibility takes its place as a keystone element interlinked with renewable technology rollouts, infrastructure upgrades, mobility network expansions and resilience planning. In essence, our Just City Manifesto calls for a structural change - one where accessibility becomes the catalyst for building cities that are safe, sustainable and equitable embodying the principles of justice and inclusivity for all.

## Conclusion

In our pursuit of the just city, we declare that spatial justice shall be upheld through the unwavering commitment to the four foundational pillars: safety, social equity, sustainability, and accessibility—forging a collective vision where every corner echoes the principles of a city that is fair, secure, sustainable, and open to all.

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# A Manifesto for the Micro

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## Why the micro?

When we say 'micro' we include the human, urban and temporal scales: individuals, marginalised communities and the everyday. At the heart of our manifesto, we draw from the lived experiences of individuals in the most unequal city in the world: Cape Town, South Africa. We acknowledge that citizens, like those in Cape Town, feel like foreigners in their own land. The just city transforms the impact of historical injustices of spatial segregation and disenfranchisement. The 'just city' is a continuous process. Introspection, critique and improvement are vital. This manifesto acknowledges the state of transition into a just city rather than a descriptive model of it.

## The just city means marginalised groups belong.

- The just city is people-centred.
- It is a place of activism: encouraging community-based conversation and practising advocacy.

This allows for the identification of dominant discourses which enables activism and action.

- The city must facilitate, at a spatial level, a display or practice of culture and by doing so strengthens cultural identity.

**The just city foregrounds the interdependency of people and systems, human and non-human, to foster connections rather than divisions across social, economic and political divides.**

## The just city needs new narratives.

- It needs to critique the prevailing order or narratives of the era it is in (Goldberg, 1993).
- The individual and their lived

experiences in a community are valued sources of knowledge. It is therefore imperative to shift the narrative of the state to the facilitator rather than the developer (Isandla Institute, 2016).

- The just city understands the significance of community over the state whilst still holding the state accountable: particularly in countering small and large scale corruption which is a significant impediment to implementing projects in many countries in the Global South.

- We believe knowledge of the context is best understood by those people that are situated within all aspects of their landscape.

- *In District Six, a thriving suburb in central Cape Town, approximately 60 000 residents were forcibly removed to the periphery of the city during apartheid. But still, over 50 years later, restitution is yet to be accomplished. In an interview with a displaced gentleman from District Six, he mentions*

**THE 'JUST CITY' IS A CONTINUOUS PROCESS: a transition rather than a descriptive model**

*that it would be difficult to return as the soul has been removed from the largely barren District Six (An Impossible Return, 2020).*

The story that arises from this interview underscores the power of narratives, storytelling, and the interplay between individual perceptions and historical realities. **In the just city, we foreground people's lived experiences.**

**This is a declaration against everyday violence:** the violence that is not "an event or action" nor "explosive and spectacular" (Nixon, 2011) and needs to be undone.

- The future – a just future – needs an active fight against the everyday inequalities – we cannot think about the



future of our city, we cannot think about the large scale without thinking about the voices that have been made small, the everyday wrongs that have become normalised.

- In Cape Town, the most unequal city in the world, Gideon Mathe explains that transport costs are inaccessibly priced for unemployed individuals, and it remains increasingly difficult for him to sell his walking sticks without any permit. These issues make him feel like a foreigner in his own country (Isandla Institute, 2020).

**In the just city, research is done differently. This means between 'speaking to' as opposed to 'speaking for'** (Spivak, 2010).

Gayatri Spivak, postcolonial scholar and critic, advocates for an understanding of the subaltern as 'experts' (Spivak, 2010).

#### The just city:

- requires researchers, practitioners and all professionals to be conscious of their positionality
- prioritises community driven activism and allows a degree of self-governance. It places the means to space-make through identifying small projects that have ongoing impact
- establishes care as a practice
- encourages people-centred approaches and instils a sense of accountability towards others
- needs to look to unconventional, marginalised and sidelined knowledge bases or systems
- There is a need for spaces of dialogue within liminal contexts. Gayatri Spivak writes that the subaltern is hindered by the structured powers within society,

limiting their ability to speak within their context. The term 'subaltern' has progressed from an elitist historiography.

- Now, we have the chance to represent marginalised groups. Our society, specifically in the Global South, is seen in terms of the legacy of empire and Western practices. By employing dialogical research methods and practice, the just city addresses these legacies.

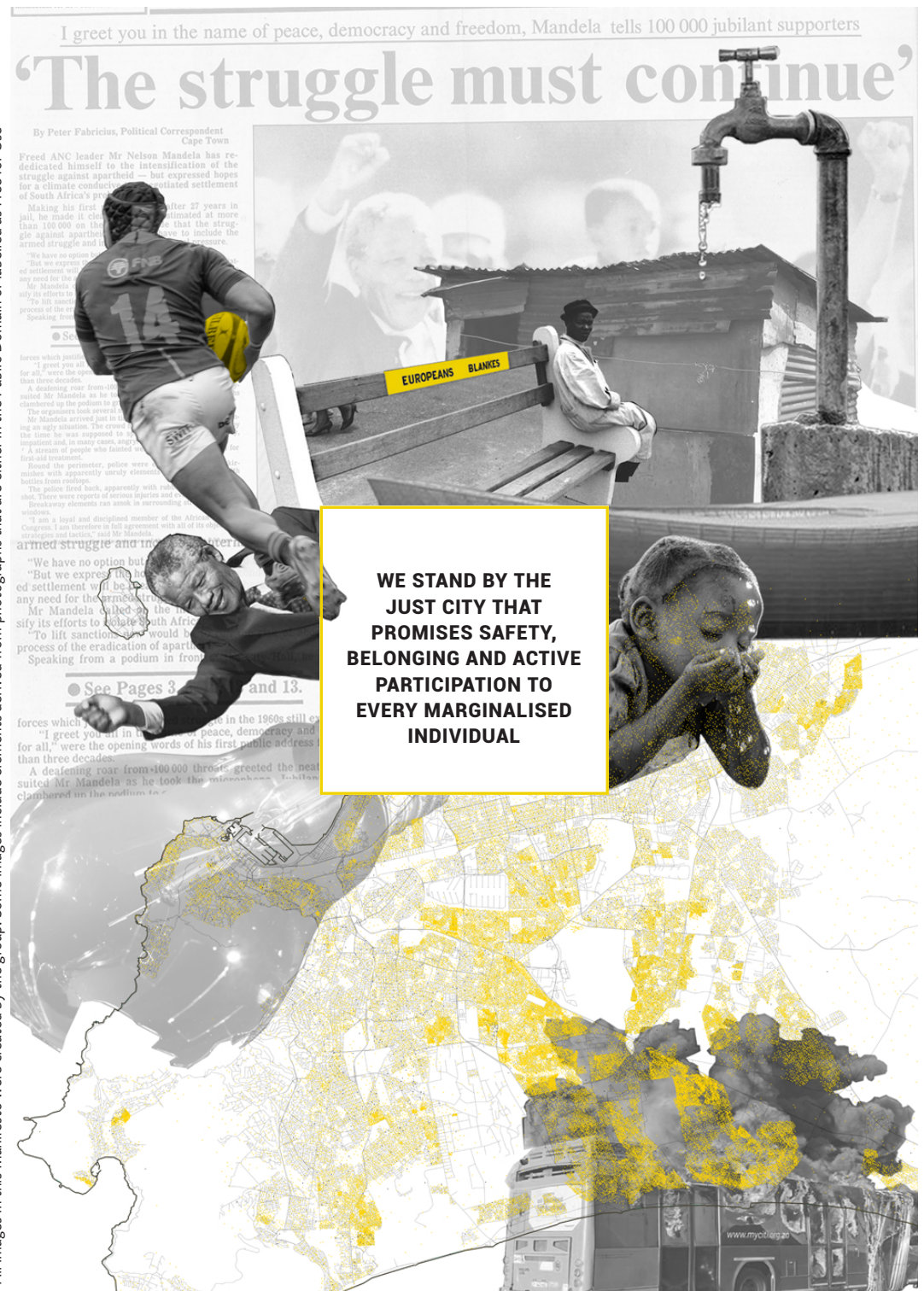
We stand by the struggle to undo historical and structural violence. We stand by the just city that promises safety, belonging and active participation to every marginalised individual.

**WE STAND BY THE STRUGGLE TO UNDO HISTORICAL AND STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE**

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# **URGENT DEMAND** **of affordable and social** **housing resulting** **from densification in** **Cape Town**

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# Our Vision for the Just City

## INTRODUCTION

Our vision for the just city is to advocate for affordable housing that is both accessible and adaptable, fostering a sense of security and pride. We seek to eliminate the stigma often associated with social housing and to create communities that are vibrant, diverse, and inclusive. We recognize that the provision of social housing is not just a matter of economics but a moral imperative, an investment in the future of our societies. The time has come to make our voices heard, to demand action, and to work tirelessly to create a world where everyone can find their place called home. This is our mission, our manifesto, and our collective commitment to social housing. The next information will uncover entitlement to affordable housing, sustainable development, community-centered urban planning, and economic viability.



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## THE RIGHT TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Affordable housing is not a luxury but a fundamental human right, crucial for the well-being and dignity of all individuals. In Cape Town, the absence of affordable housing near the CBD has intensified social and economic disparities, making the right to affordable housing of paramount importance. Affordable housing is more than just a roof over one's head. It's a gateway to better economic opportunities, education, healthcare, and an improved quality of life. The scarcity of affordable housing options in Cape Town particularly affects those with lower socio-economic statuses, intensifying social inequalities. The government and its policies play a pivotal role in ensuring this right. To address the pressing demand for affordable and social housing, the government must proactively implement policies that facilitate access to affordable housing. These policies should not only address immediate housing needs but also lay the foundation for sustainable urban development benefiting all residents. Government intervention, in collaboration with effective policies, is essential to bridge Cape Town's housing gap and create a more equitable and just city. Affordable housing should be accessible to all residents, regardless of their socio-economic status, as it represents a critical step in mitigating social and economic disparities.

## ECONOMIC VIABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY SOLUTIONS

Cape Town's economy is fast growing, and the city is densifying. While this economic growth and densification benefits a category of people, there are others who are struggling to fit in. This puts an emphasis on accessibility and proximity resulting from disparity and high cost of living in Cape Town. While accessibility and proximity are pertaining issues to densification and economic growth, there are solutions that can be adopted and promoted in the resolution of social equity and sustainable livelihood in Cape Town such as \*Integrated living environment and the implementation of special tactics (the tactics encompass live-work typologies, building reuse and repurposing for housing projects, and more). Policymakers must foster partnerships with architects, urban designers, and regional planners to promote the advancement of adaptable, equitable and resilient urban architectural planning.

## COMMUNITY CENTERED URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Looking at the city of Cape Town, it is a fact that the people are moving toward the city rapidly. This is counterintuitively a positive trend, as it is evident that people living in urban environments are better off. With the population expanding, the city is densifying more, and more, and by the year 2030, the city will have a population of more than five million people, of which 2 million will live under the line of poverty due to the high cost of living in Cape Town, and with more people coming to the city, a consequence of this influx is the rise of informal settlements, emphasizing the urgent need for affordable housing—a global challenge tied to urbanisation. The demand for social housing in the city requires a multifaceted approach. One such approach involves focusing on community-centric urban development. This method acknowledges that urbanisation extends beyond providing physical infrastructure and housing units but also involves fostering a sense of community, and social cohesion, and addressing the distinctive needs and aspirations of residents. To tackle the density issue, the city must consider vertical expansion to accommodate families with diverse income levels. There is a huge need for participatory design processes in addressing the challenges of social housing, as it is a crucial endeavour. The answers to solving the right questions lie within the communities themselves, and not exclusively with the architects and designers, attempting to answer right, all the wrong questions. We can look at the work of Alejandro Aravena, who successfully designed social housing for a community with a limited budget and provided a valuable precedent. This can be used in areas such as District Six.



## Conclusion

Our manifesto envisions a just Cape Town forged through urgent action on affordable and social housing amid rapid densification. Beyond mere shelter, we champion vibrant, stigma-free communities, moral imperatives, and investments in our collective future. Affordable housing emerges as a linchpin, a fundamental human right critical for well-being. The scarcity near Cape Town's CBD widens social and economic gaps, necessitating proactive government policies. Our call is for swift measures that address immediate crises while ensuring sustainable urban development and making affordable housing universally accessible. Economic viability and sustainable solutions are paramount in the face of rapid growth. Integrated living environments and strategic urban planning offer pathways to social equity, mitigating the impact of escalating living costs. Community-centered urban development stands as a crucial element. As Cape Town's population burgeons, a community-centric approach fosters social cohesion, meeting diverse resident needs. Embracing participatory design processes inspired by successful precedents is crucial for tackling challenges tied to urbanisation. Our manifesto is a call to action, a blueprint for a just city transcending bricks and mortar. It's a commitment to an inclusive, affordable, and sustainably growing Cape Town. It's time for collective action to turn this vision into a reality, where everyone finds a place called home.

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# Urban Mobility for Social Mobility

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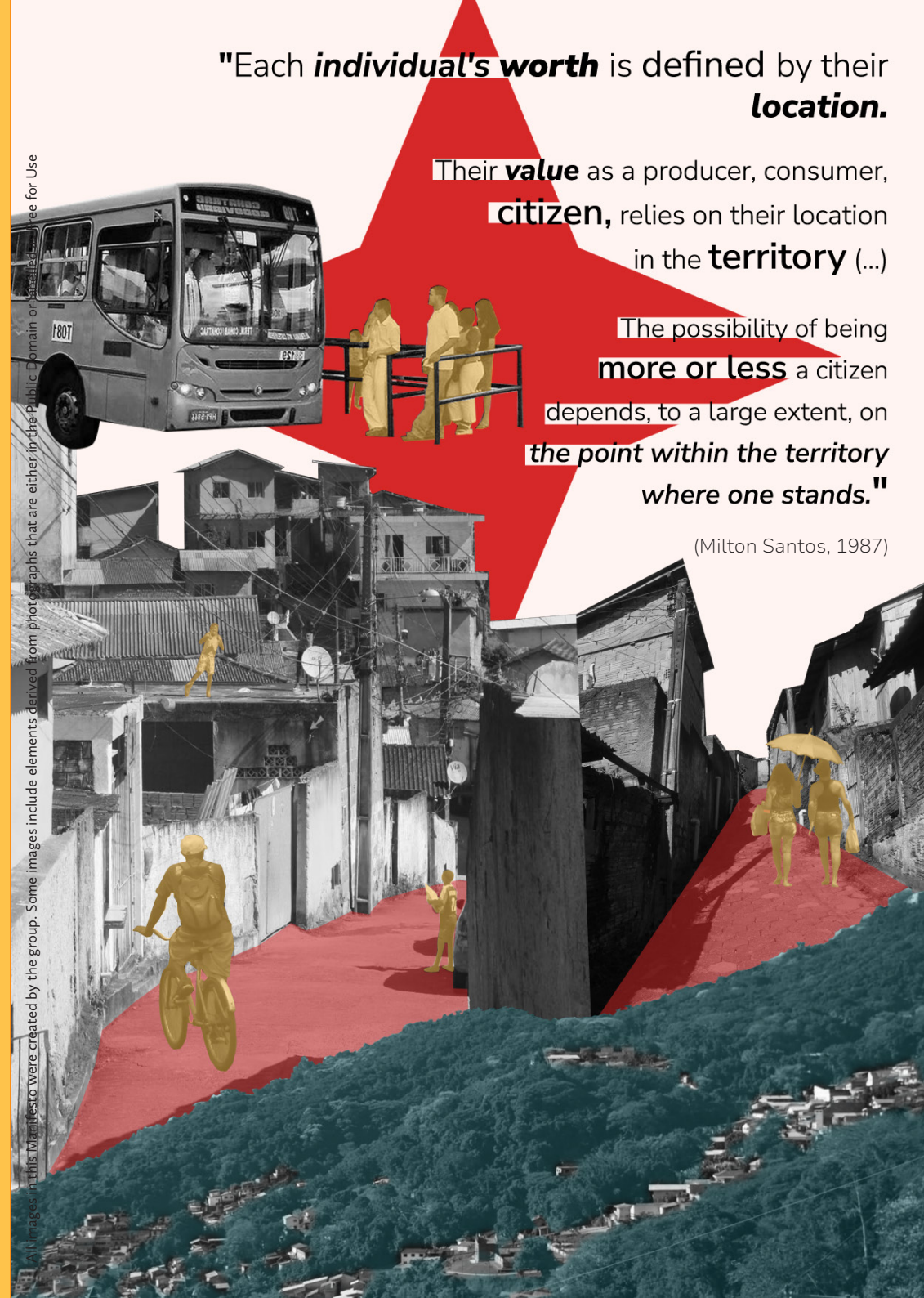
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"Each **individual's worth** is defined by their **location**.

Their **value** as a producer, consumer, **citizen**, relies on their location in the **territory** (...)

The possibility of being **more or less** a citizen depends, to a large extent, on **the point within the territory where one stands.**"

(Milton Santos, 1987)



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The Brazilian constitution echoes: **'you are free to move within the national territory'**. Yet, entangled within these words is an implicit condition: **'if you have the financial means to do so'**. Unlike other public services in the country, such as education and health, urban mobility is not yet recognised as a fundamental social right. The ever-seeking profit approach to transportation, coupled with strong

spatial segregation and the lack of transformative housing policies, perpetuates an unequal society. Beyond that, it creates lifestyles characterized by lengthy and draining commutes and often limited access to the city's offerings. **A truly just city needs to ensure the right to urban mobility to all, regardless of their social class.**

We delve into this issue and explore solutions below.



### Understanding in numbers:

The average public transport fare in Brazil is around R\$4.60 (US\$0.93) while the minimum wage is R\$1412.00 (US\$278). If the worker needs to use public transport for **21 days**, in one month the expense would be approximately R\$193.20 (US\$39.3) or approximately **14% of**

**the monthly salary.** In Brazil, 60% of people live on up to 1 minimum wage per capita and 16 million people live in "favelas". These numbers show that **for the impoverished population, getting around the city is expensive! Expensive not only in terms of money, but also the time spent traveling.**



% SPENDING ON FEES

MONTHLY SALARY

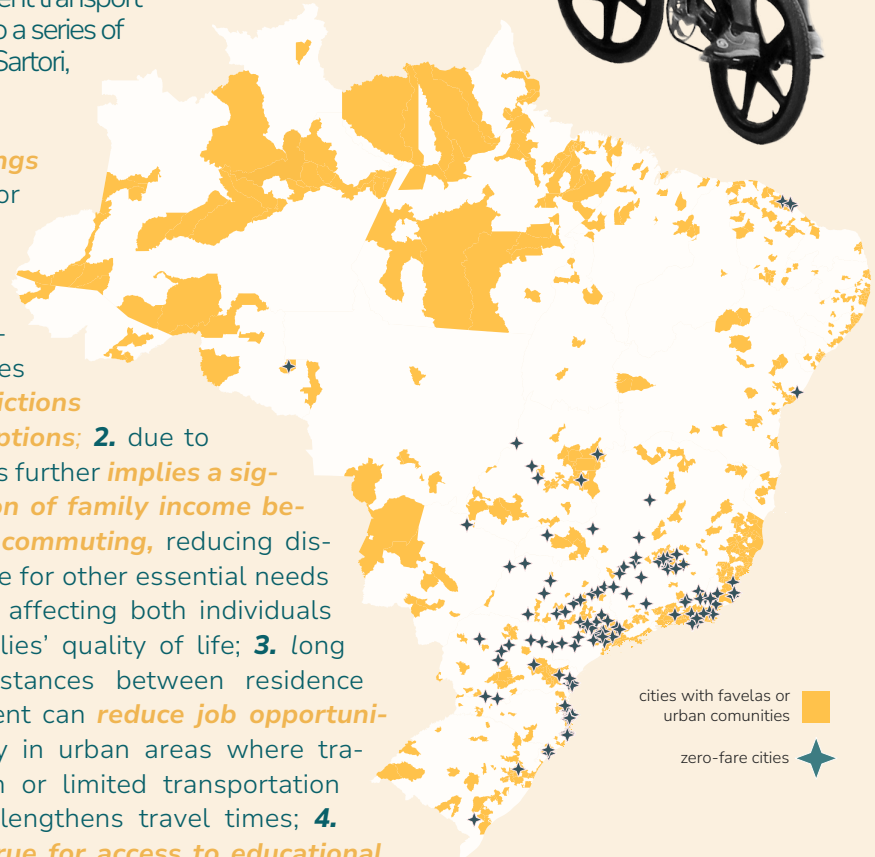
Urban mobility in Brazil is strongly dependent on individual motorized transport and precarious public transport systems. This dependence is further complicated by the spatial distribution of leisure, cultural, and health facilities as well as employment places. While these are often located in more central areas, **housing for lower economic classes is typically relegated to the margins of the urban landscape.**



The use of deficient transport systems leads to a series of consequences (Sartori, 2023):

1. it **prolongs space-time** for the middle- and low-income classes, whose inadequate wages impose **restrictions on mobility options**;
2. due to low wages, this further **implies a significant portion of family income being spent on commuting**, reducing disposable income for other essential needs and adversely affecting both individuals and their families' quality of life;
3. long commuting distances between residence and employment can **reduce job opportunities**, especially in urban areas where traffic congestion or limited transportation infrastructure lengthens travel times;
4. **the same is true for access to educational and healthcare services**, as well as recreational opportunities.

In stark contrast, the higher socioeconomic classes engage more in daily trips for leisure and consumption (Leite Souza, 2016, p. 47), most of the time using individual motorized transport.



At the root of this problem is the fact that **public transport in Brazil is traditionally seen as a paid service designed to make profit** (Leite Souza, 2016, p. 56). Profit-oriented public transport policies can lead to reductions in services or the transfer of fare costs to the passenger. Charging tariffs, calculated in working hours, introduce a contradiction by forcing the worker to bear part of the travel costs, contributing to an increase in their own expenses. **Spatial segregation also burdens the system by, for example, generating dynamics of extensive routes to peripheral regions.** These routes cover longer distances with fewer passengers, decreasing efficiency and sometimes not operating at all.

Closely aligned with that, is **the economic and political interests behind encouraging individual motorized transport.** Since the 1950's, the preference for cars has been implemented in a forceful manner as the main strategy of spatial integration in the territory. Nowadays, **the promotion of this type of transport reveals itself as an active mechanism of social segregation**, continuing to be perpetuated by State policy. Furthermore, this incentive contributes to increasing the insecurity in cities.

Prioritizing cars leads to the expansion of urban sprawl, with cities spreading outwards to accommodate the increasing number of vehicles. This **urban sprawl often results in poorly planned and disconnected neighborhoods.** Public spaces become secondary considerations, with a focus on accommodating roads and parking infrastructure. This shift in urban planning neglects the creation of pedestrian-friendly areas that foster community engagement and surveillance, thereby leaving public spaces deserted and insecure.

In a nutshell: **the current urban mobility system leads to social segregation, restricts freedom of movement, creates less secure**

**cities for their inhabitants and consigns people to enormous time wasted in transit.** This is further exacerbated by the unequal distribution of housing in the city.

We can better understand the interdependence between mobility and decent housing through the example of the “Minha Casa, Minha Vida” program in Brazil. “Minha Casa Minha Vida” (“My house, my life”) is the biggest social housing program in the country aimed at addressing housing deficits and providing affordable housing solutions for low-income families. Launched in 2009, the program is a government initiative that seeks to improve living conditions for the country's less privileged population.

The problematization surrounding the program, despite its qualities (which are many), highlights the construction of housing in peripheral areas, far from urban centers and with difficult access to essential services. This **disconnect between housing policy and an effective urban mobility policy accentuates socio-spatial segregation, compromising equitable access to opportunities and fundamental rights.** Mobility and housing policies need to be developed together to create integrated solutions that address the complex interplay between urban development, accessibility, and social equity.

As a long-standing issue of path dependency, with established cities, roads, and numerous buildings, this problem may appear complex and challenging to address. We claim the opposite; there are two basic yet fundamental changes needed:

1. **urban mobility recognised as a social right, guaranteeing access to all regardless of economic status;**
2. **acknowledging mobility and housing policy as interconnected issues in policymaking to adopt more inclusive and holistic approaches.**

Here is what we propose:

## HOUSING FOR THE LOW-INCOME POPULATION IN CITY CENTERS AND CLOSE TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT:

a new project created by the federal government aims to rehabilitate abandoned buildings in the country's large cities as an attempt to bring these people to more central areas of the city. The focus should be on using the recovered buildings as housing units with social rent for vulnerable groups, especially elderly people. But this is just a step towards fairer cities, the road is still long

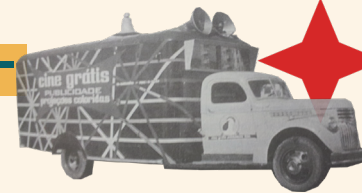


## INTEGRATION ACROSS DIFFERENT MODES OF TRANSPORT:

building structures that better connect different modes of transport is key for making public transport more accessible. This could entail initiatives such as implementing bike lanes close to transport stations and ensuring safe and easy bike access to bus stops

## ZERO FARE! ENSURING FREE, COMFORTABLE, ACCESSIBLE PUBLIC TRANSPORT FOR EVERYONE:

charging fees perpetuates segregation by limiting urban mobility and access to essential resources. The implementation of zero fare represents an opportunity to expand the rights of the most segregated classes and a just city.



*Mobility plays a crucial role in realizing the right to the city and overcoming urban segregation. It ensures the use and appropriation of public spaces and increases the opportunities experienced by people. A democratic mobility system promotes social mobility. When complemented by transformative housing policies, it can create a path towards more equitable cities. A just city is one that recognises housing and urban mobility as fundamental rights, alongside the provision of free, well-integrated, and inclusive public transport.*

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# Weaving for a City of Participation

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# INTRODUCTION



REDUCING THE NUMBER OF OPPONENTS  
REGARDING URBAN PLANNING  
PROJECTS AND PROPOSITIONS

REDUCING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

WHY IS THE PARTICIPATION OF ALL  
CITIZENS AND STAKEHOLDERS CRUCIAL  
FOR DESIGNING JUST CITIES ?

FINDING AN OPTIMUM  
BALANCE BETWEEN  
VARIOUS URBAN PLANNING  
PERSPECTIVES

PREVENTING THE STALLING OF  
URBAN PLANNING PROJECTS

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT CHALLENGES ?  
AND HOW CAN WE FIX THEM ?





# CHALLENGES



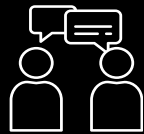
## MODALITIES OF PARTICIPATION AND CONSULTATION ARE OFTEN ORGANIZED AS A PROTOCOL WITHOUT PROPOSALS AND OPPOSITIONS BEING TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION

This conventional approach often overlooks the diverse perspectives and input crucial for informed decision-making. Without a genuine integration of differing viewpoints, the effectiveness and inclusivity of these processes are compromised.



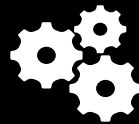
## DICHOTOMY BETWEEN REGULATIONS AND REALITY (AWARENESS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF ADOPTING A PARTICIPATORY APPROACH YET LACK OF PRECISION IN THE MODALITIES OF PARTICIPATION AND REGULATIONS)

On one hand, regulations are crafted with the intention of guiding urban growth and ensuring sustainability. However, their implementation frequently encounters challenges when confronted with the complexities of real-world urban dynamics.



## LIMITED COMMUNICATION METHODS

When communication methods are limited, crucial information may not be adequately shared or understood, leading to inefficient decision-making and potential conflicts.



## LIMITED UNDERSTANDING OF THE TECHNICAL URBAN ASPECTS OF THE PROJECT

Without a comprehensive grasp of these technical aspects, planners may struggle to create cohesive and sustainable urban environments.



## LACK OF AWARENESS OF ONE'S OWN RIGHTS OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Without knowledge of these rights, citizens are often excluded from vital discussions and decisions that impact their neighborhoods and daily lives.



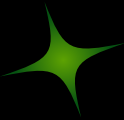
# CASE STUDY



## MOROCCAN MEDINAS: CITIES BUILT BY EVERYONE, FOR EVERYONE



CONSTRUCTING AT  
GROUND LEVEL AND  
NOT SURPASSING  
THE HEIGHT OF THE  
WALL SURROUNDING  
THE CITY



Moroccan Medinas exemplify a population that participated collectively, **even in the absence of legal texts**, in the creation of their living environment, by adhering to a set of principles **to which everyone agrees**



CLUSTERING BUILDINGS AND  
CONSTRUCTING NARROW STREETS TO  
FREE UP AS MUCH SPACE AS POSSIBLE  
FOR AGRICULTURAL LAND AND GARDENS



HOMOGENISING  
BUILDING  
FACADES



BUILDING PLACES OF  
WORSHIP AT THE CENTER  
AND AT THE HIGHEST PART  
OF THE SITE

# THE MAIN IDEA



"A JUST CITY SHOULD FAVOR JUSTICE AND THE JUST, HATE TYRANNY AND INJUSTICE, AND GIVE THEM BOTH THEIR JUST DESERTS" AL-FARABI



**COMMUNITIES ACTIVELY ENGAGED & ALL VISIONS OF STAKEHOLDERS TO BE PRESENT AND ALL VOICES TO BE HEARD**



**GUARANTEE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF URBAN PLANNING PROJECTS**



**SHARED RESPONSIBILITY**

FOSTERING A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY AMONG CITIZENS AND RESPONSIBLES



**PARTICIPATORY APPROACH**

AS MAIN VALUE TO BUILD A JUST CITY

## IN SHORT :

On this manifesto we are thinking to :

- INVOLVE ALL CITIZENS AND STAKEHOLDERS IN THE PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT, AND GOVERNANCE OF THEIR CITY
- ENSURE STRENGTHENS THE BONDS THAT TIE INDIVIDUALS TO THEIR CITY, CREATING A MORE HARMONIOUS AND EQUITABLE URBAN ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL.

## REVOLUTIONISE COMMUNICATION

It is imperative that we enhance our communication channels for disseminating information. This entails not only improving traditional methods of communication but also adopting and integrating new technologies into our communication strategies such as social media platforms, digital newsletters, mobile applications, and interactive websites

## CO—CREATION IS ESSENTIAL

Co-creation is very important. It is an interesting asset to help meeting the needs of all residents regardless of age, social and economic background and status. Building a city isn't a solo act. Bring your friends, neighbors, your pet. Everyone's got something to contribute!

## LET'S CREATE A CULTURAL SHIFT

But how? Raising awareness about the importance of participatory approach is interesting to borrow inspiration from communities. Make the participatory approach a trend like a video on social media! Everyone plays their part, everyone wins the game.

# JOIN US IN TAKING ACTION!



## DEFINING THE HOW

Defining detailed Modalities for Consultation Meetings can be effective and lead to great results. A detailed charter or an equivalent can be a valuable tool to ensure that every member understands the purpose of consultation and focus their contributions on the relevant aspects.

MAKE YOUR CITY COUNT: GET  
INVOLVED IN CREATING A JUST FUTURE



# In the Spirit of Ubuntu: Infusing Cities with Humanity

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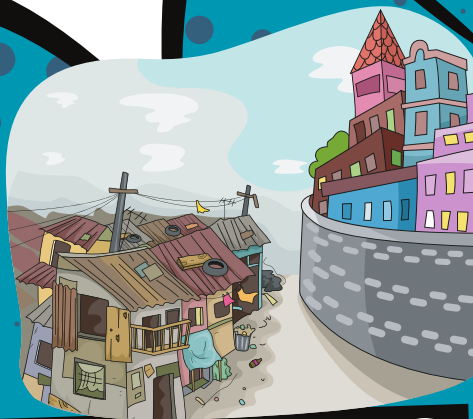


**DESPITE THE 2030 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA HOLDING A SIGNIFICANT PROMISE TO END DISCRIMINATION AND EXCLUSION, ERADICATE POVERTY IN ALL FORMS, AND REDUCE INEQUALITIES AND VULNERABILITIES THAT LIMIT THE POTENTIAL OF INDIVIDUALS AND HUMANITY, THE GAP BETWEEN THE ASPIRATION AND REALITY CONTINUES TO WIDEN AND OUR TRAJECTORY FALLS SHORT OF ACHIEVING THIS CRITICAL GOAL.**

**CITIES PARTICULARLY IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA CONTINUE TO EXPERIENCE INCREASED INEQUALITIES MANIFESTING THROUGH PROLIFERATING INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS, POPULATIONS LACKING ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES, PUBLIC SPACES AND EXCLUSION IN FORMAL PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING PROCESSES.**

**WHAT IS**

**THE REALITY?**



**PROLIFERATING  
PRECARITY: THE RISE OF  
INFORMAL  
SETTLEMENTS**



**OUT OF REACH: THE  
GROWING CHALLENGE OF  
PUBLIC SPACE  
ACCESSIBILITY**



**CITIZEN EXCLUSION  
FROM FORMAL  
PLANNING PROCESSES**



**URBAN DESERTS**

**Food  
Insecurity**



**THIS MANIFESTO BRINGS FORTH A TWO-FOLD ARGUMENT THAT TOP-DOWN DECISION MAKING PROCESSES AND OVERRELIANCE ON MARKET SYSTEMS IN URBAN MANAGEMENT PRACTICES LEADS TO THE MANIFESTATION OF THESE INEQUALITIES AND INJUSTICES IN MOST AFRICAN CITIES.**

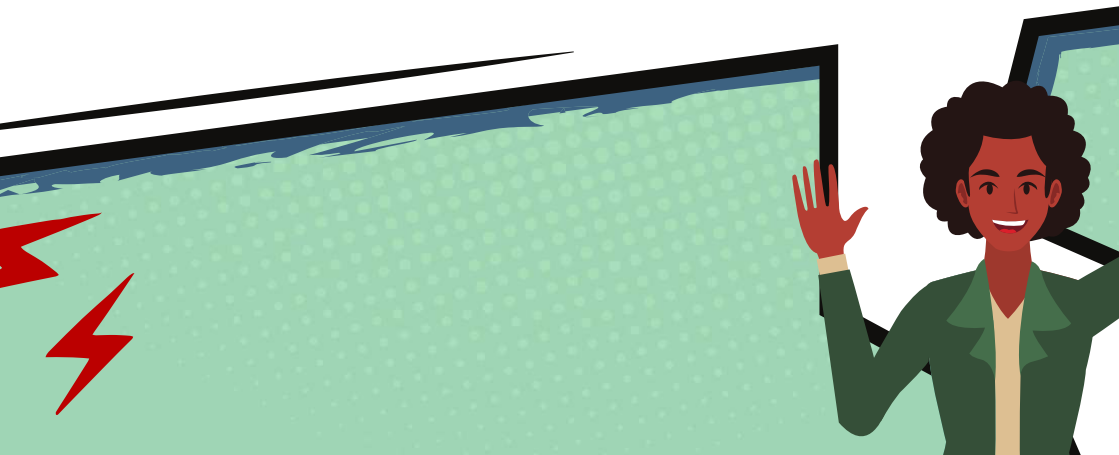






**"LET'S REWRITE THE URBAN NARRATIVE - CITIES ARE NOT JUST BUILT; THEY ARE CO-CREATED!  
JOIN THE MOVEMENT WHERE COLLABORATION MEETS INNOVATION,  
AND TOGETHER, WE SHAPE THE FUTURE OF OUR VIBRANT URBAN SPACES."**

**IN THE SPIRIT OF UBUNTU: INFUSING CITIES WITH HUMANITY  
"YOU MIGHT HAVE MUCH OF THE WORLD'S RICHES,  
AND YOU MIGHT HOLD A PORTION OF AUTHORITY, BUT IF YOU HAVE  
NO UBUNTU,  
YOU DO NOT AMOUNT TO MUCH."  
-ARCHBISHOP DESMOND TUTU**



**1 WE CALL FOR SYNERGISING URBAN GOVERNANCE WITH EQUITY AND INCLUSIVITY  
TO COMBAT THE GROWING CHALLENGE OF PUBLIC SPACE ACCESSIBILITY AND  
DELIVER SAFE, SECURE, HEALTHY, AND ACCESSIBLE OPEN AND GREEN SPACES TO  
THE DIVERSE URBAN POPULATION TO MEET THE NEEDS OF ALL**



**2**

**WE CALL FOR DECONSTRUCTING THE PREVAILING NEGATIVE NORMS IN URBAN  
POLICY, PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING .**



**ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING, WATER AND  
SANITATION, GREEN SPACES AND SAFE AND  
SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT ARE NOT PARTIAL PRIVILEGES  
BUT BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS!**



3



*Break the Bias*

**WE LONG FOR AND AIM TO TRANSFORM CITIES, TO CONTRIBUTE TO A WORLD WHERE DISCRIMINATION AND EXCLUSION REMAIN ERRORS OF OUR PAST, WHERE POVERTY IS EXPERIENCED ONLY IN ACCOUNTS OF HISTORY, AND WHERE EVERYONE CAN PARTAKE IN OPPORTUNITIES AND ENJOY THE BENEFITS REGARDLESS OF WHO THEY ARE, WHERE THEY ARE FROM, OR WHAT THEY DO.**

**END POVERTY & DISCRIMINATION**

4

**WE WILL INFUSE HUMANITY IN CITIES THROUGH UBUNTU EMBODIES A HOLISTIC PHILOSOPHY THAT UNDERPINS INCLUSIVITY, DIVERSITY, RESPECT, COLLECTIVISM, SOCIAL COHESION, CONSIDERATION FOR OTHERS, AND DIGNITY IN LIFE—TOWARDS**

**UBUNTU  
= HUMANITY**

**A WORLD FOR ALL, AND  
ALL FOR ONE, MOVING  
FORWARD TOGETHER WITH  
NO LEFT BEHIND.**

**WHO NEEDS TO  
ACT?**



**GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS**

**POLITICAL LEADERS**



**COORDINATE**

**CO-CREATE**



**CIVIL SOCIETY  
ORGANIZATIONS**

**PRIVATE SECTOR**



**COMMUNICATE**

**COLLABORATE**



**ACADEMIA**

**LOCAL CITIZENS**







# Loop

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the circle  
of life

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coexistence of all dots

“loop”

manifesto for a just city | envision

# "loop"



" the cities are places, stories and experiences stitched together to cohabitate,  
where every journey starts & ends by forming a continuous loop "

A story of a **dot**, who has a will to become something, so it needs to push itself and move ahead. That's how it became a **line**. Now, have you ever noticed a circle or a zero? It's a line in a continuous **loop**, a never-ending journey, the **journey** of life.

There is an urgent need to address the situation at an individual level (at **dot** level), where we position ourselves as the stakeholder and ask, are we responsible enough to make our city, our world, everybody's home? A world where every being exists together in harmony to make it a whole. All it takes is a **will** to act and be the **change** you want to see out in the world.

- potential of streets, pathways, flexible spaces
- spaces under the flyovers as multipurpose
- green pockets as lungs for city

## planning.

- non human-centric / eco centric approach, where we respect all the beings exists in the same ecosystem as a whole.
- considering lives over profits

## beings.

## safety.

- spaces should be porous
- more organised and walkable routes
- ease of access when medical emergencies

- **policies as a whole** (social, political, economic, environmental and spatial)
- transparency
- feedback & reviews implementation

## systems

- considering education as an opportunity
- awareness about the world
- people participation
- overlooking and monitoring

## education

- where the waste produced by one entity is consumed as a food by the another entity and this phenomena forming a continuous loop of zero waste

## loop

## migration

- migration is temporary hence it's not a solution but a problem in itself
- magnet center to be built at multiple areas to distribute and manage everything in a balanced way

## unseen

- what is unseen is somehow unfelt and hence unresolved in this ecosystem

A home where every being lives in harmony. A home where we educate ourselves to understand the complexities of the world and act responsible about it. A home where political agendas and policies are more transparent and ecocentric in approach which take care of (social, economic, political, environment and spatial) all together to contribute in the betterment of the society. There are various layers to a city, some layers are tangible and some are intangible, which can only be experienced as collective. The city responds as a fabric which keep expanding and adapting as per the needs of the surroundings. It holds tremendous amount of potential in the form of streets, pathways, flexible open spaces, green breathers which acts as the arteries to the city, where everything coexist in a very natural way, we can utilise these spaces to the extent of solving or to be vocal about the world's problem in order to make **our collective city, our planet, a better place.**



Our collective motive is surrounding cohabitation, stemming from a loop, a circle of life, with us being collaborative dots in the ecosystem.

# just city

Over the years, we have developed city planning in a rigid grid form, and while we envision a loop, we see the intersection of streets where life comes together as a circle. Through our manifesto, this practical elaboration occurs from our individual experiences towards the aspect of our collective manifesto vision.



230124 4904

the circle  
of life



• This is where a city collaborates to make it a better place

*Have you ever seen a street or a pathway as:*

- As a place to exercise early in the morning
- As a place for parking during the day time
- As a place to play in the evening
- As a place to conduct religious activities at a same time
- As a place to conduct marriage during weekends

# "streets"

- Act as the arteries to the heart, the city
- Connect every space
- Provide a sense of belongingness to everyone
- Invites everyone to interact
- Multi-functional space or a versatile space

• Minimum spaces in maximum cities

• Streets are the only way from where every journey starts and ends

*\*A place to breathe positively and make people reconsider their relationship with long-forgotten areas in the city*



# Transforming Just a City into a 'Just City'

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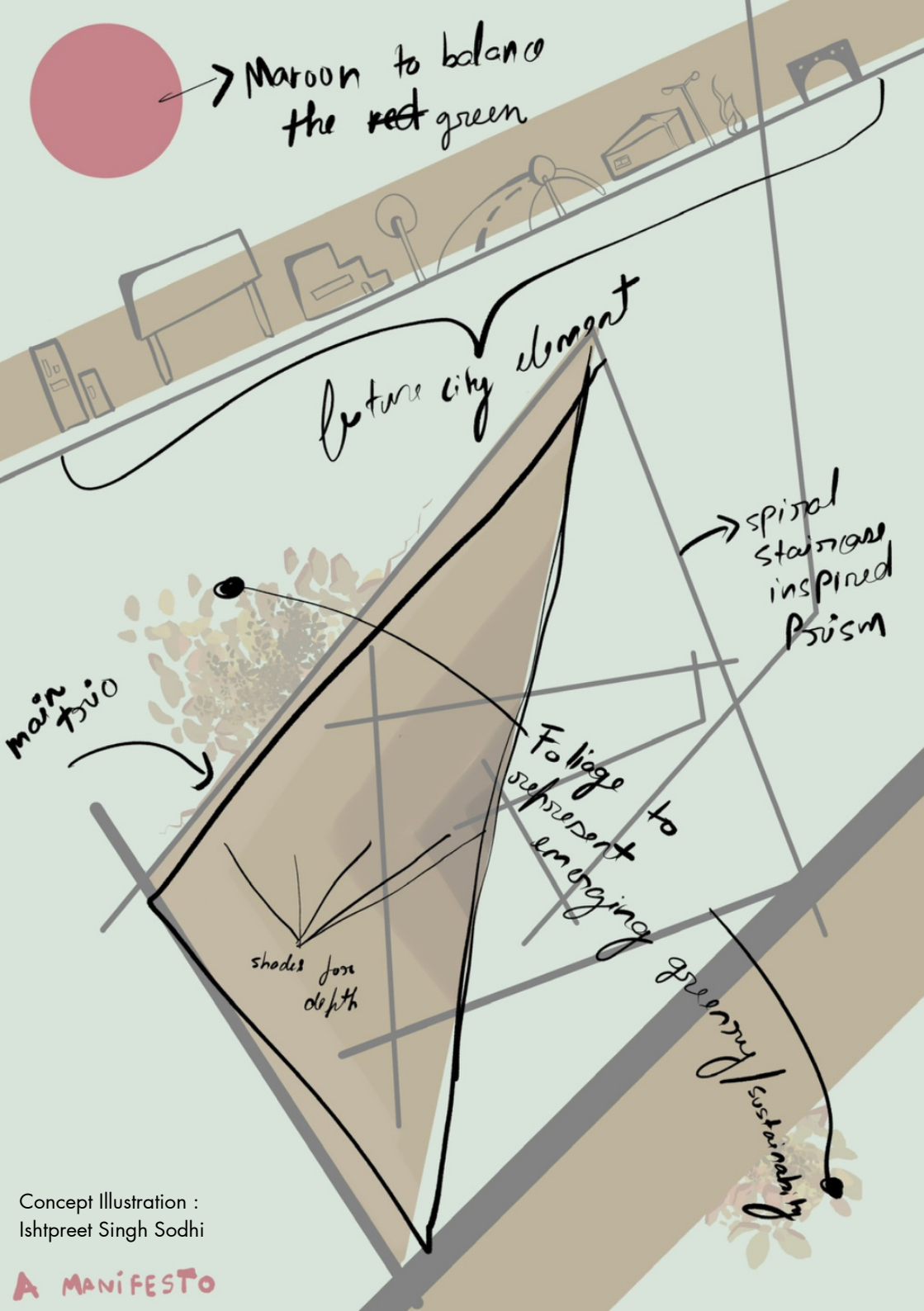
The Design Village, Noida, India

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Illustration : Ishtpreet  
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A MANIFESTO



# Transforming Just A City into A Just City

We advocate for the transformation of Just A City into A Just City. We hypothesize that Natural Justice must prevail in A Just City.

We conceive of A Just City as a Biome, where Natural Justice prevails, and where Homo sapiens (Latin for 'wise man') adjust.

We seek the building of new communities of people who work with nature, for the people, to be used by the people.

We ask not what your city can do for you, but what you can do for your city.

We propose that urban greenscape make the paradigm shift from offering just its beauty to just offering beauty through its bounty.

We expect citizens to actively engage in the act of growing food in urban pockets, farming produce at any scale for themselves and for others, and offering their excess space, resources, expertise, and patronage to make a city a Naturally Just Biome.

Accessiphilic Equitomorphic InclusivorganismTransforming Just A Cityinto A Just City

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A MANIFESTO

# Addressing Climate Equity Concerns in Urban Planning through Citizen Science

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The relentless expansion of the global economy, driven by an ever-increasing population, has placed an immense environmental burden on the planet, leading to growing conflicts over resource distribution. Alarming evidence reveals that those societies least responsible for climate change often bear the brunt of its consequences. These marginalised communities lack the resources and capacities to effectively respond to climate-related hazards. At the same time, paradoxically, those contributing most to climate change tend to possess the means to mitigate its impacts, resulting in profound social and environmental inequities.

"Addressing Climate Equity Concerns in Urban Planning through Citizen Science with Spatial Justice" acknowledges that involving community members in data collection and analysis can help protect their rights and address environmental and other forms of injustice. "Spatial justice" underscores the significance of considering how space and location affect the distribution of resources, opportunities, and environmental impacts within urban areas. They are interconnected through their focus on leveraging citizen science and spatial justice principles to promote sustainable urban development, address climate equity issues, and advocate for environmental justice in the context of urban planning.

This manifesto outlines a vision for a just city, emphasising transformative approaches to climate action and inclusivity, prioritising systemic change. It underscores the importance of citizen science, data activism, and serious gaming in co-producing knowledge for equitable urban planning. The manifesto also advocates for governance transparency, access to opportunities, and amplifying the voices of vulnerable communities, all guided by the principle of a theory of change for sustainable, resilient, and just urban futures.

# Our Vision Board for a Just-City

1

## Envisioning climate action and inclusivity;

through a transformative lens,  
advocating for systemic change  
over adaptive approaches,  
ensuring sustainable and  
equitable urban futures for all.

2

## Mainstream information, knowledge and data sets;

co-produced through citizen science on  
mapping of vulnerable communities  
formed by underlying equities into  
planning and strengthening local  
institutional capacities.

3

## Champion the principle of access to opportunities;

being a cornerstone of spatial and climate justice.  
Envision a future where every individual, regardless  
of background, enjoys equitable access to resources  
and opportunities to tackle challenges posed by  
climate change and spatial injustice.

4

## Advocate for climate and spatial justice;

by ensuring that vulnerable communities  
have a platform to voice their concerns.  
Amplifying these voices to drive  
meaningful change through serious  
gaming and migrant urbanism.

5

## Foster data and knowledge co- production platforms;

between city governments and civil society.  
Devise and apply inclusive measures through  
citizen science for co-beneficial actions.

6

## Empowering communities through data activism;

where spatial justice is championed  
through equitable access, citizen-driven  
data to democratize climate information,  
and the collective pursuit of fairness in  
urban areas.

7

## Integrating tacit knowledge and collaborative creation;

elevates the calibre of climate data and serves as a  
potent driver for climate action. Empowered  
communities, possessing profound insights into local  
climate nuances, are poised to embrace sustainable  
behaviours and champion well-informed policies.

8

## Advocating for transparency in governance;

underscores the imperative of empowering civil  
society to ensure accountability and  
transparency in governance for cities that are  
truly equitable and inclusive.

9

## Champion the theory of change;

as a guiding principle, advocating for strategic  
interventions that catalyze sustainable urban  
transformations, promoting justice, equity, and  
resilience.

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# A step-by-step guide to dance on our rooftops

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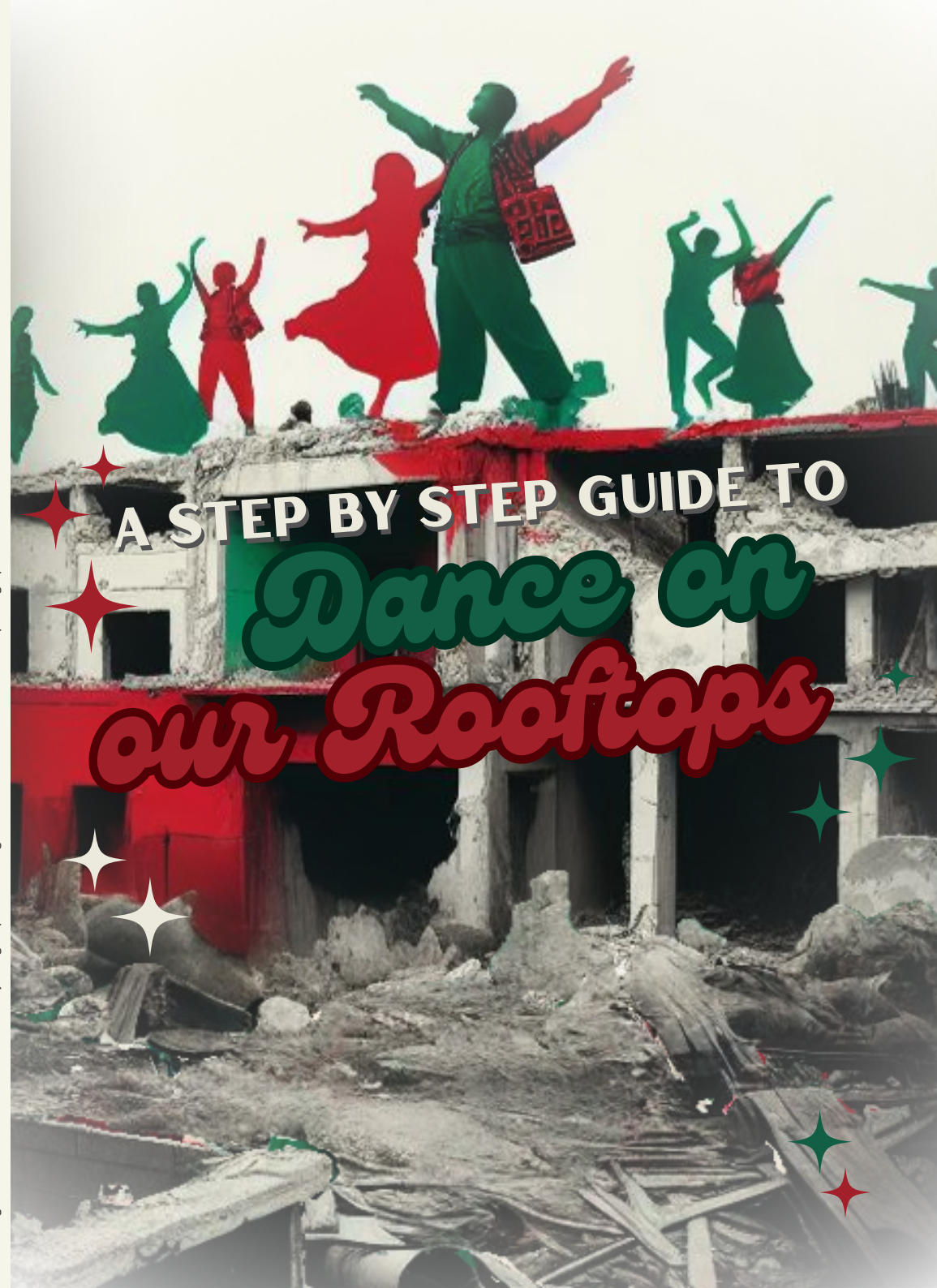
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## A step by step guide to dancing on our rooftops

The Israeli evacuation of 2005 where the army left Gaza after bulldozing 3000 buildings was met with a protest from Benjamin Netanyahu, the then finance minister saying- “The palestinians will be dancing on our roofs”. This comment came as a concern to the ideological broadcast of Arabs living in the homes of the jews and turning their synagogues into mosques.

To read the guide as a manifesto, replace the following words with-  
Dance- identity, rhythm- use, stage- roof, Lose control- Decolonization

**Step 1:** To set up your dance, one needs to wait for the right moment: A time when the stage is empty. This happens when there is a power vacuum. The new rhythm is not set, and the old ones are now gone. (P.S. It doesn't always have to be a rhythm!)

**Step 2:** Before starting, one needs to acknowledge the presence of the previous performers, but remember to not let them set the tone. Its your stage!

**Step 3:** It is important to view the stage not as a divisive tool but to foster a shared sense of community. It is a stageless solidarity that is rooted in friendship and intellectual curiosity. Your dance is a representation of you and is bound to be complex and different.

**Stage 4:** There is power in your dance. It can start a movement. So channel it to transcend the borders of the stage and join in on a secular, democratic and an inclusive journey! Lose control to truly feel your dance!

**Stage 5:** For a dancer, losing control is a truly radical transformation. It widens the vision to unleash new horizons. Pro tip: Do not fear profanation while losing control. Simply dance to feel in sync with yourself. When you profane you sway to your child-like rhythm!



The aftermath of colonial rule is always infused with the predicament of urban usage. It is a tussle between the newly articulated “independence” and a power vacuum waiting to be filled. At the forefront of these desires is the occupation and reappropriation of colonial infrastructure. It was always about the roof, and never about the dance.

But our guide to dance is about finding a roof in the rubble. It is an interpretational tool that orients one away from destruction while still living in cognizance about the potential of the rubble being a tombstone. Our dance is a commemoration of those who are still here.

Our dance consists of dominos of disorientation and reorientation. The complexity of our dance finds a roof on the streets when the hospitals are turned to dust. We commemorate our streets for they truly take the meaning of our healing spaces. Our solidarity is transcending and endless. The open-ended transformations act as passages that lead the way to greener pastures.

Our manifesto to dance finds power in solidarity. Colonialism has often left shockwaves of violence inflicted upon the indigenous population by their own brethren. But even through these marks our rubble makes space for the people to inhabit and negotiate amidst the colonial remnants of a deformed space and geography.

The politics of our dance dwells in the now. It is secular, democratic and inclusive. It denounces acts of violence and looks for cracks and loopholes in the existing power structures rooted in separatist ideologies through unorthodox temporalities. We demand for our end state politics to be rooted in solidarity.

Our dance is an act of lifting a stone and placing it on top of another, and then repeating it till the time it builds a post, a wall, and a room. Our roof emerges from the material reality of the existing world. It is a memorial for the fallen and a sanctum for the reborn. Each stone from the river to the sea has undergone its own tactical struggle and stood still in time for it rings of the home it was before and the home it will be, someday.





Our dance is patient. It is waiting to trace back its route to home. However, someone is waiting to go. The time it spends away from home is a minute longer than it spends in the endless presence of homelessness. The battered conversations of return are riddled in the futile political negotiations. It acknowledges the temporality of the wait as each day that turns into years of no return.

Our return starts with each step. Every step that takes us closer to home. It is a profane dance of defiance. The movement towards our homes is symbolic of the united struggle to fight against histories of injustice. Our dance takes us on a pilgrimage leading to extraterritorial geographies in the search of our lost homes. The spirit of our walk is optimistic and hopeful, it is the return to one's own place of origin.

It is the return, the soul and zeal of a refugee's life that becomes the driving factor for our decolonization. It is the struggle of gaining and losing a home. The home resides as a yearning, and the displaced dwell in its memories. This manifesto acknowledges the constant struggle of reappropriation of the refugee homes as ephemeral habitats of the ancestral homes.

Our manifesto also tends to make peace with the reality of never being able to go back to the ancestral home. It is a looming reality, and even after the return looks like a future conception, we will plan for our right to return. We hope our private owners decide the fate of their land to express their autonomy over it.

To return is to come back to a land of one's own. Either the private plot and the community existing in urban space due to the act of commoning. Dancing on the roof looks around for traces of public space, or life that is cultivated through the act of commoning. But only when we return can we turn a land into a city, and make a city that is for all.

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# The Just City: Space to grow while weaving relationships in the urbanscape

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**A JUST CITY** is one where communities may thrive and be healthy, where children and youth can grow safely while weaving their relationships and networks through the intertwining threads of everyday life, negotiating tensions of conflicting occupations and presence, and building a community.

**A JUST CITY** is a space of inclusivity welcoming those entering it. It provides space for neighbours to work side-by-side, building a shared space for their community to co-create, co-renew, co-adapt, and co-invent collaboratively so that forms of living together may be cooperatively shaped and reshaped.

**A JUST CITY** needs space to be flexible to adapt over time and/or cyclically across functional timeframes and environmental circumstances while offering opportunities for community use, shared use, and space for inclusion.

**A JUST CITY** provides space for children and youth to learn and foster negotiation, peace, and compromise. Public spaces can provide a platform for the everyday lives of individuals and households to interconnect with each other, finding and negotiating space for co-existence while navigating the complexities of difference – race, nationality, colour, body ableness, language, religion, politics, social status – and to find shared commonalities through which threads of relationships may be woven.

**A JUST CITY** must be a space for healthy learning and playing, exploring freedom safely. It must have spaces where tensions may be dissipated for inclusion and greater access, making it more democratic for individuals' and groups' free and authentic expression. It must allow for a spatial sense of belonging and identity.

**A JUST CITY** provides safe spaces where networks are created, and occupations are shared, weaving community from intertwining threads of shared living.





“Não me sinto à vontade por tudo, porque no centro da cidade há muito movimento, muita mistura, muita qualidade de tudo, o centro da cidade é para onde vai tudo. Eu não me sentiria à vontade nisso, aqui sim. Por exemplo, aqui à minha porta, nem passam carros, então eu até o meu menino eu deixo aqui à porta e está a minha mais velhinha a olhar para ele porque aqui não há carros, não há nada. **NO CENTRO DA CIDADE, NÃO!** Por tudo, pelas pessoas, pelos carros, por o movimento. **NÃO HÁ SOSSEGO, HÁ MUITO MOVIMENTO...COM AS CRIANÇAS, NÃO DÁ.”**

In the city centre, I feel uncomfortable with everything because there's much movement, a lot of mixing, and much quality of everything. The city centre is where everything goes. I wouldn't feel comfortable there, but I do here. For example, here on my doorstep, there aren't even any cars. So I leave my little boy here on the doorstep, and my eldest is looking at him because there are no cars here, there's nothing. **NOT IN THE CITY CENTRE!** Because of everything, the people, the cars, the movement. **THERE IS NO PEACE, THERE'S TOO MUCH MOVEMENT...IT'S NOT POSSIBLE WITH CHILDREN.**



“**SIDAE POS-KONFLITU** prezisa aumenta opsaun atu halo atividade sira, liuliu ba joven sira – atu aseguira estabilidade – porezemplu...**OPSAUN BARAK LIU TAN HANESAN FATIN PÚBLIKU** atu sira bele hela... ohin loron joven sira iha difikuldade boot atu hetan **FATIN ATU HASORU MALU...**”

A POST-CONFLICT CITY needs to have more options for activities, particularly for the youth... – to ensure stability – for example...**MORE OPTIONS FOR PUBLIC SPACES** for them to be in...nowadays the youth have tremendous difficulties in being able to **FIND PLACES TO MEET UP...**



**TIMOR-LESTE**



“धोबियों की दैनिक आजीविका का समर्थन करने के लिए इस स्थानीय जल निकासी को धुलाई क्षेत्र में विनियोजित किया गया है। जल निकासी के आसपास यह **स्थान** धोबियों के परिवारों द्वारा साझा किया जाता है। दिन के दौरान हम यहां कपड़े धोते और सुखाते हैं, बच्चे उसी जगह पर खेलते हैं जो बाद में रात के दौरान बाहर सोने के लिए उपयोग किया जाता है।”

This local water drain is appropriated into a washing area; dhobi ghat to support the daily livelihood of washermen in the neighborhood. The SPACE is shared by the families of washermen that surround the water drain. During the day we wash and dry the clothes here, children play in the same SPACE that later during the night is used for sleeping



**PORTUGAL**

**TURKEY**

**INDIA**



**ROMANIA**

“25 yıldır aynı mahallede oturan ev hanımıyım. 3 çocuğum var. Oturduğumuz bölgede hep **ALT GELİR GRUBU** var. Bu nedenle, İstanbul kent merkezinde yaşayanlar (kent merkezini Beşiktaş ve Beyoğlu (Avrupa Yakası), Kadıköy (Anadolu Yakası) olarak tanımladı)) asla bizim oralara gelmez. Bizler yeni insanlarla tanışmadan hep mahallemizdekiler ile görüşürüz. Sanki İstanbul'da yaşamıyor gibiyiz, ben mesela **HİÇ DENİZİ/ İSTANBUL BOĞAZINI** görmedim...”

For 25 years, I have been a housewife living in the same neighborhood. I have three children. Our area is always populated by the **LOWER-INCOME GROUP**. Therefore, those living in the city center of Istanbul (defining the city center as Beşiktaş and Beyoğlu on the European side, and Kadıköy on the Anatolian side) never come to our area. We always socialize with people from our neighborhood without meeting new people. It's as if we don't live in Istanbul; for instance, I have **NEVER SEEN THE İSTANBUL BOSPHORUS...**



“Sunt un cățel simplu, cutreierând **ORAȘUL DE BETON**. Am blană, nu port pantofi, am doar patru lăbuțe. Știu că iarna e grea pentru voi cei cu două picioare. Zăpada cade, trotuarele devin alunecoase și zi de zi aruncați cu sare ca și cum ar fi confetti. Știu că pentru **VOI** e un **CONFORT ȘI O SIGURANȚĂ**, dar pentru mine orice plimbare e o încercare **DUREROASĂ**. Simt că e puțin **NEDREPT**. Hai să facem **ORAȘUL CONFORTABIL** și pentru **GHETUȚE** dar și pentru **LĂBUȚE!**”

I'm just a pup, cruising through the **CONCRETE JUNGLE**. No fancy shoes for me, just these four paws taking me places. I've noticed winters are a bit rough on you two-legged beings. The snow falls, the sidewalks get slippery, and you start **TOSSING SALT** around like it's confetti. I get it, you're after **COMFORT AND SAFETY**, but every **STROLL** for me turns into a **PAINFUL ADVENTURE**. Feels a tad **UNFAIR**, doesn't it? Let's figure out how to make this **CITY COMFORTABLE** for both **YOUR BOOTS AND MY PAWS!**



# Interviews

- Former member of government.** (July 2019) Place: Dili, Timor-Leste. Language: Tetum
- Mother of two children in Contumil Social housing neighbourhood.** (May 2022), Place: Porto, Portugal. Language: Portuguese
- Washerman in Dhobighat.** The washermen's neighbourhood. (September 2023). Place: Dharavi, Mumbai, India. Language: Hindi
- Mother of three children in low-income neighbourhood.** (November 2023). Place: Istanbul, Türkiye. Language: Turkish
- A Romanian dog** (January 2024), Place: Copenhagen, Denmark. Language: Romanian.

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# The Involvement of Community Engagement in Smart Cities for Urbanisation Development

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As current society becomes increasingly urbanized, the need for reclaiming the city development from vitalism has risen. The concept of Just City reflects the urbanisation labels of being smart, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable (Nederhand et al., 2023). Correspondingly, The Manifesto for the Just City 2023 recognizes the importance of community engagement in planning and implementing smart city initiatives. Archer et al., (2014) review of the literature concluded that the involvement of community stakeholders in the development of these initiatives not only leads to more equitable and inclusive cities. Therefore, it ascertains that the needs and preferences of residents are taken seriously (Heyland et al., 2003). In this way, the Just City 2023 manifesto encourages all stakeholders involved in the process of smart city development to prioritize community engagement, thereby enhancing the quality of our work, and promoting truly sustainable, fair, and inclusive cities.

The application of smart city stakeholder engagement presents how smart cities is co-produced in the living lab (Paskaleva et al., 2015). As a result, the smart cities need and benefit smart citizens simultaneously. Engaging community stakeholders in smart city planning can have several advantages (Snow et al., 2016). Firstly, it can provide valuable knowledge and expertise that can only be available otherwise. This will aid in pinpointing the distinct requirements and obstacles that are particular to the local situation. This is to ensure that smart city initiatives are tailored to meet these needs. Secondly, the participation of the community can foster cities that are fairer and more inclusive. This ensures that the advantages of these initiatives are spread more uniformly among the populace. By interacting with marginalized groups and vulnerable communities, we can tailor smart city initiatives to meet specific challenges. These obstacles can pertain to aspects such as mobility, accommodation, and the utilization of public amenities. To sum up, the holistic interactions between stakeholders and the smart city are in various way and tend to become rigorous participation (Shamsuzzoha et al., 2021). Consequently, the vigorous participation of the community plays a vital role in constructing sustainable and fair smart cities. These cities are designed to serve the needs of every resident.

The vigorous participation facilitates the strategic inclusivity in developing and managing the smart city, highlighting the engagement of public solving socio-spatial conflicts (Aurigi, 2016; Ogryzek et al., 2021). Sayce et al., (2013) demonstrated that for effective engagement with community members during the planning phase, adopting diverse strategies is crucial. This method ensures that all voices are heard and contemplated. This may include holding public meetings, conducting surveys, creating online forums, or hosting workshops and exhibitions. These techniques can foster dialogue and cooperation between community members and smart city planners. This is a way to ensure that local voices and concerns are duly considered.

Moreover, tools such as data visualization, digital participatory mapping, and social media can facilitate the collection and incorporation of community input

into smart city initiatives. Data visualization couples with haptic or kinaesthetic interfaces, making it possible to capture body language, human touch, and expression (Bouloukakis et al., 2019). Digital participatory mapping is the maturity assessment to ensure a successful transition toward sustainable smart cities (Bouzguenda et al., 2020). The communication via social media analyses residents' and visitors' engagement, offering a human-oriented perspective for smart city planning and management (Molinillo et al., 2019; Miah et al., 2022). By leveraging these tactics and tools, city planners can foster inclusive and participatory processes that enhance the quality and relevance of smart city initiatives.

These tools highlight the role of community engagement in delivering smart city innovations (Mazhar et al., 2017). Successful smart city projects prioritize community engagement as a critical element of smart city deployment. Mazhar (2017) carried out a number of investigations into the several cities have effectively implemented community engagement practices. In Barcelona, for instance, the city government created a digital platform (Decidim Barcelona) that allows residents to propose and vote on urban development projects (Smith et al., 2022). The practice of participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre, Brazil, introduces techniques that involve citizens (de Sousa et al., 1998). Specifically, these methods allow citizens to have a role in the distribution of public funds. This approach allows the residents to have a lead that influences the allocation of public resources. Therefore, this system is empowering for residents as it gives them a direct influence. Specifically, they have the possibility to voice their thoughts on the allocation of public resources. In both instances, the outcomes were highly successful, leading to improved results. In 1998, Healey et al. published a paper in which they described this success fostered increased trust between citizens and the government, promoting a more collaborative approach to urban development. These examples demonstrate that community involvement can lead to impactful and beneficial smart city initiatives. It is because the dynamic engagement of indigenous communities lays a foundation of public participation in the smart city development (Goodman et al., 2020).

The integration of the community in smart city initiatives presents numerous benefits, yet it also brings forth several challenges that need to be addressed. These challenges include a lack of awareness and trust between community members and city officials, limited access to technology or digital literacy, and language barriers (Agbali et al., 2019; Agbali et al., 2019) emphasize the importance of improving citizen participation and awareness through competitiveness, as seen in Amsterdam's smart city initiatives (Agbali et al., 2019). Furthermore, the study by Hamamurad et al. (2022) highlights the varying degrees of acceptance of smart city technology among different cities, indicating that resident requirements play a significant role in the adoption of smart initiatives (Hamamurad et al., 2022). Therefore, the active engagement of indigenous communities in the development of smart city initiatives is crucial for ensuring that these initiatives are flexible and responsive to the needs of the community.

By addressing the challenges and implementing the suggested solutions, city planners can foster collaborative and inclusive smart city development.

The active participation of the community is crucial for the development of sustainable, equitable, and inclusive smart cities. This approach ensures that the needs and aspirations of the community are genuinely addressed, tapping into the knowledge and expertise present within local communities (Agbali et al., 2019). Participatory governance is recognized as an essential element in realizing planned smart cities, emphasizing the importance of involving the community in decision-making processes (Lim & Yiğitcanlar, 2022). Furthermore, the redefinition of smart cities to encompass culture, metabolism, and governance highlights the need to integrate community values and social dynamics into the development of smart city initiatives (Allam & Newman, 2018).

In line with the importance of community involvement, it is essential for every stakeholder involved in smart city initiatives to prioritize community engagement. This simultaneous collaboration is key to ensuring that the benefits of smart city initiatives reach all residents, irrespective of their background or social status. The review of smart city assessment tools provides a framework for evaluating the impact of smart city interventions, emphasizing the need to consider the diverse needs of the community and the effectiveness of the initiatives in addressing them (Patrão et al., 2020). As we move forward with the Manifesto for Just City 2023, it is imperative to maintain the importance of community involvement at the forefront of planning and implementation processes. By integrating the insights and perspectives of local communities, smart city initiatives can be tailored to address the specific needs of residents, fostering a more inclusive and sustainable urban environment. By synthesizing the insights from these reputable sources, it is evident that community involvement is fundamental to the success of smart city initiatives, ensuring that these initiatives are responsive to the diverse needs of the community and contribute to the development of just and inclusive cities. Therefore, the involvement of community engagement increases the inclusivity and sustainability of smart city growth by promoting both stakeholders' advantages and active participation of the public.



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# A Decolonised Just City in Practice!

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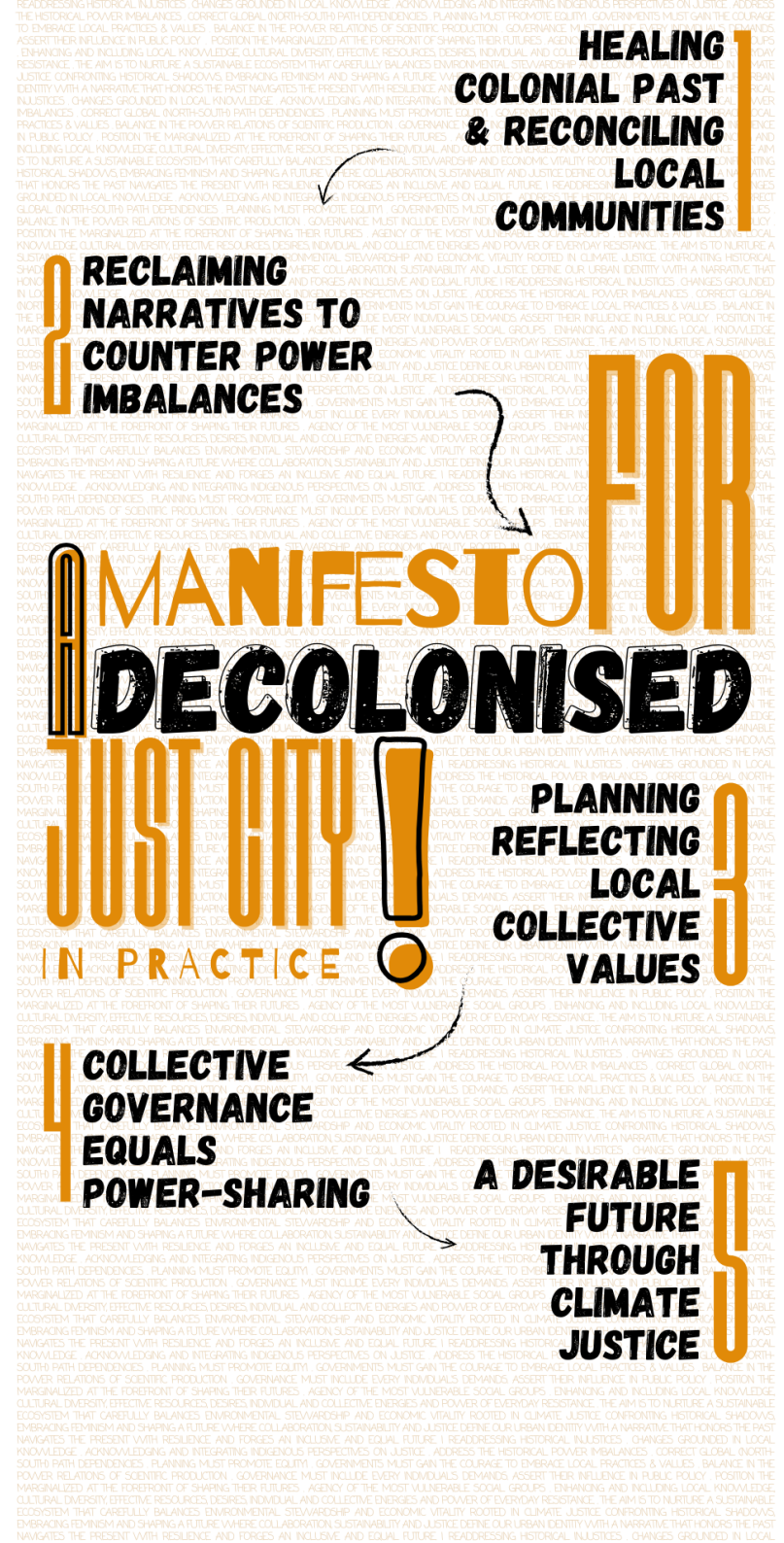
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## HEALING COLONIAL PAST & RECONCILING LOCAL COMMUNITIES

ACKNOWLEDGE AND READDRESS HISTORICAL INJUSTICES THROUGH STRUCTURAL CHANGES GROUNDED IN LOCAL KNOWLEDGE. FOSTER COLLECTIVE HEALING AND RECONCILIATION TO ARTICULATE COLLECTIVE NEEDS FOR DECISION-MAKING IN THE TERRITORIAL PROCESS.

## RECLAIMING NARRATIVES TO COUNTER POWER IMBALANCES

ACKNOWLEDGE AND INTEGRATE INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES ON JUSTICE. ENSURES THAT GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES ADDRESS THE HISTORICAL POWER IMBALANCES AND CORRECT GLOBAL (NORTH-SOUTH) PATH DEPENDENCIES.

# A MANIFESTO FOR A DECOLONISED JUST CITY! IN PRACTICE

## PLANNING REFLECTING LOCAL COLLECTIVE VALUES

PLANNING (EDUCATION & PRACTICE) MUST INTEGRATE NARRATIVE DIVERSITY, ENDORSE DEMOCRACY, PROMOTE EQUITY, AND DISPLAY PLURAL CONTEMPORARY URBAN REPRESENTATIONS OF SPACE. CITY GOVERNMENTS MUST GAIN THE COURAGE TO EMBRACE LOCAL PRACTICES AND VALUES. THERE MUST BE A BALANCE IN THE POWER RELATIONS OF SCIENTIFIC PRODUCTION.

## COLLECTIVE GOVERNANCE EQUALS POWER-SHARING

CITY COLLECTIVE GOVERNANCE MUST EMBODY EVERY INDIVIDUAL'S DEMANDS. TAKE THE INITIATIVE TO ASSERT THEIR REPRESENTATION IN PUBLIC POLICY DEVELOPMENT, ECONOMIC DECISIONS, AND STRATEGIC URBAN DEVELOPMENT. MUST AIM TO POSITION THE MARGINALIZED AT THE FOREFRONT OF SHAPING THEIR FUTURES.

## A DESIRABLE FUTURE THROUGH CLIMATE JUSTICE

IN OUR DECOLONISED JUST CITY'S TAPESTRY, WE CULTIVATE THE AGENCY OF THE MOST VULNERABLE SOCIAL GROUPS TOWARDS ITS IMAGINATION AND 'WEAVING' BY VALUING, ENHANCING AND INCLUDING LOCAL KNOWLEDGE, CULTURAL DIVERSITY, DESIRES, INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE ENERGIES AND POWER OF EVERYDAY RESISTANCE.

THE AIM IS TO NURTURE A SUSTAINABLE ECOSYSTEM THAT BALANCES ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AND ECONOMIC VITALITY ROOTED IN CLIMATE JUSTICE. CONFRONTING HISTORICAL SHADOWS, EMBRACING FEMINISM, AND SHAPING A FUTURE WHERE COLLABORATION, SUSTAINABILITY AND JUSTICE DEFINE OUR URBAN IDENTITY WITH A NARRATIVE HONOURING THE PAST, NAVIGATING THE PRESENT WITH RESILIENCE AND FORGING AN INCLUSIVE AND EQUAL FUTURE.

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# Rally! A Manifesto by Albano, Arreglado, Cabuco, and Sundo

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A MANIFESTO BY ALBANO, ARREGLADO, CABUCO, AND SUNDO

# RALLY!

## SECURE SPACES, SECURE VOICES

Communication is at the heart of progress; it is the only way to a better future. For all of human history, expressions of hope for change have and continue to be worth the risk to life and body. A better future must leave that risk behind. Public spaces that host speech are vital to communities. They must be designed to promote spatial awareness in ordinary people using light and clear sightlines. Designers must provide ample outdoor lighting to deter shady activities. They must expose spaces to avoid isolating potential victims from witnesses.

## RAMPS OVER BARRIERS

The freedom to express oneself is an inalienable human right. Beyond protecting people from discrimination and repression, we must also remove barriers and empower people to overcome their individual challenges. The built environment should ensure people with disabilities access to their spatial and social place in the public sphere with minimal difficulty. Designers should locate elements for people in wheelchairs along the shortest paths to minimize travel distance. Unique textures in flooring should be used to inform and direct blind people using walkers and walking sticks about the areas they move into.

## DIGNIFIED, DIGNIFYING

Expression and communication are dignifying activities for the individual. They are the tools by which people grow into becoming members of their community. Public spaces must be equally dignified through proper care and maintenance. Through orderliness and cleanliness, they can enhance the quality of interactions and encourage respect and honor for the public sphere. Designers should favor materials and forms that are resilient to wear and tear and maintained at low cost and effort. Ordinary citizens should keep these spaces clean by taking trash with them and preventing damage to public property.

## MEANING, CLEAR AND CRISP

The act of communication always has meaning, no matter how important or not. To cry, to grumble, to make noise, all of these acts of communication have a hidden meaning, no matter how insignificant it may seem. The intent of action or communication done in a space can also determine the atmosphere of the place, whether it is a gloomy, unsafe space, or a welcoming and homey gathering place. Designers must always keep in mind the social aspects of design, how it may subconsciously communicate meaning to the users. People must also remember that the intent of a place may change with how they utilize it.

## TO KNOW, ONE MUST SEE

Any act of communication is ineffective if it cannot be seen or observed unobstructed. Expression of thoughts and opinions must be visible to the masses for it to be spread and transferred, as in interaction and communication that the people can form their own beliefs, thoughts and opinions. Designers must care to increase visibility of space whether through the site location, through the use of appropriate signages, or other design strategy. The space must be maintained and cared for, as the natural elements and non-maintenance may result in the space being hidden because of trash, plant overgrowth and unkempt appearance.

## SYMBOL OF AN IDEAL

The act of communication is not always an individual or direct effort. Many times representation is necessary to convey the general idea or belief of a community at hand. For those afraid of speaking, for those who are under difficult circumstances and the rest, representation ensures that viewpoints do not create misunderstandings and miscommunications, and that everyone's ideas are communicated in a concise and proper manner. Officials in charge or representatives must ensure that everyone within the community attempts to participate or make their voices heard in important matters that can affect them. Citizens and community members must ensure that their voices are properly heard and represented.

## INCLUSIVE SHARED SPACES

To promote better communication and expression, spatial practices that consider minorities such as women, children, PWDs, and racially diverse people as its users must be implemented. These social spaces are the means by which people's thoughts and ideas can be shared and that they should create an atmosphere with a sense of community and belonging, making individual people feel heard and included. This will ensure that there is an increased activity of citizen participation towards the improvement of the built environment.



# HOMEVOLUTION

## Building Tomorrow's Infrastructure Today

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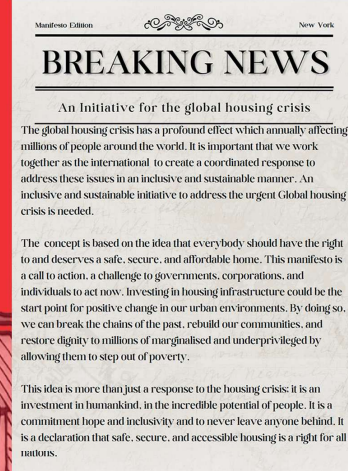
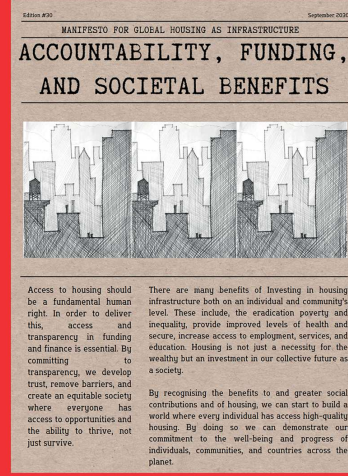
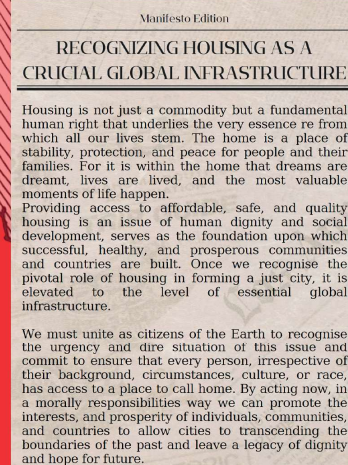
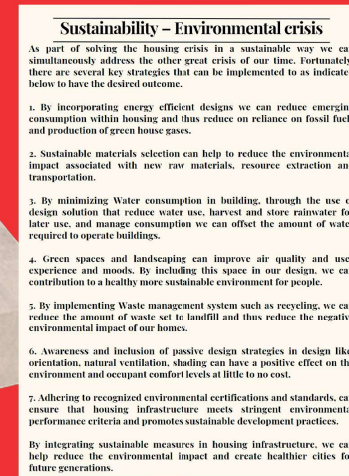
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# RENOVATE REJUVENATE REGENERATE

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**RENOVATE  
REJUVENATE  
REGENERATE**  
a manifesto

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# REGENERATIVE ARCHITECTURE ON A MICRO LEVEL

## in the context of Cape Town

### OUR OBJECTIVES

Our objectives are to develop the rich diverse tapestry of Cape Town through the renovation and restoration of existing buildings that are situated within the urban framework. Thus, promoting sustainability in the Cape Town built environment while also celebrating the history and culture of micro-communities already present in our pre- and post-apartheid society. In order to uplift and develop the macro-climate of Cape Town, we need to address the micro-climate and their communities as such. This is evident in the success of the Old Granary situated in the French dominated suburb in the city which will act as a case study for this manifesto to show how it can be done successfully in an urban context.

### OUR CHALLENGE

Cape Town is home to many various cultures, ethnicities and histories that need to be accommodated for within the urban framework, therefore the challenge lies in addressing this need for developing communities on a micro level. Rapid urbanization is prevalent in the Cape Town CDB but is neglected in the outer parts of the city that need the most attention. These areas have succumbed to homelessness due to housing shortages and rapid inflation, environmental degradation and poor infrastructure as they have essentially been abandoned by the local government that have promised these amenities. These areas have been impacted the most by apartheid regimes and still have not recovered because of it, our challenge is to uplift these communities through the celebration of cultural and historical contexts using architecture as the main driving force.

### OUR VISION

Our vision is to uplift **East City Precinct** communities through regenerative and restorative architecture as well as sustainable design practices, using pre-existing structures and integrating new modern elements to rebuild the infrastructure and in turn providing housing and public facilities such as hospitals and schools, as well as job opportunities in areas where it's most needed.

### WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN & HOW

Primarily, an analysis of the buildings will need to be conducted so that we understand structural, social and historical context of the area. Beyond that, we would need to apply sustainable design practices and principles such as adaptive reuse and repurpose of discarded materials and products, water conservation, energy conservation and the selection of materials that align with sustainable design. The existing buildings have their flaws, studying them gives us an opportunity to correct them in alignment with the modernized standards and principles. Furthermore, we can ensure that these rejuvenated buildings are not contributing to our ever-deteriorating environment by using the existing primary structure of the building as a base of reconstruction and renovation. Refurbishing the building with products that are made by eco-friendly rated company, products that have a good life cycle and products that can be sourced easily limiting high transportation needs reduces the carbon footprint of the buildings. These were not considerations that were made when the buildings were being built, so our vision could significantly improve the buildings' standing and "health". This ensures that we inject new life to these structures without the destruction of its pre-existing one.

### WHO NEEDS TO BE INVOLVED

For our vision to be realized, we need involve the local community and those that frequent the East city precinct often. Their input would greatly inform our decisions and ultimately, our plans and ideas. Our vision will only be successful if the people that will use it embrace the project. Incorporating local labour into our plans develops another layer of intimacy that ropes in the local community. Furthermore, the use of the rejuvenated and renovated existing buildings will need collaboration with various parties. An open invitation will be extended to Government and Local Authorities, the private sector and NGOs giving them the opportunity to be involved in the rejuvenation project. The possibility for these buildings to be used to serve in a governmental capacity, private sector or public means is dependent on the discussions that follow this initial projection. However, the primary step of rejuvenating these existing buildings creates a structure that can support any of these projects.

# THE OLD GRANARY MUSEUM, A SUCCESSFUL CASE STUDY

## by GAPP Architects & Urban Designers

### CASE STUDY CONTEXT

The **East City Precinct** has been increasingly well-liked by both business and artistic types quietly. The coffee capital of Cape Town, designated by the city as a unique design and development zone, has been gradually fostering its culture, with prominent figures like Haas and the steampunk-inspired Truth Café staking claim to a portion of the pavement. The **periphery** finds itself acting centrally as an urban mediator between the revitalized District Six and the Cape Town City Centre, because of its diversified usage and density, the East City Precinct has witnessed significant change throughout time. The precinct had previously been neglected, underdeveloped, and had a vague sense of location and intelligibility. It also seemed somewhat isolated from the inner city. In addition to the East City's substantial residential population, the region is home to several government agencies with sizable workforces and regular patrons as well as several educational institutions with sizable student populations.

One of the living examples that inform both the past and future of the precinct and extend to the entire city is found in the **Old Granary building**. This architectural landmark went through irregular phases and functions that have been extremely opposed for 200 years. It had played the role of the city granary, women's prison, magistrate's court, customs house and the offices of public works. But today, it stands as a monument of peace, a museum that celebrates Archbishop Desmond Tutu. The restoration was done with respect to its past functions, following the standard guiding principles of restorative buildings which is "to do as little as possible to the building but as much as is required". The restoration also aimed to bring a futuristic aspect, by introducing modern expertise and materials that weren't even developed 200 years ago. Picture frame stainless steel was positioned wherever new openings occur as well as other new elements were created. That is the beauty of this rejuvenation, the elements stand in contrast to the pre-existing structure that is coherent, portrays accurate contextual history and culture and accentuates that the present starts now.



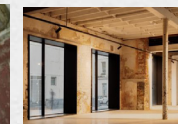
BEFORE: external plaster along the Longmarket Street facade.  
Photographs: GAPP Architects & Urban Designers



AFTER: Integration of existing and new elements.  
Photographs: Markus Jordaan



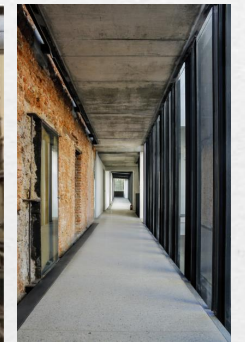
BEFORE: Floor joists to be supported by the steel portal frame.  
Photographs: GAPP Architects & Urban Designers



AFTER: Integration of existing and new elements.  
Photographs: Markus Jordaan



BEFORE: Floor joists to be supported by the steel portal frame.  
Photographs: CCT



AFTER: Integration of existing and new elements.  
Photographs: Markus Jordaan

### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, our objectives center on the revitalization of Cape Town's rich urban tapestry through the renovation and restoration of existing buildings within the East City Precinct. This approach aims to promote sustainability in the built environment while celebrating the history and culture of micro-communities, addressing the need for development on a micro level. The success of the Old Granary serves as a case study, illustrating how this manifesto can be implemented successfully in an urban context. The challenge lies in uplifting communities that have been neglected, particularly in the outer parts of the city, impacted by homelessness, housing shortages, environmental degradation, and poor infrastructure, exacerbated by the lingering effects of apartheid. Our vision focuses on regenerative and restorative architecture, incorporating sustainable design practices, adaptive reuse of materials, and community involvement to rebuild infrastructure, provide housing, and create job opportunities. Analyzing existing buildings allows us to understand structural, social, and historical contexts, correcting flaws in alignment with modern standards. Collaborating with various stakeholders, including government, local authorities, the private sector, and NGOs, is crucial for the success of our vision. By rejuvenating existing structures with eco-friendly practices, we aim to inject new life into these buildings without contributing to environmental deterioration. The involvement of the local community is paramount, ensuring their input informs decisions and garners support for the project's success. Ultimately, our vision seeks to transform the East City Precinct into a thriving hub, bridging the gap between revitalized areas and the Cape Town City Centre, fostering cultural growth and inclusivity. Revitalize, Renovate, Restore: Weaving a New Chapter into Cape Town's Urban Tapestry.



# A Manifesto for Spatial Justice in Urban Mobility

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In the pulsating heart of our urban landscapes, a silent crisis unfolds, masked by the cacophony of daily life: the challenge of urban mobility. This is no mere inconvenience; it is a barrier that divides us, deepens inequality, and stifles the vibrant potential of our urban spaces. The congested arteries of our cities, choked with endless streams of vehicles, tell a story of missed opportunities, of time stolen from our lives, and of a collective yearning for spaces that breathe, connect, and thrive.

The repercussions of this crisis extend beyond the frustratingly long commutes. They manifest in the air we breathe, tainted by the emissions of countless cars; in the noise that invades our homes and spaces of solace, leaving a trail of stress and anxiety; and most critically, in the widening chasm of social inequality. The underprivileged, who already navigate a labyrinth of urban challenges, find themselves further marginalized by a transportation system that fails to acknowledge their needs, their aspirations, and their right to the city.

In the midst of conflict, ensuring safe and accessible transportation transcends mere logistics; it becomes a vital conduit for hope and healing. As roads and transit systems, once lifelines of normalcy, become battlegrounds, the resilience of mobility networks is paramount. They not only facilitate crucial humanitarian efforts and safe passages but also knit together the frayed edges of communities, laying down the groundwork for recovery and unity. Championing spatial justice in such times means advocating for these lifelines, recognizing that the journey towards peace is underpinned by the universal right to move safely and freely.

Yet, amidst this adversity lies an unprecedented opportunity—a chance to reimagine our urban ecosystems, to weave a new fabric of connectivity that champions equity, sustainability, and inclusivity. This manifesto is not merely a critique but a clarion call to action, an invitation to embark on a collective journey towards a future where mobility is not a privilege but a fundamental right, accessible to all.

## • Empowerment through Accessibility

Our first decree is the prioritization of public transportation. We envision a future where efficient, reliable, and high-quality transit systems become the backbone of urban mobility. Imagine buses and trains that are not only frequent and punctual but also affordable and accessible to all, irrespective of age, ability, or economic status. This vision demands bold investments from our leaders—not just in the physical infrastructure but also in the human dimension, ensuring that public transit becomes a dignified and desirable choice for all.

## • Innovation as a Catalyst for Change

We stand on the brink of a technological revolution that holds the promise to transform our urban landscapes. We advocate for the seamless integration of technology into the fabric of public transportation. Real-time updates, electronic payments, and smart planning apps should not be luxuries but standard features that enhance the user experience, making public transit more adaptable, efficient, and in tune with the digital age. This technological leap can bridge the gap between demand and supply, creating a transportation network that is truly responsive to the needs of its users.

## • Community at the Core

The essence of our cities lies in their people, and it is their voices that should guide the future of urban mobility. We call for a paradigm shift in the planning and implementation of transportation policies—one that places community engagement at its heart. Public forums, participatory planning sessions, and transparent decision-making processes should become the norm, ensuring that the blueprint for our urban mobility reflects the diverse tapestry of needs, dreams, and aspirations of our communities.

## • The Green Path

Sustainability is not just a choice but an imperative for the survival of our urban centers and the planet. Our manifesto champions a holistic approach to urban mobility, one that embraces green transportation options as integral elements of the public transit system. From expansive networks of bike lanes to electric buses, every step towards reducing our carbon footprint is a stride towards a healthier, more sustainable future. It is through these green pathways that we can begin to heal our cities, making them resilient in the face of climate change and beacons of hope for a sustainable world.

## • A Vision of Unity and Action

This manifesto is more than a document; it is a vision of unity and action. It is a call to each one of us—citizens, leaders, and visionaries—to unite in the pursuit of spatial justice, where mobility transcends physical movement to become a catalyst for social equity, economic opportunity, and environmental stewardship.

We envision cities where the right to move freely is not determined by one's socio-economic status but is a shared communal asset, fostering a sense of belonging and community. We dream of urban spaces where children can breathe the clean air, where the elderly and disabled navigate with ease, and where the pulse of the city beats in harmony with the rhythm of sustainable progress.

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In this journey towards spatial justice, we all have a role to play. Whether it is through advocating for better policies, participating in community planning, adopting sustainable modes of transport, or simply by engaging in the dialogue for change, every action counts.

As we stand at the crossroads of history, faced with the daunting challenges of urbanization and climate change, let this manifesto serve as a beacon of hope and a roadmap for action. Let us embrace this moment not with trepidation but with the courage to dream, to innovate, and to act.

For in the quest for spatial justice, the freedom to move is not merely about traversing space but about breaking down barriers, connecting communities, and unlocking the full potential of our urban landscapes.

Together, let us move forward, not just as inhabitants of our cities but as custodians of their future, champions of justice, and architects of a world where mobility is a right, cherished and accessible to all.

**For mobility is more than movement; it is the very essence of our freedom, the lifeblood of our communities, and the cornerstone of our collective future.**

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# Manifesto for Water Just City

## A case for Jaipur, India

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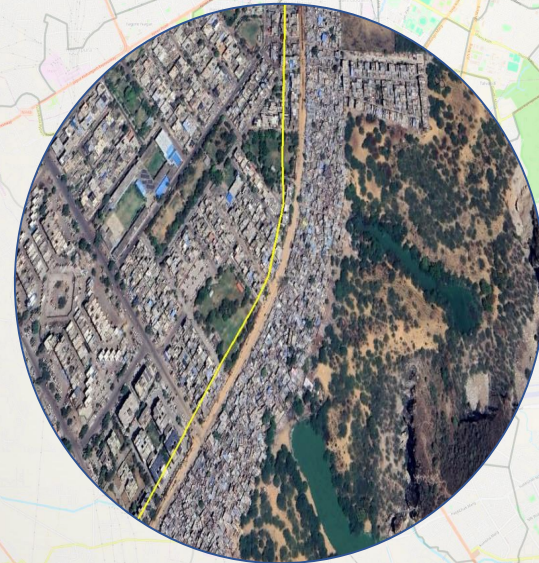
University of Rajasthan Jaipur, India

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**S**patial justice comes with the 'right to the city', which gives power and rights to the citizens to shape the city accordingly. It discusses how social inequalities are manifested through spatial arrangements (Soja, 2009; Chatterton, 2010). It is not only a mere share of the common resources that a just city calls for, but the very essence of sustainable urbanism for a growing urban future. The just distribution of society's needs is of prime concern due to the existing multi-layered segregation by socio-spatial nature of poverty, discrimination, and political support (Moroni, 2020). In such unjust urban spaces, ensuring accessibility, inclusivity, and democracy remains a major challenge.

Urban planning studies advocate 'spatial justice' as the fair distribution of resources, opportunities, and services across city spaces. Policies and initiatives of a just city strive to eradicate gaps and provide equal access to amenities and opportunities, regardless of their spatiality. This definition of equality transcends physical distribution to include recognising and supporting varied urban needs and experiences.

Historically, marginalised people have lived on city fringes, away from basic necessities of life like clean air, water, and greenery. From segregated redlined districts of American cities during the Great Depression to informal settlements in the periphery of global south cities, all have one thing in common: poor living conditions. Basic utilities reach too few people in these places due to resource and managerial constraints. Indian cities are not an exception. Spatial injustice coexists with economic and infrastructure growth in the era of neo-liberal cities.



**Road of Divide:** This road in Jawahar Nagar, Jaipur divides the well-planned societies laden with all facilities and slums with deprived of even basic services.

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# Water Scare Cities: The New Normal

Distributive environmental justice in urban water raises legitimate concerns regarding the equitable distribution of urban waters across city spaces that are deprived of fresh and clean water availability.

UNDP (2006) argues that the 'water crisis' is caused by uneven power geometry, not scarcity. Grave concerns about rising demand, unequal access, and conflicts for water pose a threat to the city's water justice. These concerns demonstrate the complexity of urban water distribution and the shared responsibility for sustainable solutions. We need elaborate affordable water infrastructure, demand management solutions, and proactive community engagement to ensure no one is left behind.

In this manifesto, we have examined water injustice in Jaipur, the capital city of the Indian state of Rajasthan. This metropolis of more than three million people suffers from acute water stress during the summer. The rapidly decreasing groundwater levels and drying up of dams with fragile water networks make Jaipur's water supply inconsistent and often a catastrophe. This phenomenon is unevenly distributed in the city. Figures A and B show a variation in access to clean drinking water in the city. The spatial differentiation of in-premise water supply in the city core and its periphery is evident of the existing spatial injustice to the peripheral dweller.

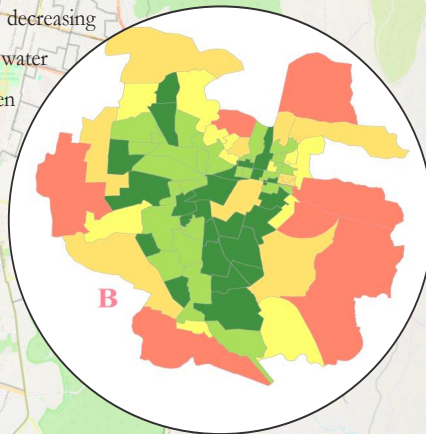
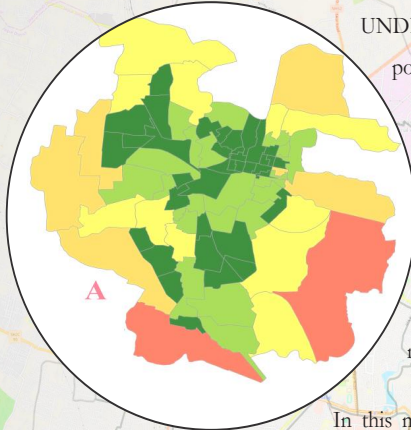


Figure1: **A:** Percentage of Households with Tap water connection, **B:** Percentage of Households with in-premises source of water. (Source: Census of India, 2011)

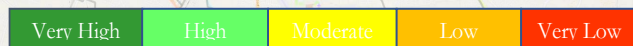


Figure 2: **A:** Sex ratio; **B:** Total literacy rate (%); **C:** female literacy rate (%); **D:** Total workforce participation rate (%); **E:** Total male workers in non-agricultural activities (%); **F:** Female workforce participation rate (%). (Source: Census of India, 2011)

The differentiated tap waterscape of the city is not random. Other socio-economic indicators also tend to be 'apparently better places' in the city core compared to the edges of 'poor performing wards'. Neither city planning nor poor governance can be blamed for this. Over time, rising housing demand and exorbitant land prices have forced underprivileged people to move to uncontrolled slums and squatter regions outside Jaipur city. It's important to note that these locations aren't just poor; instead, they supply a cheap workforce to the city. The continual erection of high-rises due to the city's rapid growth and expansion has enabled the availability of water supplies in pockets. In many of these locations, drinking water is poorly managed. Government water supply trucks don't always arrive adequately and timely; therefore, people have to pay for basic drinking water. Eventually, it unpacks the unjust access to water in the region.



## Water as a common good

Common good that belongs to all inhabitants of the city, irrespective of socio-economic status, ethnicity, or geographical location. Access to clean, safe, and sufficient water is a universal right that must be upheld and protected..



## Regulatory Frameworks for Accountability

Robust regulatory frameworks will be established and enforced to prevent exploitation and ensure responsible use of water resources.



## Environmental Stewardship

Embracing environmental stewardship, we will work towards revitalizing and preserving natural water bodies, acknowledging their intrinsic value for both ecosystems and communities.



## Education and Awareness

Empowered citizens will understand the importance of water conservation, pollution prevention, and sustainable practices, contributing to a shared responsibility for our water resources.



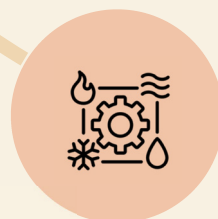
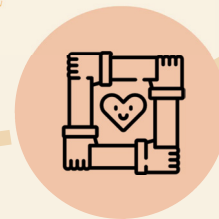
## Social and Environmental Justice

Our vision of a just city encompasses social and environmental justice. Water policies and initiatives will consider and rectify historical injustices.



## Collaboration and Solidarity

Achieving spatial justice of water demands collaboration and solidarity among citizens, government bodies, NGOs, and private entities.



## Climate-Resilient Water Practices

We should commit to implementing sustainable water practices that build resilience and adaptability. This includes water conservation, efficient usage, and innovative solutions.



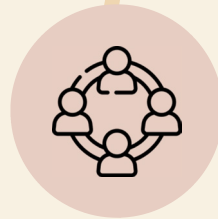
## Community Empowerment and Participation

Communities, especially those historically marginalized, must actively participate in decision-making processes related to water management.



## Inclusive Infrastructure Development

Infrastructure projects related to water supply and sanitation will be planned and executed inclusively, with community input considered at every stage.



## Equitable water distribution

Every neighbourhood, regardless of its affluence or historical background, should have equal access to reliable water supply and sanitation services.



# Water Just City



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# Being a Just City through its Phenomenon

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## Being a just city through its phenomenon: Citayam Fashion Week

In the middle of summer 2022, Indonesia got a breaking news of a sudden phenomenon where the youths from the Citayam Village, Bogor Regency, West Java, were flocking around Sudirman station, Central Jakarta, being there just to hang out with a streetwear fashion around that public area, then upload their activities as contents on their social media accounts. In a short time, this event became a trending in a nation-wide.

Looking at the venue, this hyped trend happened in Dukuh Atas area where it is a very accessible area via commuter rail through Sudirman station, TransJakarta through Sudirman bus halte, and MRT through Dukuh Atas station, also near the Sudirman Central Business District (SCBD). This strategic location makes the public area becomes more popular to everyone, including people who live in suburban areas around Jakarta, especially youngsters.

They came there with various and chic street fashion styles, stole the public's attention, and a lot of people were excited about their existence. The event has evolved into a fashion contest, attracting local artist, even the government officials and EU representatives with this phenomenon that so-called; Citayam Fashion Week.

All images in this Manifesto were produced by the authors.

Citayam Fashion Week happened in a glance that no one was aware of. In a common public place where everyone can gather with a lot of people, any activity could just happen unintentionally. The phenomenon of Citayam Fashion Week shows how a safe public space can attract many people to flock there, expressing themselves freely with no judgment. This hyped trend also happened in several cities outside of Jakarta; Surabaya, Medan, Yogyakarta, and many more. Now the big question is:

**"Is a safe public place in cities in Indonesia so limited, that this kind of 'regular' gathering of fashionable youngsters in a public space has become a huge phenomenon in the country?"**

A study about just city shows how inclusivity in a city can shape the character of a city including its citizens. Diving into this phenomenon, we strongly believe that breakthrough actions are needed to provide a safe and inclusive city for all, where people can feel secure and equal to express themselves. Here we break down some actions that can be done to dedicate an inclusive common space for everyone in a city. We propose actions based on the spatial justice framework explain in Edward W. Soja's paper "The city and spatial justice". In this work, the approach to achieving spatial justice involves a combination of policy changes, community action, and awareness.

## POLICY CHANGES

The aims for policy changes is to bring justice by restructuring urban spaces to ensure equitable access to resources and opportunities, and redistributing amenities, services, and infrastructure to reduce spatial inequalities.

### Provide and Facilitate

The government are willing to provide and create an open space where people can gather around freely and safely.

### Accessible Space

The space can be reached through a variety of transportation options, including public transit systems and digital ride-hailing services, ensuring convenience and efficiency for citizens.

### Decent Infrastructure

The place is located in a strategic area where it has good facilities for everyone who visit there.

### Spreading Spots

With populations dispersed throughout the city, it's essential to spread these spaces across every district, ensuring widespread and effortless access to these public open spaces for all citizens.

## COMMUNITY ACTION

Communities can challenge existing power structures by organizing, advocating, and advocating for policy changes aimed at addressing disparities. Initiatives initiated by the community should prioritize intersectionality and inclusivity, acknowledging how various identities intersect with spatial dynamics.

### Inclusive

Everyone, regardless of their economic means, gender, race, ethnicity, or religion, is enabled and empowered to visit!

### Supported by Local Market and Business

Local markets and businesses are one of key to making community spaces more lively and welcoming. Their presence helps make these areas more attractive, contributing to the community's social and economic well-being.

## AWARENESS

It is important to raising awareness about spatial justice. By understanding how space is distributed and experienced, individuals and communities can advocate for change. Increased awareness also fosters the sustainability of these changes, as people consciously strive to maintain these conditions.

### Safe Environment

We can express ourselves freely there. Enjoy the place any time we want.

### Visible Sustainable Environment

Even the public is flocking around, the cleanness of this place is present and it shows its commitment to save the environment and make people happy to do it!

Citayam Fashion Week has ignited a crucial dialogue on the importance of public spaces in fostering a Just City. It calls for significant policy changes, community action, and an increase in awareness to build more inclusive, accessible and safe public open spaces in the future. This phenomenon underscores the importance of creating open spaces that meet people's needs, showing how crucial they are in making our Just Cities.

**In the future, ensuring safe public spaces across Indonesian cities is crucial. These spaces foster free expression and provide safety of the people. Together, these spaces empower citizens to share ideas, celebrate culture, and shape their communities.**



# Manifesto

## POLICY CHANGES

Provide and Facilitate  
Decent Infrastructure  
Accessible Space  
Spreading Spots



Original art by the group.

Illustrated by the group

## COMMUNITY ACTION

Supported by Local Market and Business  
Inclusive

## AWARENESS

Safe Environment  
Visible Sustainable Environment

# for The Just City through its phenomenon

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# Saving Lake Urmia

## A call to Environmental Justice

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# A Call for Environmental Justice: Saving Lake Urmia

Based on the definition in the Cambridge Dictionary, environmental justice is the idea that all groups of people deserve to live in a clean and safe environment. The principle emphasizes that environmental problems cannot be solved without unveiling the practices of maintaining social injustices (Lehtinen, 2009).

In most of the arid regions of the world, increasing demand for water, global climate change, and population growth have reduced or almost disappeared endorheic saline lakes. (Wurtsbaugh et al., 2017).

which causes many human-related, environmental, political, social, and economic problems such as reducing air quality and the effects of dust, unemployment, and many diseases.

## The plight of Lake Urmia

Lake Urmia, located in northwest Iran, is a symbol of the delicate balance between human activity and the environment. It is one of the largest permanent natural super-saline lakes in the world. Before 1989, it covered an area of about 6,000 square kilometers and contained 30,000 million cubic meters of water.

This lake provides important cultural, economic, aesthetic, recreational, and scientific values. (2021, Rahimi). The area of the lake has decreased by 90% in recent decades until 2024. This lake has been damaged by numerous human and industrial activities, including the increase in agricultural activity, climate change-induced droughts, and poor governance and water management.

**This manifesto seeks to address Lake Urmia's urgent environmental issues, propose sustainable solutions, and emphasize the need for environmental justice in our collective mindset.**

## The Current Crisis

Lake Urmia is now facing an environmental crisis of unprecedented scale. The significant drop in water levels has led to increased salinity and severe environmental degradation over the past few decades.

The impact of this catastrophic environmental issue affects its immediate surroundings and changes the lake's ecosystem. For instance, it is diminishing the diverse range of flora and fauna that once flourished in its waters and shrinking the habitats of many migrating birds as well as local communities. The main causes of Lake Urmia's drying up include:

1. Decreased rainfall due to Iran's location in the world's dry belt and global climate changes, leading to increased evaporation of Lake Urmia's water.
2. Construction of dams in watersheds for agricultural irrigation, altering farming patterns and leading to increased digging of deep wells.
3. Construction of a highway on the lake to shorten the route between Urmia and Tabriz.
4. Conversion of dry land around the lake to agricultural land, encouraging locals to farm, and granting excessive permits for surface and groundwater extraction.
5. Mismanagement of water resources has resulted in a sharp decrease in the lake's surface.
6. The absence of effective policies and regulations has hindered efforts to address these issues.

To tackle this crisis, we need to acquire a comprehensive approach that includes **international collaboration and scientific research, community engagement and environmental justice, and an international call to action.** To gain environmental justice, this manifesto tries to underline how these actions are urgent.







## Comprehensive Approach

To address the complex web of challenges surrounding Lake Urmia, we must adopt a comprehensive and sustainable approach. This involves international cooperation, robust scientific research, and active community engagement.

Initiatives that zero in on reducing water consumption, implementing efficient irrigation techniques, and restoring the lake's natural balance are indispensable for resuscitating this invaluable ecosystem. The revival of Lake Urmia needs everyone to work together on a global scale. The sharing of knowledge, expertise, and resources is not a mere luxury; it's necessary. Scientific research, acting as a guide, is instrumental in unraveling the intricacies of the lake's ecosystem.

Collaborative research initiatives involving international organizations, environmental scientists, and local experts should be the cornerstone of our strategy.

By pooling our intellectual and technological resources, we can navigate the complexities of Lake Urmia's challenges more effectively.



## Community Engagement and Environmental Justice

Environmental justice is not just an idea; it's a duty we must fulfill. We need to make sure that everyone shares in the good and bad parts of looking after our surroundings. This means we have to think about what's best for the local people.

Everyone should have a say in the decisions; we need to talk openly about what's happening, and those who are most impacted should be actively involved. These things are non-negotiable. Local communities, armed with their traditional knowledge and lived experiences, must be integral contributors to the decision-making process.

This is not only ethically sound but also a pragmatic necessity for the success of any restoration initiative.



## An International Call to Action

The international community must unite to address the challenges facing Lake Urmia comprehensively. This involves not just the exchange of scientific knowledge and technical expertise but also the fostering of collective responsibility.

Global awareness of the ecological significance of Lake Urmia is a precursor to mobilizing concerted efforts toward its restoration. International partnerships can facilitate the transfer of technology, financial support, and capacity building, ensuring a robust and coordinated response to the environmental crisis.

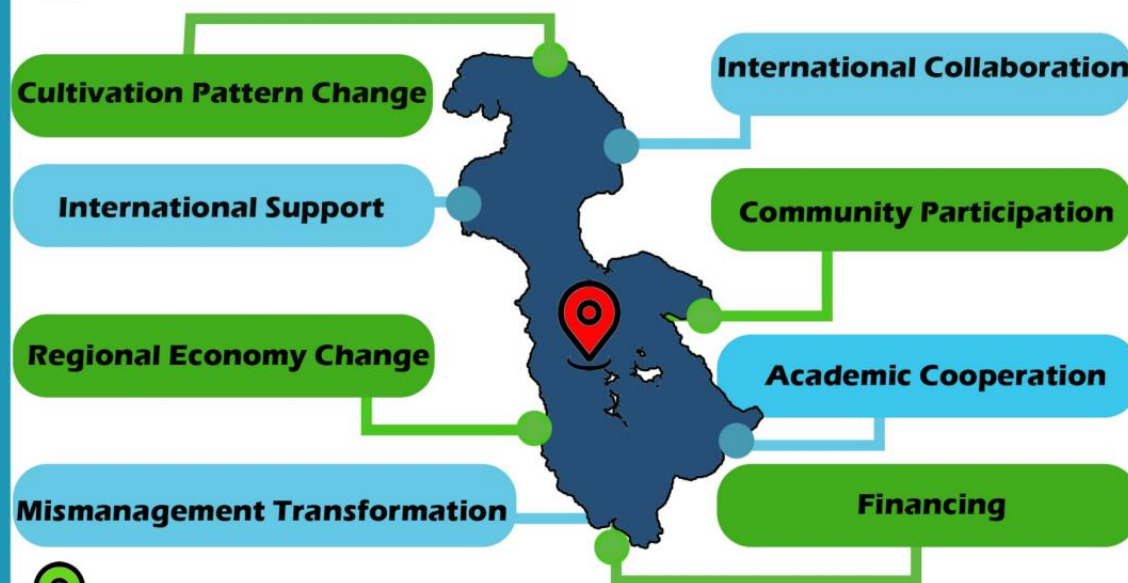


## satellite image of lake urmia



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## Our Commitment



## Conclusion

**In conclusion,** Lake Urmia is at a critical point, and our actions will shape its future. The urgent need for action is rooted in environmental justice, global collaboration, and sustainable practices. The restoration of Lake Urmia is not only about conservation but also about ensuring justice for the local communities.

We must be dedicated to saving Lake Urmia and making sure the people who depend on it are treated fairly. We shall team up with groups from our community, our country, and around the world to make lasting changes and push for rules that protect both our planet and its people. By embracing inclusive decision-making processes, prioritizing scientific research, and fostering global cooperation, we can chart a course for the revival of Lake Urmia. This endeavor transcends geographical boundaries and cultural differences, setting a precedent for responsible environmental stewardship. As custodians of this planet, we owe it to Lake Urmia, to ourselves, and to future generations to ensure a harmonious coexistence between nature and society.



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# Towards a proximal city

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## Towards a proximal city.

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Cities are home to most of the world's population. Thus, we are compelled to rethink them to respond to the crises we are faced with today. The just city - a city that advocates for justice - is growing in response to these challenges, but is this still an abstract notion hard to define? And more importantly, how does justice materialise in the form of a city?

This manifesto calls for proximity - with its multiple associations - arguing that it cannot only help deliver justice in cities but it is key to visualising what the just city is and how it ought to function. Thus, it poses proximity as a fundamental component to the development of a just city; a proximal city.

"In our modern societies, power hierarchies or differentials have a clear spatial expression."

Espino, N.A. (2017)

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"The freedom to make and remake ourselves and our cities is, I want to argue, one of the most precious yet most neglected of our human rights. How best then to exercise that right?"

Harvey, D. (2012)

The notion of proximity in cities has gained popularity since the emergence of the '15-Minute City' concept coined by Carlos Moreno. This urban concept was born as a reaction to the modernist urban development trends, which championed a global agenda of industrialisation and oil dependency. These have not only aggravated the impacts of climate change but have also led to the creation of fragmented cities and communities which are heavily automobile-dependent and incur in excessive commuting times. The '15-Minute City' proposes an urban model where all basic amenities can be accessed within a 15-minute walk or bicycle ride, encouraging spatial decentralisation, density, mixed-use neighbourhoods, and proximity to infrastructure. This model leads to an increase in health, new economic benefits and the promotion of social interaction and participation, leading to more closely knitted community fabrics and a better quality of life.

The '15-Minute City' defines proximity as the act of living in close distance to other activities, and sees it as mostly a temporal and spatial issue, developing a notion of what is known as 'chrono-urbanism'. However, in the context of a just city, this restricted focus - confined to time and space - may not reflect the nature of urban settlements across the world whose origins are in varied cultural, socio-economic and geographical conditions. Its physical limitation, therefore, could lead to a restricted global applicability and fail to deliver social and spatial justice, or even result in promoting gentrification and increased social segregation. Thus, this manifesto aims to expand on the multiplicity of other aspects that also construct proximity. It does so to establish a flexible framework that would enable its implementation across different - present and future - urban structures across the globe.

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A proximal  
city  
dissolves its  
boundaries.

The notion of imposing an external boundary to a city is in itself an unjust practice. It forbids "external" citizens from entering the system of exchanges and infrastructures that network the city. Furthermore, a proximal city dissolves its internal boundaries in favour of heterogeneity.

A proximal  
city is  
elusive.

Historically, power structures sought to manipulate urban space and use it as a control mechanism to map out "constructed realities" of everyday life, centring desired activities, and manufacturing people's interaction with one another.

In contrast, a proximal city - with its tendency for dissolution and distribution of not only resources but of control and power - becomes elusive. It dismantles these dominance tools and reverses these enduring strategies in favour of a resilient and hard-to-control city.

A proximal  
city feels  
close.

Feeling "close" to the city is imperative in proximal visions. Citizens must be able to relate to the city's identity, its sense of place, and be a part of shaping it. Thus, this relates not just to physical and historical proximity but also to the development of *procedural justice* - the citizen's involvement in how the city functions.

A proximal  
city is  
scalable.

Instead of being defined by the number of residents or its surface area, the primary focus of a proximal city is placed on the network of relations that define it. Thus, a proximal city could range from a housing block to a town or a large metropolis. Furthermore, these scales are interconnected, as not only does the just city occur at the everyday-life scale but the household suffers the consequences of the unjust city.



A proximal  
city is both  
a physical  
and a  
political  
entity.

A city is not just a collection of individuals living within close distance to one another or sharing a geographically bounded area; it is also a collection of individuals sharing a local political framework. Thus, a proximal city is not simply concerned with the physicality of being together; it embraces and highlights the intangible network of interrelations and organisational frameworks that define the city.

A proximal  
city sustains  
itself.

Equitable access to sufficient life-supporting resources, such as food, clean water or power, is essential to a proximal city. This notion surpasses the physical proximity of said resources, or even their affordability, and includes public engagement in providing and controlling these resources on a communal and horizontal level, particularly so in times of urgent need.

These decentralised infrastructures prioritise sustainable living away from spatial interests and profit and act as a crucial tool that ensures fairly distributed resilience and autonomy, otherwise known as *distributive justice*.

A proximal  
city is  
alive.

A city that prioritises health does so by establishing proximity to natural landscapes. The pursuit of mental health, physical health and wellbeing is associated with a connection to our natural world, brought into our cities through green spaces, landscaping, and vibrant public spaces.

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A proximal  
city is  
honest.

Proximal governance offers democratic accountability to its citizens, enabling a transparent dialogue between the city's finances and resources. Collectives ought to have proximity to their valuable agency. This extends to the pursuit of justice through an unbiased reflection on the city's history and public consciousness. In essence, a proximal city is held accountable, offering a transparent decision-making process in its governing structure and enabling a collective healing process in a form of *restorative justice*.

A proximal  
city enables  
protest.

The ability of collectives to gather, share ideals and contribute to a culture of shared knowledge enables the pursuit of equitable and democratic justice, where transformative action takes place on the streets of the city. This proximity to a shared dialogue forms the essence of a city that champions urban agency.

A proximal  
city is an  
exercise of  
collective  
imagination.

By reclaiming the right to shape and re-shape the city from a selected few and extend it to the masses, a proximal city becomes a living and ever-changing reflection of communal discussions. Thus, the power of dynamic and vibrant dialogue over the city's identity, priorities, and purpose is materialised.

This collective exercise of imagination and ownership ensures an inclusive space where a mutual vision is in constant evolution, redefining the essence of the city in itself.

By reading this  
manifesto you have  
already participated  
in building a  
proximal city, for  
it is collectively  
envisioned.

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# Hoe gaan we om met onze klimaatkwetsbare wijken?

## How do we deal with our climate-vulnerable neighbourhoods?

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# Hoe zorgen we dat klimaatkwetsbare wijken niet de kloof tussen arm en rijk versterken?

Nederland beschikt over zeker 900 klimaatkwetsbare wijken. Dit betekent dat een kwart van de wijken in ons land niet bestendig is tegen de gevolgen van klimaatverandering (NOS, 2023). Met verschijningen als overtollig (regen)water en hittestress loopt een groot deel van de huizen in deze wijken een vergroot risico op klimaatschade (Rijksoverheid, 2023). En niet alleen in de woningen zullen deze gevolgen te merken zijn, door de hele wijk zal klimaatverandering voelbaar zijn.

Natuurlijk loopt niet elke woning even veel risico. Door onderhoud en bouwjaar verschilt de kwaliteit van huizen onderling flink. Daarom wordt er nu gepleit om de achterstand in huizen in klimaatbestendigheid door te berekenen in de verkoopprijs (ABN AMRO, 2023). Mochten extra klimaatinvesteringen in de (nabije) toekomst nodig zijn dan gaat de verkoopprijs van het huis omlaag. Dit wordt berekend door de geschatte kosten van de reparaties en onderhoud af te trekken van de huidige waarde van het huis.

Hiermee wordt de kloof tussen arm en rijk, en klimaatkwetsbaar en klimaatveilig, alleen maar vergroot. Mensen die minder te besteden hebben eindigen sneller in goedkopere, klimaatkwetsbare woningen. Zij zijn vaak niet in staat om de benodigde aanpassingen te doen aan hun woningen, of om te verhuizen naar minder klimaatkwetsbare gebieden (Schuermans, 2022). Zo ontstaat een situatie waarin de meeste welgestelde mensen in klimaatveilige huizen en wijken wonen, en de mensen die het minder breed hebben in klimaatkwetsbare wijken. Op deze manier krijg je hier juist een neerwaartse spiraal van kwetsbaarheid. Financieel kwetsbare mensen bevinden zich dan in de meest klimaatkwetsbare wijken, wat leidt tot een versterking van de al bestaande kwetsbaarheden (DNB, 2023).

## De Onzichtbare Last

De link tussen sociale ongelijkheid en klimaatverandering is onmiskenbaar. Historisch gezien leveren mensen met een lager inkomen de minste bijdrage aan de uitstoot van broeikasgassen (eg. besparen uit zichzelf al op energie en gas om kosten zo laag mogelijk te houden) (Schuermans, 2022). Toch ondervindt deze groep de meest directe en ernstigste gevolgen van klimaatverandering.

Dit creëert gevoelens van onmacht en frustratie bij deze benadeelde groep (Schuermans, 2022). Subsidies en steunmaatregelen, die vaak bedoeld zijn om burgers te helpen bij het verduurzamen van hun woningen lijken onbereikbaar voor diegenen die ze het meest nodig hebben (Nauta, 2022). Dit gevoel wordt versterkt door het besef dat de gevolgen van klimaatverandering oneerlijk verdeeld zijn en dat diegenen die het zwaarst worden getroffen, de minste financiële mogelijkheden hebben om maatregelen te nemen (Schuermans, 2022).

Hier moet verandering in komen! En volgens ons zijn nu de beleidsmakers en wethouders van steden met dergelijke wijken aan zet.

Daarom stellen we drie interventies voor om de kloof tussen klimaatonveilige- en klimaatveilige wijken te verkleinen. Zo wordt de stad, stap voor stap, een volledige JustCity.

## 1. Maak gebruik van de bestaande sociale structuren in de wijk!

Vaak zijn er in een wijk al diverse buurtinitiatieven aanwezig. Ga dus niet zelf iets vanachter je bureau bedenken, maar sluit aan bij lopende initiatieven die er al zijn en help deze te verduurzamen en energiezuiniger te maken. Zeker voor vergroening zijn er al veel succesvolle of kansrijke trajecten. Denk bijvoorbeeld aan het [NK Tegelwippen](#), [Opzoomeren](#) in Rotterdam of het initiatief “Tiny Forest”, een groene plek in een wijk waar iedereen zijn draai en band kan vinden en vormen met de natuur (IVN, sd).

Door te investeren in bestaande initiatieven, ontstaat een gedragen en gedeeld gevoel van verantwoordelijkheid. Bewonersparticipatie zorgt voor eigenaarschap, wat leidt tot lagere beheerskosten. Hiermee is groen geen luxeproduct meer, is het toegankelijk en beschikbaar voor iedereen, en zal de verbeterd de klimaatbestendigheid van de buurt.

**“JE KUNNEN AANPASSEN AAN  
KLIMAATVERANDERING IS NU EEN PRIVILEGE.”  
DAPHINA MISIEDJAN, ONDERZOEKER AAN DE  
UU (ZENDEGANI, 2022).**



## 2. Ontzorg de bewoners!

Laat een gemeente namens de bewoners de subsidies aanvragen. De regels zijn natuurlijk voor iedereen - rijk of arm - hetzelfde (rechtsgelijkheidsbeginsel) maar niet voor iedereen even bereikbaar: variërend van moeilijk taalgebruik tot het niet beschikken over een apparaat dat de DigiD-app aankan. De gemeente kan ontzorgen door scans per woning aan te bieden in achtergestelde wijken van ingrepen die het energiegebruik reduceren en een platform van (aan te besteden) aannemers aanbieden om de klussen gesubsidieerd uit te voeren.

## 3. Werk van buiten naar binnen!

Groen wordt vaak als een luxe gezien, maar is een basisbehoefte, of zelfs grondrecht. Uit onderzoek blijkt dat stadsvergroening veelal plaatsvindt in gebieden waar rijkere mensen wonen. In armere wijken blijft het groen juist achterwege (Belitardo, 2023). Dit past niet in een rechtvaardige stad (JustCity). De publieke ruimte zou immers voor iedere inwoner volgens dezelfde standaarden ingericht moeten worden. Het is belangrijk dat alle wijken vergroenen, omdat groen helpt bij het afvoeren van overtollig regenwater, hittestress en de gezondheid van de wijk. Zo blijkt uit onderzoek in Los Angeles dat bomen en ander groen met name voorkomen in rijkere wijken van de stad, terwijl de schaduw van een boom ervoor kan zorgen dat de gevoelstemperatuur gemiddeld 20 graden lager ligt (Borunda, 2021).

Voor vergroening is het cruciaal dat dit wordt ontwikkeld met samen de lokale gemeenschap, of beter nog, op basis van bestaande (burger) initiatieven. Begin daarom met het vergroenen van de wijk (buiten) met gebruikmaking van bestaande netwerken en structuren (zie punt 1) en gebruik de community die zich hierdoor langzaam zal vormen om het gesprek aan te gaan van “we hebben nu samen iets gedaan aan buiten maar hoe zit het bij jou thuis? Zullen we eens kijken wat slimmer en beter kan?”. Zo maak je de drempel voor de doelgroep om in te stappen - vreemden in je huis te laten om een scan te doen - een stuk lager. רררר

## Tijd voor actie!

Het is nu tijd voor actie. Zoals we de afgelopen maanden allemaal hebben kunnen ervaren, laat het (regen)water niet op zich wachten. Fietsend door diverse wijken is het verschil tussen welvarende omgevingen en armere omgevingen niet te missen. Het directe effect van a) het vergroenen van wijken en b) het klimaatbestendig maken van een huis is, als je erop let, niet te missen. We staan op een belangrijk en noodzakelijk moment; de tijd dringt voor klimaatkwetsbare wijken. Daarom doen we een urgente oproep aan beleidsmakers en wethouders van steden met dergelijke wijken om nog dit jaar concrete plannen te ontwikkelen. We roepen ook de minister van Volkshuisvesting op om op korte termijn met een regeling te komen die het vergroenen en klimaatbestendig maken van deze wijken niet alleen stimuleert, maar ook evenredig financieel mogelijk maakt voor iedereen. Immers moet de weg naar verandering wel toegankelijk gemaakt worden, en niet alleen voor zij die het zich kunnen veroorloven.



## How Can We Ensure That Climate-Vulnerable Neighbourhoods Do Not Exacerbate the Gap Between Rich and Poor?

\* This translation is provided by the editors.

The Netherlands has at least 900 climate-vulnerable neighbourhoods. This means that a quarter of the neighbourhoods in our country are not resilient to the effects of climate change (NOS, 2023). With phenomena such as excessive (rain)water and heat stress, a large proportion of the homes in these neighbourhoods face an increased risk of climate-related damage (Rijksoverheid, 2023). Moreover, the effects of climate change will not only be felt in individual homes but throughout the entire neighbourhood.

Of course, not all homes are equally at risk. Factors such as maintenance and year of construction mean that the quality of houses varies greatly. For this reason, there are now calls to factor deficits in climate resilience into property sale prices (ABN AMRO, 2023). If additional climate investments are needed in the (near) future, the sale price of the house will decrease. This would be calculated by deducting the estimated costs of repairs and maintenance from the property's current value.

This approach, however, only exacerbates the divide between rich and poor, as well as between climate-vulnerable and climate-safe areas. People with fewer financial resources are more likely to end up in cheaper, climate-vulnerable homes. They are often unable to make the necessary adaptations to their houses or move to less climate-vulnerable areas (Schuermans, 2022). As a result, a situation arises where the wealthiest people live in climate-safe homes and neighbourhoods, while those with fewer resources live in climate-vulnerable areas. This creates a downward spiral of vulnerability: financially disadvantaged people end up in the most climate-vulnerable neighbourhoods, further reinforcing their existing vulnerabilities (DNB, 2023).

### The Invisible Burden

The link between social inequality and climate change is undeniable. Historically, people with lower incomes have contributed the least to greenhouse gas emissions (e.g., they naturally conserve energy and gas to keep costs as low as possible) (Schuermans, 2022). Yet, this group experiences the most direct and severe consequences of climate change.

This reality creates feelings of powerlessness and frustration within this disadvantaged group (Schuermans, 2022). Subsidies and support measures, often intended to help citizens make their homes more sustainable, appear out of reach for those who need them the most (Nauta, 2022). These feelings are compounded by the awareness that the impacts of climate change are distributed unfairly and that those most severely affected have the least financial means to take action (Schuermans, 2022).

“Being able to adapt to climate change is now a privilege.” – Daphina Misiedjan, researcher at Utrecht University (Sendegani, 2022).

This must change! In our view, it is now up to policymakers and city councillors in municipalities with such neighbourhoods to take the lead.

We therefore propose three interventions to narrow the gap between climate-vulnerable and climate-safe neighbourhoods. Step by step, this will help transform the city into a fully **JustCity**.

### 1. Make Use of Existing Social Structures in the Neighbourhood

Many neighbourhoods already have various community initiatives in place. Rather than coming up with new ideas from behind a desk, policymakers should connect with existing initiatives and support their efforts to become more sustainable and energy-efficient. Particularly in the area of urban greening, there are numerous successful or promising projects. Examples include the NK Tegelwippen (a tile-removal competition promoting greening), Opzoomeren in Rotterdam, or the Tiny Forest initiative, which creates green spaces in neighbourhoods where residents can connect with and build a relationship with nature (IVN, n.d.).

Investing in existing initiatives fosters a shared sense of responsibility. Community participation creates ownership, which in turn leads to reduced maintenance costs. This approach ensures that green spaces are no longer a luxury but accessible and available to everyone, while also improving the neighbourhood's climate resilience.

### 2. Relieve the Burden on Residents

Municipalities should take on the task of applying for subsidies on behalf of residents. While rules and regulations are the same for everyone — rich or poor — they are not equally accessible. Barriers range from complex language in application forms to the lack of a device compatible with the DigiD app.

Municipalities can ease this burden by offering tailored home assessments in disadvantaged neighbourhoods to identify interventions that reduce energy use. They can also create a platform of pre-approved contractors to carry out subsidised work. This approach removes logistical and financial barriers for residents, making energy-saving measures more accessible to those who need them most.

### 3. Work From the Outside In

Green spaces are often regarded as a luxury, but they are a basic necessity, or even a fundamental right. Research shows that urban greening predominantly occurs in wealthier areas, while poorer neighbourhoods are often left without sufficient greenery (Belitardo, 2023). This imbalance is inconsistent with the principles of a just city (JustCity). Public spaces should be designed to the same standards for all residents.

Greening all neighbourhoods is vital, as it helps manage excess rainwater, reduces heat stress, and improves the overall health of the community. For example, research in Los Angeles demonstrates that trees and other greenery are concentrated in wealthier areas, while the shade provided by trees can lower perceived temperatures by an average of 20 degrees Celsius (Borunda, 2021).

It is crucial for greening efforts to be developed in collaboration with the local community or, ideally, based on existing citizen initiatives. Begin by greening the external areas of the neighbourhood using existing networks and structures (see Point 1). Then, leverage the community connections formed through this process to open a conversation: “We’ve worked together to improve the outside, but what about your home? Shall we explore ways to make it smarter and better?”

This gradual approach reduces the barriers for residents — such as hesitations about allowing strangers into their homes for an energy assessment — and encourages broader participation.

### Time for Action!

The time to act is now. As we have all experienced in recent months, (rain)water waits for no one. Cycling through different neighbourhoods makes the contrast between wealthier areas and poorer ones impossible to ignore. The immediate impact of a) greening neighbourhoods and b) making homes climate-resilient is striking when you pay attention.

We are at a crucial and urgent juncture; time is running out for climate-vulnerable neighbourhoods. Therefore, we issue an urgent call to policymakers and city councillors in municipalities with such neighbourhoods to develop concrete plans this year.

We also call on the Minister of Housing to implement a short-term scheme that not only promotes the greening and climate-proofing of these areas but also makes it financially accessible for everyone. After all, the path to change must be open to all, not just to those who can afford it.

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# The Empathetic City

## The product of spatial agency and syncretic placemaking

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### CONNECTIONS

What does urban planning have to do with justice? Everything. When constructing our cities, we discuss the past, present, and future. We are constructing justice. In designing the city, we momentarily play the role of the divine. The designer of the city decides the limits of equity. The designer decides who the city is catered to and, more importantly, who it is not. The problem with many cities today is that they are concrete realizations of systemic inequalities. We cannot, however, burn the city and start over. Nor should we. So, how can we construct justice?

At its core, justice is respect. In the same way that the city cannot create an unjust person, it cannot create a just person. It can, however, make injustice more or less difficult. We come to know, respect, and understand ourselves through our cities. Every day, we wake up in houses that are part of a community, and we walk outside to cracked sidewalks or, if we are lucky—to pristine sidewalks, just washed. If we live in a neighborhood given greater attention and care, we begin to believe that we are worthy of greater attention and care, and vice versa.

From the German word *Einfühlung*, empathy roughly translates to “in-feeling” or projection onto space. In the context of the built environment, projection onto the space allows us to converse with the city as if it were another person. Thus, we have empathy or projected emotion for the city, and the city projects itself onto us. Temporally dynamic, empathy must transgress generations and cultures to embed itself into the urban fabric, which fertilizes the growth of a just city. Outsiders must enter a city with empathy and must be empathetically accepted by the city’s existing inhabitants. The just city utilizes empathy to address and correct spatial inequities.

Cities are dense with the poetry of strangers. Poems are ample in contextual meaning and must be interchanged between strangers to create shared understandings and induce mutual respect. Urban fabrics facilitate and impede the dispersal and aspiration of these social poetics. The just city sponsors spatial agency through the uninhibited and spontaneous use of shared spaces. The just city embraces the unfinished city, as well as informality, and allows residents to physically and metaphysically alter the space around them. A just city centers placemaking and feelings of belonging to enrich and uplift its inhabitants. These principles are the foundation upon which a city can promote socio-spatial justice.

### KNOWING YOURSELF THROUGH YOUR CITY

Michel Foucault writes in his aptly named “Technologies of the Self” that there are four technologies by which we come to know and understand ourselves. They are the technologies of production, technologies of sign systems, technologies of power, and the technologies of the self (Foucault, 1988). Each has a place in the city. Production allows us to create the built environ-





# NAVIGATING DICHOTOMIES FOR SPATIAL JUSTICE IN URBANISM

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In the **COMPLEX SYMPHONY** of everyday urban life, where harmonious encounters and discordant conflicts intertwine, this manifesto seeks to navigate the dichotomies inherent in public spaces. Embracing the **RICHNESS OF POLYPHONY**, we strive to **HARMONIZE** competing voices and contestations, weaving a narrative of **SPATIAL JUSTICE** that resonates with the **DIVERSE** inhabitants of our cities.

# DUALITIES

## EQUITABLE ACCESS VS. EXCLUSIONARY BOUNDARIES

In the dichotomy of access and exclusion, we challenge the barriers that limit entry to public spaces. Recognizing the contestation between **inclusivity** and ~~exclusivity~~, we advocate for designs that dismantle barriers, fostering an environment where every citizen feels a **sense of belonging** (Madhosingh-Hector and Seals, 2022).

OF

# SPATIAL

## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE VS. ECOLOGICAL EXPLOITATION

The conflict between **environmental justice** and ~~ecological exploitation~~ is a pressing challenge. By contesting unsustainable practices, we advocate for polyphonic solutions that **harmonize the needs of the environment** with the rights of marginalized communities to a healthy living environment (Bullard and Jo son, 2000).

## INCLUSIVE DESIGN VS. HOMOGENIZING FORCES

The contestation between **inclusive design** and ~~homogenizing forces~~ is a battleground for the soul of urban spaces. We champion the polyphonic approach, recognizing the **multiplicity of voices** in design processes in order to challenge ~~homogenizing trends~~ that eliminate local distinctive qualities.

# JUSTICE

# VOICES IN

## COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT VS TOP-DOWN CONTROL

Advocating for the polyphonic empowerment of communities, we contest ~~centralized control~~, enabling **equitable pluralism** to include all areas of **public interest**.

## EQUITY IN RESOURCE REDISTRIBUTION VS STATUS QUO

Through **polyphonic advocacy**, we challenge existing power structures, urging for policies that address the ~~disparities in infrastructure, amenities, and opportunities~~.

## DEMOCRACY IN DIALOGUE VS AUTHORITARIAN EXCLUSION

Public spaces are arenas for democratic engagement and authoritarian exclusion (Parkinson, 2015). Contesting the ~~dominance of exclusive decision-making~~, we champion polyphonic forums that allow **diverse voices** to contribute to the urban discourse, fostering a **harmonious coexistence of opinions**. Briefly, we advocate being sensed together while living differently.

# AND HARMONY

## POLYPHONIC ACTION STEPS

### Diverse Dialogues and Education:

Embrace the polyphony of urban narratives by promoting diverse dialogues and educational programs to encourage all members of society to think about the future. Challenge singular perspectives through inclusive storytelling that captures the varied experiences and needs of urban inhabitants.

### Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration:

Navigate the dichotomies of public space by fostering collaboration among government bodies, NGOs, community organizations, and private stakeholders (Healey, 1998). In a polyphonic approach, each stakeholder's voice contributes to a harmonious urban development that respects diverse perspectives. Not only the majority but also everyone is of great significance in this process.

### Policy Reforms with Multiple Perspectives:

Advocate for policy reforms with a polyphonic lens, considering the multiple perspectives of contestation in urban spaces. Seek policies that reconcile conflicting interests, addressing the needs of various communities to ensure a just and inclusive urban landscape at different scales and aim to resist in order to gain economic and political rights.

# CONFLICT

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# MANIFESTO

## for collective care

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# MANIFESTO

## FOR COLLECTIVE CARE

### 1 CARE SHOULD NOT BE LINEAR

Be wrong, make mistakes considering that care and healing do not constitute a linear process, but you can always learn from the past-present moment, trying to transform it into something good. You should learn from past mistakes and demand for a better quality of life: public transportation, public health and not exclusive one and ample green spaces, public education and for all.

### 2 WE MUST HAVE COLLECTIVE CARE AS PRACTICE

In certain situations, there are no permanent solutions. It's about consistently staying open and engaged in each interaction, using our ability to respond responsibly to foster awareness and breathe life into ever-emerging possibilities for just living. The world is remade in every encounter.

### 3 THE VISUAL LANGUAGE MUST BE DECOLONIZED

Languages allow us to imagine and build new worlds, new spaces, real or imaginary. Language has been colonized by "normative" meanings and associations, break those associations and rebuild new ones. Be creative, creativity doesn't need normative rules. Learn to listen to those who have difficulty accessing the same privileges as you are in public space.

### 4 WE SHOULD BE SOLAR AS F\*\*CK

Collective, solarpunk care is not just an abstract concept, but translates into daily actions that improve the quality of life for everyone, actualizing a future in which collective well-being is the priority. Practices of problem-solving and creative actions must be the fuel to think outside the box.

### 5 THE CHOICES YOU MAKE HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE CITY

The actions you take have consequences on the quality of life in the city. They are not just choices, but they go to the detriment or favor of someone. For example: the archival process excludes something, in favor of others; the food you buy might be a reproduction of local food, due to gentrification phenomena in the big cities.

### 6 ONLINE AND OFFLINE SPACES MUST BE CURATED

Be aware of how you are feeding yourself, don't do it passively. You choose what to keep and what to remove. Choose the cultural products you feed on. Water your garden, both offline and online.

### 7 PUBLIC SPACES MUST BE TREATED AS A LIVING BODY

The space must be perceived as a living body. This attitude is a chance to overset the perspective and the gaze we assume towards public infrastructures. Thanks to this interaction, it is possible to heal some wounds inflicted by inaccessible spaces, in order to rebuild an inclusion-based narrative..

### 8 CARE SHOULD NOT BE CONTROLLED

We exist as elements in a vast network of interconnected entities that we seek to understand more and more over time. The environment itself is a substantial social creation, that gains finite flexibility and is not ontologically prone to the influences of the economy, institutions, and politics.

### 9 APPROPRIATION MUST BE ABOLISHED

We should start thinking about the re-appropriation of public spaces: this re-appropriation must be collective. We must rethink collective needs, taking into account the subjectivities belonging to a more or less extended community that inhabits that space on a daily basis. Appropriation is often individual and furtive, re-appropriation must be collective and facilitate community spontaneity, we need to re-signify public space, which must belong to everyone and not to a few. Reclaim your green spaces, your streets, your sea, your squares.

### 10 CARE SHOULD BE DECENTRALIZED

We exist as elements in a vast network of interconnected entities that we seek to understand more and more over time. The environment itself is a substantial social creation, that gains finite flexibility and is not ontologically prone to the influences of the economy, institutions, and politics.

# Manifesto for the Just City

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Images in this Manifesto are produced by the group. Images taken from screenshots on Instagram have been blurred to protect people's identities and privacy.

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Recipe for change \_ \_ \_



# The Paradox

In the intricate tapestry of European politics, a paradox casts a shadow over the very principles we hold dear in our quest for a just city. Amidst the kaleidoscope of cultural diversity and the majestic presence of historic landmarks, a disturbing undercurrent of intolerance towards foreigners challenges the very foundations of our shared ideals. This paradox is most glaring in the realm of housing and access to space, a dual predicament that demands our collective attention. On one side of the paradox, we witness the struggles of local residents as they try to navigate the changes in their urban landscapes. The difficulties they encounter in adapting to these changes weave a narrative of discontent, revealing the cracks in the foundation of a just and inclusive city. At the same time, immigrants, attracted by the promise of a united Europe, face unjust obstacles that impede their assimilation into the communities they wish to call home.

## Uncovering the paradox: People's voices

### Scientific articles

Academic articles provide a meticulous examination of the inherent inequalities, dissecting the problematic nature of access to housing and space in our cities. These academic works act as a beacon, illuminating the discrepancies that erode the very fabric of our societies.

### Social media

Turning to social media, a disturbing normalisation of discrimination unfolds. Memes and comments that perpetuate stereotypes weave a dangerous narrative that seeps into the collective consciousness of our interconnected society. The platforms designed to connect people across borders inadvertently become conduits for normalising the exclusion of those seeking a new home in our communities.

### Newspapers

In contrast, newspaper headlines reflect the lived experiences of individuals, capturing the inequalities and tensions surrounding access to housing. Residents struggling with gentrification, rising rents and the erosion of cultural identity articulate a collective struggle against the changing urban landscape. This first-hand perspective is a powerful reminder that the challenges of a just city are not theoretical, but deeply embedded in the daily lives of its inhabitants.



[Housing crisis biggest concern for voters at Dutch election](#)

[Populist approach by Geert Wilders and PVV](#)

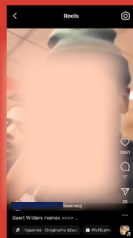
[Dutch election: housing crisis prompts turn](#)

[What Geert Wilders' victory means for the Dutch society](#)

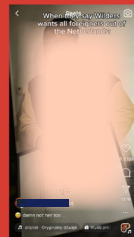
[Housing shortage the central theme in election programs](#)



"het nieuw vervoersbewijs is een nederlandse paasport" together with solemn music in the background



"iedereen moet eruit" = everyone must get out



Leaving the country together with the Argentinian queen



# Recipe for change: steps towards a harmonious blend

## Step 1: Prepare the palette with inclusion

[Ingredients: values]

1 cup of **open-mindedness**  
2 tablespoons of **empathy**  
A pinch of **curiosity**

[Instructions: actions]

In the cauldron of urban development, prepare the palette with the warmth of inclusion. Cultivate a mindset that embraces diversity. Break down the walls that separate local and international communities. Initiate **cultural exchange programs, language initiatives, and community events** to create a sense of belonging for all.



## Step 2: Simmer down the stereotypes

[Ingredients: values]

3 tablespoons of **understanding**  
1 teaspoon of **compassion**  
A dash of **empathy**

[Instructions: actions]

Reduce the heat of discrimination by simmering down stereotypes. Implement **educational programs that promote cultural understanding and challenge prejudice**. Celebrate the richness that diversity brings to our European cities. Let stereotypes dissolve in the collective broth of acceptance and appreciation.



## Step 3: Marinate the mindset: standards & flexibility

[Ingredients: values]

1 cup of **flexibility**  
2 tablespoons of **fairness**  
1 sprinkle of **equity**

[Instructions: actions]

Pour flexibility into **zoning and urban planning for mixed-use spaces**. Mix fairness into housing policies to ensure transparent and equitable distribution of resources. Sprinkle equality for universal access. Put these into action: **Engage architects and planners with communities**, initiate pilot projects and work together for tangible, inclusive urban development.



## Step 5: Sprinkle affordable housing solutions

[Ingredients: values]

1 cup of **collaboration**  
2 tablespoons of **equity**  
1 dollop of **transparency**

[Instructions: actions]

Prioritise initiatives tailored to the needs of Dutch citizens, recognising the challenges they face in adapting to dynamic urban landscapes. Implement fair pricing models that reflect the nuances of the Dutch housing market and ensure a realistic approach to **economic diversity**. Incorporating a sense of social responsibility into housing development by seamlessly integrating **affordability into urban planning strategies**, and by **promoting alternative forms of housing** (e.g., collective housing). Work closely with developers to design and build affordable housing, emphasising the importance of accessibility and inclusivity. Provide **targeted subsidies or incentives** to support not only low-income Dutch citizens, but also migrant communities, creating an environment where **affordability becomes a shared reality**.



## Step 6: Fold in civic activism

[Ingredients: values]

1 handful of **civic engagement**  
1 tablespoon of **grassroots advocacy**  
A dash of **tenacity**

[Instructions: actions]

Fold in civic engagement to stir the pot of change. Get involved in **grassroots advocacy and challenge the norms** that perpetuate inequality. Support and join actions that fight for a productive outcome (e.g., woonprotest) to voice your concerns, demand change, and **contribute to the collective effort for a just city**. Let the aroma of activism permeate the air and inspire a movement towards thinking out of the box.



## Step 7: Taste the harmony before you serve!

[Ingredients: values]

1 cup of **patience**  
2 tablespoons of **perseverance**  
A pinch of **hope**

[Instructions: actions]

Before serving the dish of a just city, take a moment to envision the harmony. Be patient as the 'flavours' blend and intertwine. Persevere in the face of challenges, knowing that change takes time. Sprinkle hope generously, for a hopeful heart is the secret ingredient that makes the journey to a just city worthwhile. **Remember that achieving a just housing system is not a linear process, but rather a circular, iterative, and never-ending journey of building resilience and adaptation.** Embrace the cycles of learning, growth, and transformation as you navigate the path to justice. The journey may have twists and turns, but with each iteration the city becomes more attuned to the diverse needs of its residents.



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**E**mbrace  
**E**mpower  
**E**ndure

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Polina Yemelianova, Personal archive

In pursuing a just city, we want to share the lessons from our history and our determination to build a future that overcomes the shadows of a complex colonial past and current transition through adversity. Three interconnected pillars—

# **I D E N T I T Y P E R S O N A L I S M R E S I L I E N C E**

—seamlessly interwoven with the intricate fabric of our cultural landscape, guide the exploration of urban initiatives, planning, development, and technology.

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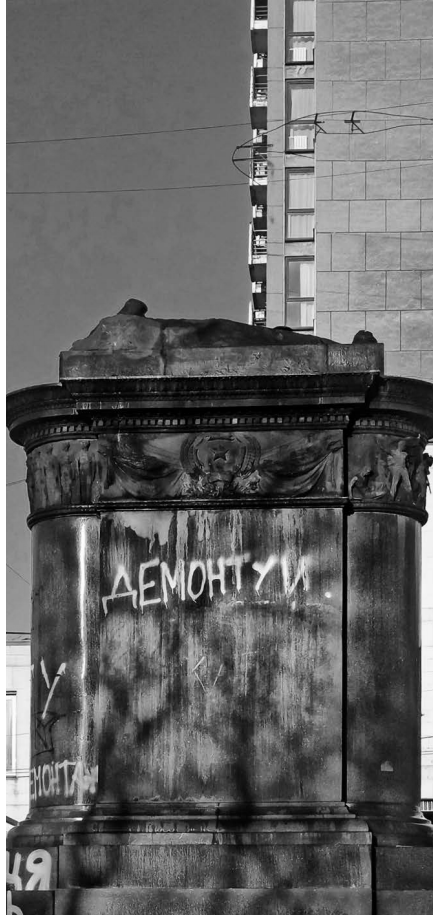
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IDEN -  
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Ukrainian history is tightly coupled with the notion of identity, which plays an essential role in civil society. For many centuries, the territories of modern Ukraine were colonies of the Russian Empire and later the USSR, who imposed not only their language and their system of governance but also their system of values, influencing the architecture.

Some aspects of the existing local, regional, or national identities were purposefully suppressed or wiped out. Soviet urban planning prioritised the realisation of an idea over the well-being of individuals. After the USSR collapsed, Ukrainian cities and communities continued to strive to rediscover who they were.

Today's -Russian war against Ukraine has led to the massive displacement of millions of people in-



*demolished communist monument  
december 2023*

TITY  
TITY  
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side the country. Such relocations are involuntary and marked by intense psychological states, often including an absence of a sense of belonging to a new residence. This situation is undoubtedly familiar not only to Ukrainians but also to many other nations around the world. Therefore, a significant challenge is working with local identity within the

framework of integrating internally displaced persons. When someone who has recently moved to a new community is also forcibly displaced, they must be assisted in adjusting to this new life in a new space. As new residents settle, becoming formal citizens of their new community doesn't necessarily equate to substantive citizenship, which is associated with a profound sense of belonging and active participation in local life. The factor of feeling

safe takes precedence in integration into a new space, and ensuring this requires thoughtful urban planning and policy-making.

Creating a shared story is essential in post-colonial transitions as the social glue holds the community together. Building a space that encourages creating social bonds and exploring and manifesting its local identity without being commercialised is crucial. Local authorities and the private sector should work on providing a platform for broad participation of the residents in a transparent and motivated development of their community, and at the same time, programmes for the integration of IDPs and their involvement in this community's processes. The initiatives must enhance the sense of belonging, creating a home for all.

*Diana Sierkina, Personal archive*

*Polina Yemelianova, Personal archive*

*the back of the soviet monument Datsivshchyna May (eng. Motherland)*





PERSON-  
PERSON-  
PERSON-  
PERSON-  
PERSON-

The experience of the Revolution of Dignity was of great importance for Ukrainians in the war against Russian aggression. Demonstrators opposed the current government, and the weak opposition could not become full-fledged leaders of the protest. The people organised the delivery of food, medicine and other things to the Maidan, organised a library and a lecture hall and even provided psychological assistance to the protest participants. Many volunteer organisations, currently engaged in front-line support and with the help of people affected by the war, started their activities on the Maidan.

Citizens are equal to the state and are ready to take responsibility, including financial responsibility, preservation and protection of their country. If, before the rev-



*the monument of Olga of Kyiv  
wearing bulletproof vest saying  
"she needs armor"  
Kyiv october 2023*

ALISM  
ALISM  
ALISM  
ALISM  
ALISM

olution of 2014, the relationship between Ukrainians and the state could be called vertical, then it will already have a more horizontal character after the Maidan events. In contrast to the individualism characteristic of Western countries, personalism is formed in our country when an individual's personality is manifested in interaction with society.

It is characteristic of Ukrainians to unite in various groups, unions, cultures, and organisations that are not subject to the state and are not the state's initiative.

In Ukraine, public organisations you are satisfied with effectively solving war issues are compelling. These organisations are independent and, therefore, more flexible. Their activities are closely related to communication. They

are not burdened by bureaucracy and are more accessible to program different approaches and involve various specialists. NGOs could become an effective tool and take a monopoly on solving city issues in the state.

Diana Sierkina, Personal archive

*exhibition of destroyed russian military equipment in the center of Kyiv, october 2022*



Diana Sierkina, Personal archive



RESIL-  
RESIL-  
RESIL-  
RESIL-  
RESIL-

City resilience, traditionally associated with environmental and societal fortitude, takes on new significance in conflict. In the wake of aggression, Ukrainian cities must not only endure but succeed against the odds. Our manifesto reveals a multifaceted approach to resilience tailored to the unique circumstances of a nation fighting for its existence.

At the forefront of this strategy is the unity of communities. Building strong bonds that foster a sense of shared purpose and support, which goes beyond regional, ethnic, and political differences, is essential. Community resilience is the bedrock upon which the nation can stand firm against external pressures, providing reassurance, strength, and shared determination.



*the Samsung office building  
near the central station of Kyiv  
damaged in a result of russian shelling*

IENCE  
IENCE  
IENCE  
IENCE  
IENCE

In times of trouble, the significance of technological innovation as a strong ally becomes more apparent. Digital tools play a crucial role in holding internal unity, facilitating the dissemination of important information, and coordinating responses to emerging threats. Technology empowers individuals

to maintain connections, stay well-informed, and exhibit resilience even when confronted with the most daunting challenges.

Economic diversification stands as a shield against external pressures. You can build economic resilience that withstands instability shocks by encouraging innovation and supporting local industries. A resilient economy empowers the

nation to endure hardships and ensures that the foundations of society remain strong, providing a buffer against external pressure.

Education becomes a guiding light in times of crisis. We should advocate for an unchangeable commitment to knowledge and enlightenment, encouraging people to invest in education to foster resilience. A well-informed population is better equipped to navigate the complexities of conflict and contribute to the nation's collective strength.

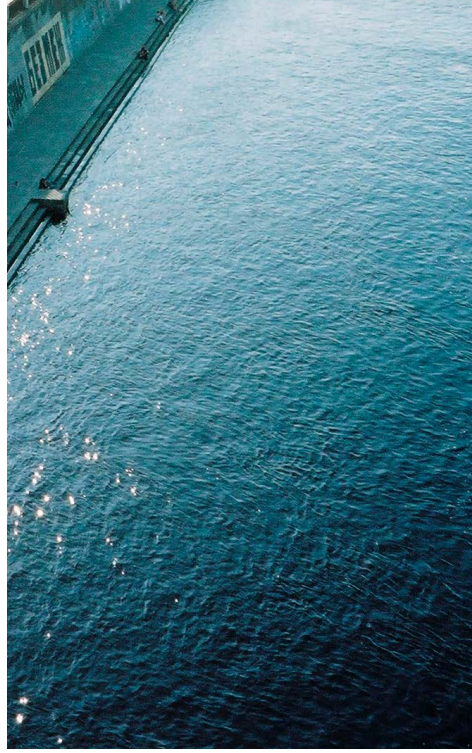
Diana Sierkina, Personal archive

Diana Sierkina, Personal archive

*a sign that says "mined" near a lake on the outskirts of Kyiv*



In conclusion, our manifesto resonates as a resounding call to action, weaving together the threads of Identity, Personalism, and Resilience into a cohesive vision for the future. Let us craft a narrative that overcomes the shadows of the past, heralding a future where our cities stand not just as structures but as living embodiments of a post-colonial renaissance—rooted in identity, flourishing through personalism, and fortified by the resilience of a society reborn.



Polina Yemelianova, Personal archive

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# A City Designed for the Just City

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# A City Designed

For the Just City

## Is Inclusive

considers the aspects of everyone within the community. It considers needs from the children to the elderly, and all their physical and emotional attributes by ensuring their views are heard and met.

## Can be easily accessed

the city has put in place safe means by which all of its residents can go into and out the city without a hustle and effective traffic management systems for vehicular and foot traffic.

## Affordable means of transport

safe and alternative means of public transport that suits the different needs of the residents within the city. Where public transport within the city is limited and moderated to the outskirts of the city.

## Proper sunshading systems

encouragement of planting of trees along sidewalks, encouragement of establishment of parks for relaxation and installation of sunshading systems in and around buildings.

## Lacks Visual Clutter

containment and moderation of Out of Home Advertising by companies in an effort to convince the mass public to purchase their products, this has led to cities covered in waste paper losing the architectural touch and connection of buildings with the people.

## Partnerships & Collaborations

normalize partnership between the government, businesses, communities, non-profit organizations and education institutions to amplify impact of initiatives for a fostered sense of shared responsibility.

## Street Family Housing

Provision of housing for the most vulnerable through urban-rural immigration, training, and supporting them as we re-onboard them back to their communities.

## Equitable Land Ownership & Distribution

stop evicting residents from their homes due to illegal dealings by corrupt officials in government. everyone has a right to own land and a home,

## Business Support

encourages trade and provides spaces and opportunities for residents to trade with one another to improve their overall economic well being.

## Smart City Solutions

this will improve city services, infrastructure and overall city efficiency in the current digital era..

## Main Challenges

**Lack of Collaboration for Effective Policy Development:**  
Forging collaboration between the government and the stakeholders for a unified policy development is essential.

**Enhancing Public Awareness and Participation:**  
Lack of public awareness on their involvement and participation in development issues to foster an engaged and informed public.

**Lack of student empowerment through hands on training:**  
Limiting direct interaction opportunities and their connection to real community issues.

**Corruption by government officials/ institutions,**  
leading to limited public involvement when it comes to development initiatives hampering the desired outcome.

**Lack of localized discussions for marginalized areas:**  
Problems and solutions affecting marginalized areas are discussed in the big city, centralized, and office-based decision-making as opposed to interacting directly with the residents to hear their views.

## Values

Inclusivity  
User Experience  
Equality  
Quality Education

## A Designed City Focuses on:

### Inclusivity:

Everyone's physical and emotional needs within the community are considered from the children, to the elderly. This includes spaces to play, work, read and live which promote the overall well-being and inclusivity of all its residents.

### Open to Business Opportunities

Provision of spaces for business opportunities from all walks of life. This could involve targeted initiatives for job creation, entrepreneurship, and support for local businesses also allowing street vendors and hawkers to participate and sell their wares within the city. The city should aim to create timelines, and space within specific streets to allow its residents to participate in informal trades that support the economic well-being of all of its people.

### Accessibility

All spaces and places need a safe and reliable means of access through different means of transport. Be it by car, air, foot, train, cycling, or wheelchair. All public spaces and private spaces need to be provided a means for access without any specific barriers unless otherwise. Transport routes and means provided need to accommodate specific traffic coming into and out of the city to accommodate the livelihood of its people. This includes installation of effective traffic management systems to enhance safety and good user experience for all its users.



## Affordable means of transport

Provide various options when it comes to public means of transport (tuktuk, matatus, buses, train, bicycles etc.). The entry of public and private cars within the city should also be moderated, where walking and cycling are heavily promoted within the city, to reduce pollution, congestion, reckless driving and heavy vehicular traffic coming to, and from the city. Limiting public transport to the outskirts of the city, only allowing verified transport systems within the city.

## Sun Shading systems

Cooling within the city as one walks through the streets is essential, not only for the residents but also to the reduction of the Urban Heat Island Effect. One way to curb this is to promote use of trees and natural vegetation with a bonus to the beautification of the city streets. Building owners and architects need to be encouraged to incorporate sun shading systems for buildings to enhance passive cooling, and allow shading of the streets.

## Reduction of visual Ads clutter

Currently, billboards, street-ads, and posters are encroaching on our streets hampering visibility of the urban landscape. Furthermore, when outdoor ads are installed on buildings, they hamper air circulation by blocking windows leading to poor air flow and excessive unbearable heat within the buildings. The advertising industry should be restricted to excessive ads and encouraged to consult urban design experts, and the public, to reduce visual clutter on our streets.

## Responsible street families' housing.

Housing for all. Street families need to be rehabilitated through urban-rural migration. This is done by tracking their family origins and relocating them back to their homes by grassroot government officials. Rehabilitation is crucial in this process by offering health rehabilitation, job training and affordable housing within their communities to help curb their overpopulation within the city.

## Partnerships and collaborations

between the government, businesses and also with non-profit organizations, educational institutions, and community groups to amplify the impact of initiatives and foster a sense of shared responsibility.

## Vision

Good design is a tool in our life, work, and play.

It is a crucial skill that when taught to everybody, gives power to the people to use it in solving our everyday problems.

## Call To Action

Be intentional in designing systems that support how we all live, work and play.

## Equitable Land Ownership & Issuance of Title Deeds by the government.

The public is protected from land cartels, corrupt officials and developers who take land that doesn't belong to them. This is further exacerbated by the issuance of fake title deeds by corrupt government officials to private developers leading citizens to being evicted and internally displaced from their homes.

## Promoting green building practices

Waste reduction, proper waste disposal and initiatives for renewable energy sources such as solar lighting, electric cars and motorbikes all while emphasizing the importance of eco-friendly urban design for the long-term health and good user experience of the city.

## Smart city solutions

in the digital era by encouraging startups to develop technology to improve city services, infrastructure, and overall efficiency and management of the city. This can include smart traffic systems, digital governance, and use of data analytics for informed decision-making.

## Citizen Engagement

To raise concerns, ideas, and help in decision-making processes through the development of online platforms or mobile apps to facilitate continuous communication between the government, stakeholders, and the public.

## Focus on quality education

To include ongoing programs for skill development, especially in areas related to urban planning, design, and sustainable practices to empower the workforce with relevant skills that contributes to the city's overall success.

## Stakeholders

Lawmakers  
Government  
Public  
Experts  
Business Community

## Summary

Design without intention is costly, but good design builds cities that empowers and connects the people.

# The City for All: Justice through redistribution

Alexandra Teubner  
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Image credits: Collage by Alexandra Teubner, Individual Images Creative Commons.  
Reference: Max Ernst Poster's draft 1921



# Inequality and Injustice

Injustice is omnipresent. It reaches from a global scale into our everyday lives. It manifests itself in repression, discrimination and powerlessness. Injustice stems from the inequality created by the ownership structure of our capitalist economic system: goods, means of production and land are in the hands of a select few. This unequal distribution of capital results in stark power imbalances, which ultimately form entrenched hierarchies, that systematically reproduce inequalities.

## The city for the few

The German constitution ("Grundgesetz") obliges property to be used for the common good (Article 14, GG). However, housing corporations often prioritise profit over this responsibility. The commodification of housing and land, along with the privatisation of social housing, exposes urban spaces to global competition. Land in the city is hardly in public hands any more - it can no longer be managed democratically. As a result, the stock of social housing is steadily declining [...]. The growing gap between rich and poor (Dinklage, 2020) is becoming ever more apparent in the built environment: entire population groups are being banished from the city centre to the periphery due to rising rents. Poorer sections of the population are also less mobile. In addition, peripheral areas have poor connections to public transportation. Access to the city, the economic, political and social centre, is becoming exclusive - social segregation is increasing. The problems of the displaced remain invisible to others.

The connection between unequal distribution and injustice is also evident on a global level. The world is divided into people with and

without capital, into the global North and the global South. This asymmetrical power relationship of colonialism is still in effect today: the global North exploits the South for cheap labour and natural resources. It leaves behind great injustices, poverty and instability. The purely profit-oriented economy, the reckless consumption of resources and

Structural power relations are barriers to positive urban development.

the high CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in European and American cities endanger the lives of poor population groups in the global South.

Racism lives on as a legacy of colonialism, but the role of the city as a place of contact (Ha, 2014) remains unfulfilled due to increasing material, structural and social segregation. Migrants, refugees and people of colour are more often poor and homeless (taz.de, 2023). The problems intersect with those of poorer sections of the population. Due to the lack of credentials, generational wealth and poor social mobility, the voices of

minorities often remain unheard in the planning of our cities.

In strongly patriarchal societies, women also suffer from poverty disproportionately. The injustice in the city must be viewed intersectionally. Women are less mobile than men in poor sections of the population (Visakha, 2021) and are therefore even more affected by displacement and car-oriented urban development. Capital relations are also fundamental here: Women are paid less for the same job and do much more care-work than men (BMFSFJ, 2018). The lack of concern for intimidating spaces ("Angsträume") in planning, remains an issue in the built environment. Such structural deficits can be traced back to the marginalisation of disadvantaged groups in urban planning. Here too, structural power relations are barriers to positive urban development. Injustices in the city are formed from the unequal distribution of capital, land and power. They are intersectional and systemically anchored problems.



Image credits: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Osnabr%C3%BCck\\_-\\_Iduna-Hochhaus\\_Westseite.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Osnabr%C3%BCck_-_Iduna-Hochhaus_Westseite.jpg), Creative Common.

The unjust city of today harms large parts of humanity - it is a city for the few. For cities to be fair, they must serve all people equally. It is vital to solve distribution problems and create the City for All.

# The city for all

The City for All is a city of freedom, equality and exchange. It is just. But how can we change property structures and power relations to eliminate injustice and initiate the transformation?

1.

Housing must be recognised as a basic right. Land must be under democratic control and collective stewardship. The housing industry must be freed from global market constraints through the state's right to socialisation. It must work in the interests of the people!

2.

Urban space must belong to all. Only then can the city become a place of exchange. The public sector must consider the needs of the people: Minorities and invisible groups must have their say in urban planning. Representative inclusion of all residents and agents for nature, animals and future generations is needed!



Image credits: Collage by Alexandra Teubner. Individual Images Creative Common.

3.

Vertical redistribution mechanisms must be established. The gap between rich and poor must be closed, the public sector financed and power imbalances reduced. This requires the introduction of a one-off capital levy ("Vermögensabgabe") to promote social housing. In addition, there is a need for a tax, that is progressively linked to the per capita living space ("Wohnflächenabgabe"), to avoid oversized floor areas in luxury flats. Finally, a Weimar-style tax on house rents ("Hauszinssteuer"), that supports people without the capabilities to pay rent on their own, is needed to enforce the basic right to housing. [2]

4.

The definition of personal wealth must be detached from private property. To this end, private pension must be decoupled from home ownership through increased state-backed pensions. The housing market will be relieved and everyone will be allowed to age with dignity. Ultimately, the growth-driven economy is replaced by an economy for the common good ("Gemeinwohlwirtschaft").

Standing in the way is a small minority of people in positions of power, who benefit from the current situation. But the framework for these changes is in place in Germany. Let's stand up for our rights and raise our voices!

The City  
where people have a say  
where everyone has a  
home  
where we live together as  
equals  
For All



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# While I Plan!

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# A Manifesto for Distributive Environmental Justice in Delhi

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**IMAGINE**, You're walking on the streets of New Delhi in India. It's the middle of June and the scorching summer is at its peak with temperature reaching 47°C. The Loo is blowing strongly and you are parched. But there's no water for you to drink or a single tree in sight under which you can momentarily sit and rest. Walking down the hot pavement, you take a turn and behold, a community park with tall shady trees to rest under and a water cooler to drink water from.

How blessed you must be feeling! A slice of heaven at last! You enter the park, only to be beaten blue and bloody by the residents of the neighborhood.

**Your fault?** Not being a resident of the gated community. And perhaps also, looking poor.

But what if I tell you it's a **REAL** incident?!

In fact, it's **NOT AN ISOLATED INCIDENT!**

In Delhi, the capital city and the seat of political power of India, these incidents are as old as the 1990s<sup>1</sup>. Conflicts between the **HAVES** and **HAVE NOTS** came to the forefront from the Delhi Development Authority's **Institutionalized Residential Segregation** (IRS) when they allowed Resident Welfare Associations (RWA) to fortify their colonies.

**Figure 1 & 2:** Article on beating of a slum dweller for entering the park of a gated residential colony in Delhi.

19-year-old Dilip had come to Delhi from Allahabad to see the Republic Day celebrations in January 1995, and had stayed on to find work. He was staying with some relatives in Shaheed Sukhdev Nagar, a jhuggi-jhopri (JJ) cluster adjoining D block of Ashok Vihar in north-west Delhi. On the morning of 30 January, Dilip was beaten, kicked and forced to run around and squat by constables of Delhi Police. Dilip collapsed and died on the spot.

At around 9:30 a.m., the police returned with heavy reinforcements and attempted to remove the body. Angry residents of the basti refused to let the body be removed until a political leader or senior official arrived. By the time the ACP (north-west) arrived, the atmosphere was tense. As the police continued trying to remove the body, the residents began pelting stones. The police opened fire. 3 people died in the firing. Another person died later because of injuries sustained in the firing. Among the injured was a woman who had given birth to a child a month ago. A bullet had hit her inside her home. The police dragged out people and broke down doors. A total of 123 people were arrested and taken to the Ashok Vihar P.S. Many of them had just returned from their shift duties at the nearby Wazirpur Industrial Area.

This argument rests on the fact that there was tension between the residents of Ashok Vihar and Shaheed Sukhdev Nagar. Tension which crystallized around the use of the park separating the two colonies. The park had been developed by the DDA for the residents of Ashok Vihar. The latter resented not only that the JJ dwellers used this park for purposes of defecation, but also that they used it for easy access into Ashok Vihar. The Residents Welfare Association of Ashok Vihar filed a petition in the High Court, and the Court then ordered the park to be walled and guarded against use by the JJ dwellers.

Tension over the use of the park still does not explain, however, why a boy had to be beaten to death for venturing into the park.

**Source:** People's Union for Democratic Rights

Delhi is a city divided into parts like Lutyens, New Delhi, DDA walled-colonies with big gardens, planned architecture, decent living and environmental conditions versus others like Shahdara, Old Delhi and area of Jamuna-paar with the absence of those all.

<sup>1</sup>People's Union for Democratic Rights. (August, 1996). Custodial Death and Police Firing in Ashok Vihar <http://www.unipune.ac.in/snc/cssh/HumanRights/02%20STATE%20AND%20ARMY%20-%20POLICE%20REPRESSION/D%20Delhi/15.pdf>

A city seemingly assimilating all those coming to it but never truly letting them feel at home as long as they don't move up the economic ladder. And sadly, also, a city where people are beaten and lynched for going to a gated park because they don't have any other green place to go to!<sup>2345</sup>

Figure 3 & 4: Newspaper article on gated parks and attitude of RWA in Delhi



Source: The Times of India

Figure 5 & 6: Newspaper article on Delhi High Court order ordering the RWAs to allow children to play in parks; Image showing citizens protesting against closing park gates



Source: The Times of India

<sup>2</sup> The Times of India. (September 14, 2019). Colony gates: Not an open and shut case. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/delhi/colony-gates-not-an-open-shut-case/articleshow/71119363.cms>

<sup>3</sup> The Times of India. (December 2, 2020). Delhi: RWAs up in arms against kiosks in parks. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/delhi/delhi-rwas-up-in-arms-against-kiosks-in-parks/articleshow/79526361.cms>

<sup>4</sup> The Times of India. (April 28, 2011). Don't be 'Selfish Giant', let kids play in park: HC to RWA. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/delhi/dont-be-selfish-giant-let-kids-play-in-park-hc-to-rwa/articleshow/8104149.cms>

<sup>5</sup> Ashish Malhotra. (June 12, 2019). What's Behind New Delhi's Gated Communities? <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-06-11/no-entry-behind-delhi-s-craze-for-security-gates>

Home to 16,787,941 people (Census of India, 2011) clustered in an area of 1483 square kilometers, 23 % of which is urban greens,<sup>6</sup> Delhi is one of the greenest capitals of the world.<sup>7</sup> The problem, however, lies in the stark differences in the way green spaces are distributed across the city. On one hand, 8 of the 252 wards of the city do not have the presence of green cover at all which goes along with their respective low socio-economic status.<sup>8</sup> More than half of the city's wards don't even fulfill the minimum criteria of 9 meter square per capita Urban Green Space (UGS) availability recommended by WHO. On the other hand, wards of New Delhi District, Delhi Cantonment board, and South Delhi (Vasant Kunj, Malviya Nagar etc.) can easily boast of more than 100 meter square per capita availability of UGS.

This development is partly a result of IRS and partly caused due to the lack of representation of stakeholders in the urban planning process along with other historical and socio-cultural factors. The former being wards of very low socio-economic status versus the latter being some of the richest wards of the city are representative of a general trend in many cities of India and the Global South.

It stands as a stark reminder to the fact that:

**Developmental plans are mostly made by the rich for the rich (technocrats).**

**The developmental priorities for low income households are seen from an economic lens while trading off the environmental and social costs of the economic and infrastructural development activities.**

**Institutionalized residential segregation is not the urban solution it is deemed to be.**

<sup>6</sup> Forest Survey of India. (2021). Ministry of Environment and Climate Change <https://fsi.nic.in/forest-report-2021-details>

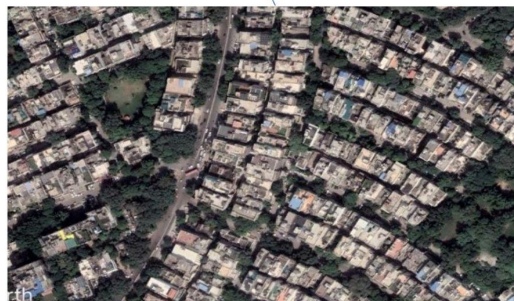
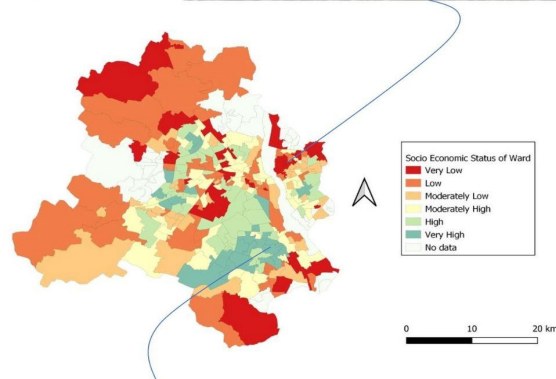
<sup>7</sup> Forest Survey of India. (2021). Ministry of Environment and Climate Change <https://fsi.nic.in/forest-report-2021-details>

<sup>8</sup> Ravindra Singh. (2023). Author's own work.



**Figure 7:** Image shows Socio-economic status of wards in Delhi and close up of selected wards

Shahdara is one of the oldest parts of Delhi. It is a highly dense area and integral part of old Delhi. The neighbourhood haphazardly grew during the medieval era, and after the partition waves of migration made it one of the most congested areas in the city. It has very poor infrastructural facilities (housing, sanitation, healthcare, etc.). The area not only performs poorly in socio-economic status clusters on the map, but also in the availability of green space. In the Google Earth imagery, we can see that the struggle for land has not left any inch of green space.



Greater Kailash is an affluent gated neighborhood which was developed by private builders in the 1960s. It has many high end restaurants, boutiques, beauty salons, cafes, bars and banks. The area is home to very well known politicians, business persons and bollywood stars. Independent villas cost around US \$800,000 - \$9,000,000 due to which it is among the most expensive neighborhoods in Delhi. In the google earth imagery we can see that the space is adequately green and it is categorized in very high status of ward in the map.

Maps by Ravindra Singh (own work), using Google Earth Imagery. Image use complies with Google Earth directives. No further use allowed.

Do **WE** all not agree that:

**Every child has the right to play in a park** irrespective of his family income?

*8 wards of Delhi do not have any parks.<sup>9</sup>*

**Every adult has the right to walk, sit, move around in a green space** without having to buy a ticket for it?

*Sundar Nursery charges 50 rupees for adults and children over 12 years as entry fee and 25 rupees for children between 5-12 years. The average monthly income of a Delhite is 22,666 rupees.<sup>10</sup>*

**Every individual deserves to access the resources provided by nature** equally, particularly when they are struggling to avail everything else?

*Delhi government funds the creation and maintenance of parks (1,08,500 rupees) which exist in RWAs colonies as well non gated colonies intended for everybody's use but RWAs practically restrict the access.<sup>11</sup>*

<sup>9</sup> Ravindra Singh. (2023). Author's own work.

<sup>10</sup> THE HINDU BUREAU. (2023, March 21). Delhi's per capita income grew by 7.54% in 2022-23: survey. *The Hindu*.

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<sup>11</sup> Delhi Parks and Garden Society. (2023). Government of Delhi.

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As the law abiding citizens of a constitutional democracy that believes in **Equality, Freedom, & Justice for all**, how will you feel if for **ONE WEEK**:

The gates to all parks and gardens are closed for you?

You aren't allowed your morning walks, yoga or other daily activities at green spaces and your kids aren't allowed to play there?

There isn't a single shady tree available for you to park your bike/car under in the scorching summers of Delhi?

UNCOMFORTABLE? UNHAPPY? IRRITATED, perhaps?

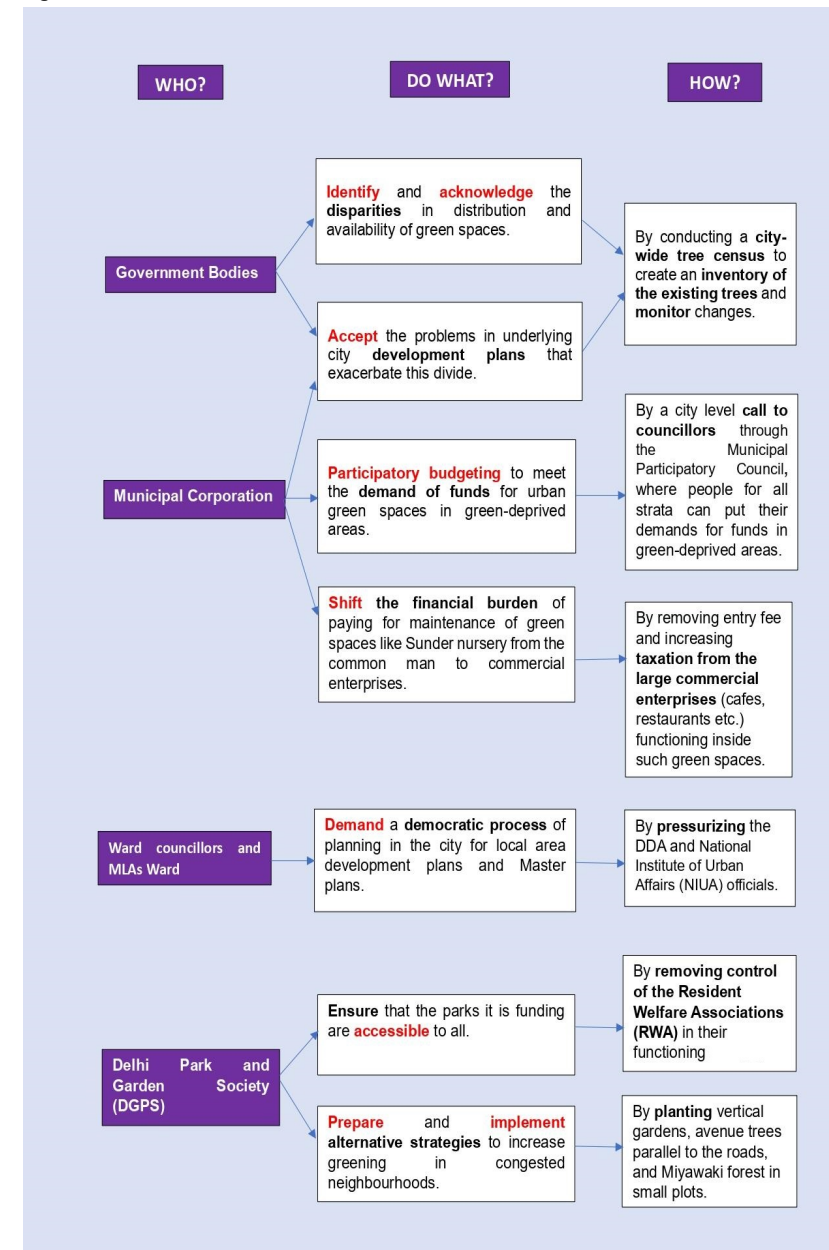
Maybe, ANGRY??  
FURIOUS even?!?!

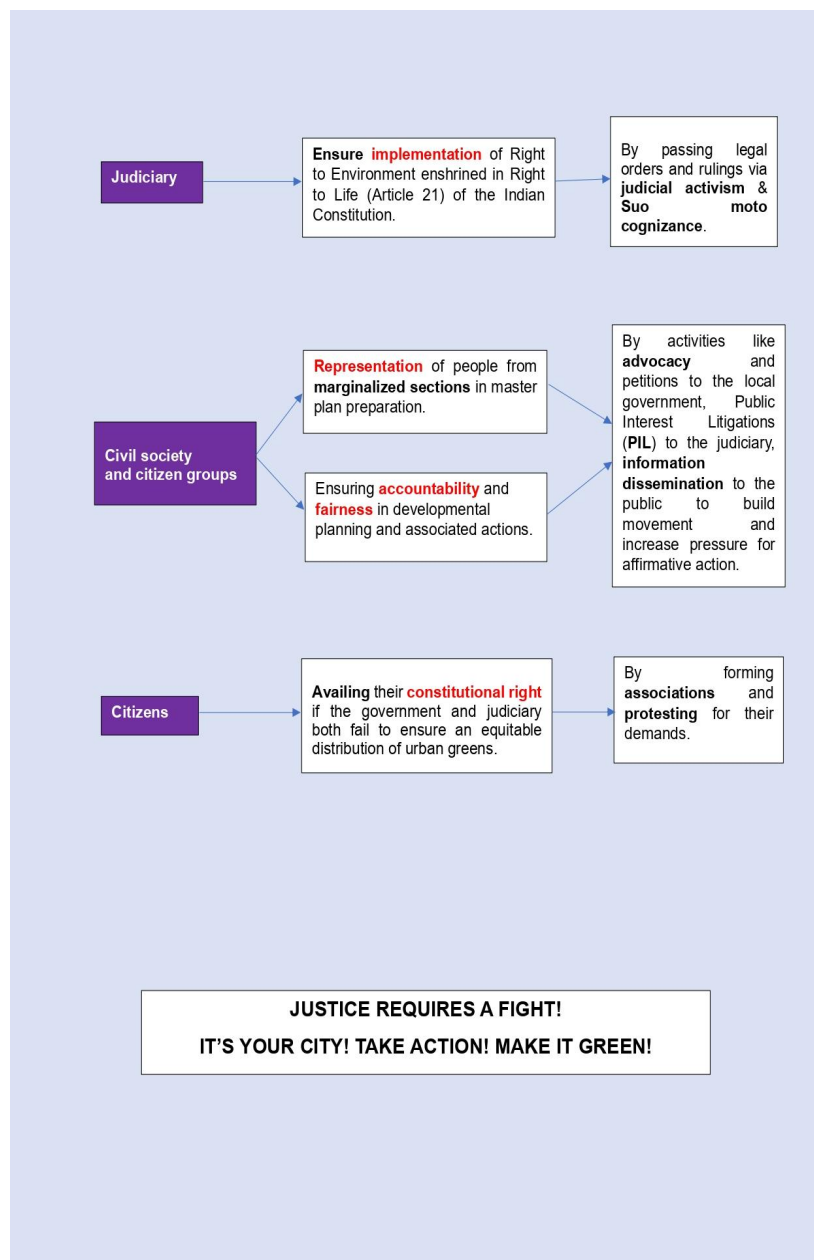
Then don't you think it's time for **us** to think about how it feels for those who've lived without these resources for their entire lives? How can **WE** sleep at night knowing that the **things we take for granted** are parts of the wildest dreams of those we see everyday?

How can **WE** just let it be?  
How can **YOU** just let it be?

ENVIRONMENTAL INJUSTICE IS REAL! AND IT'S CALLING FOR  
ACTION!  
YOU NEED TO **ACT NOW!**

Figure 8 a & b: Action Plan





Source: Garima Jasrotia and Ravindra Singh (Own work)

# Milano Just City A Graffiti Manifesto

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**Resistance to injustice and the fight for justice** require visions and ideas: a manifesto! But visions and ideas are **massively sold** by the public administration and **consumed as commodities** in the financialized urban environment. So let's start from the **people's truth shouted by graffiti** on the walls in Corvetto, Milan!

## MILANO JUST CITY

**2** They say URBAN REGENERATION

**We shout  
PUBLIC CITY!**

LA RIGUALIFICAZIONE  
È IL NUOVO BUSINESS  
DI CARIPLO

\*Regeneration is Cariplo's new business

**1** They say ATTRACTIVENESS

**We shout  
PERMANENCE!**

VOGLIAMO I FIORI  
MA ANCHE LE CASE!

\* We want flowers but also houses!

**3** They say WAR ON URBAN DECAY

**We shout  
SPATIAL JUSTICE!**

Se il quartiere vuol rigualificare  
Tanti poderi dovrà cacciare!

\*If the neighbourhood you want to gentrify, many poorer you'll have to send away

## A GRAFFITI MANIFESTO

**4** They say SHOWCASE-CITY

**We shout  
LIVEABLE CITY!**

SFONDA la  
CITA' VEIPINA

\*Break through the showcase-city!

**5** They say GREEN-CITY

**We shout  
ECO-HEALTHY CITY!**

FUCK the  
OLYMPICS



# Manifesto for a Swimmable City

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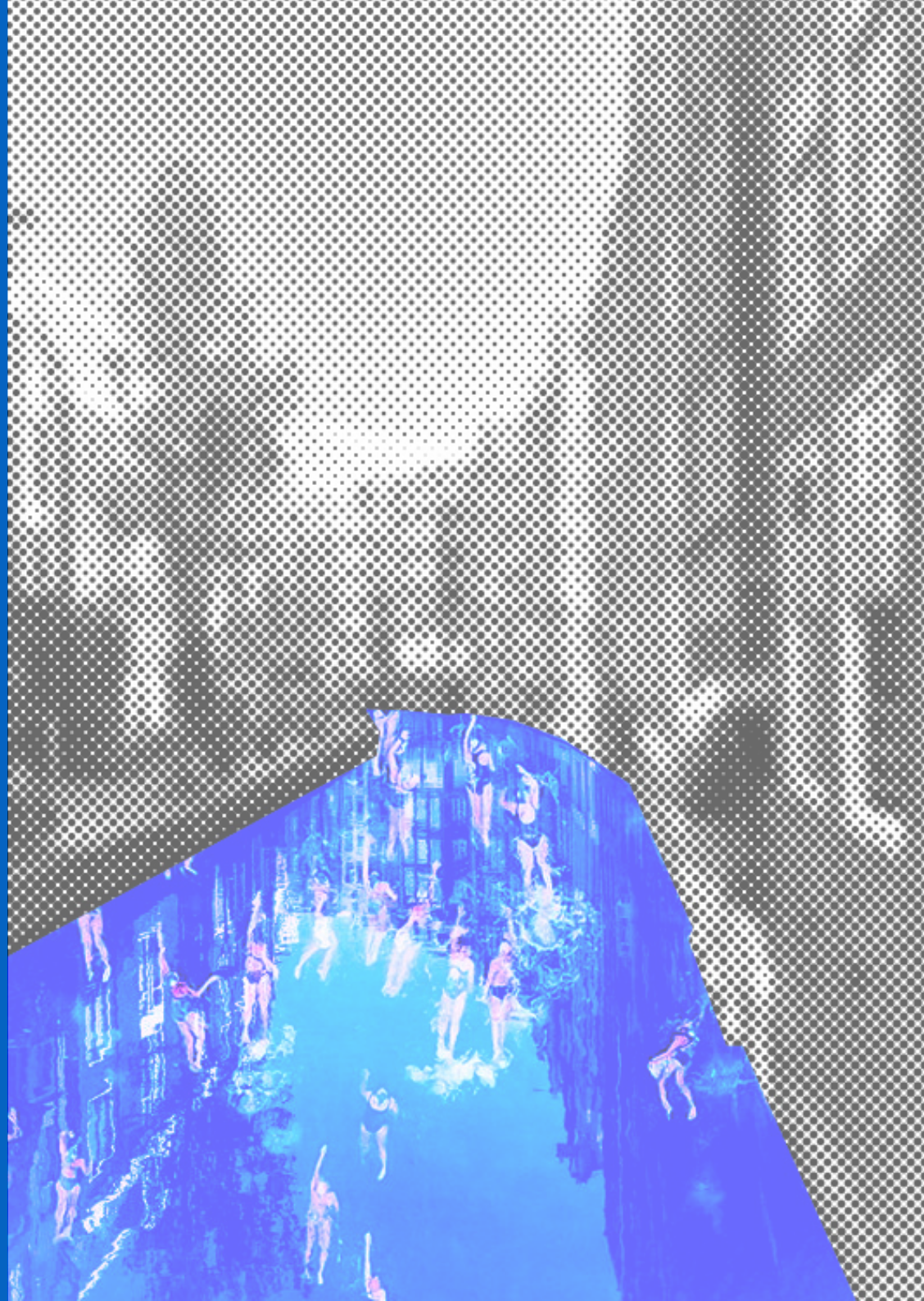
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In a time of rising temperatures, mounting pressure on green spaces, unprecedented urbanisation, and the growing commercialisation of city centres, there is a critical need to re-imagine urban waters as part of public space.

## BEYOND LEISURE

Water has the ability to evoke a sense of belonging to both place and fellow swimmers that generates new connections, networks and social bonds much needed in modern day cities. The 'fluidity and boundary-less-ness of water' liberates bodies from the hecticness of everyday urban life (Watson, 2019). Those who have experienced a swimmable city know the wonderful sight of a diverse crowd of people coming together to bathe while chatting, playing and refreshing. City water is, indeed, liquid public space (Ruby & Shinohara, 2019). Urban swimming allows city dwellers to fulfill their longing for nature while interacting with neighbours and strangers alike - intertwining social and natural "life between buildings" (Gehl, 2008).

"There are various motivations for swimming in the city: returning to nature, liberating human bodies from the rules and practices of an excessively monitored world, reappropriating an increasingly privatised urban space, or simply fulfilling the desire for a healthy, social, refreshing and athletic activity." (Ruby & Shinohara, 2019, p. 19).

Urban swimming is not just about recreation. Its deeper significance resides in the "reinvention of public space" (Ruby & Shinohara, 2019). Diving in the depths of city waters enables you to go beneath the surface of the otherwise stone-filled urban arena, adding a -literal- extra layer to the public parts of our cities. Following LeFebvre, swimmers actively use their bodies to change the perceived, conceived, and lived space of the city (Lelandais, 2014, changing the meaning of urban waterways one plunge at a time.

## CHALLENGES FOR THE SWIMMABLE CITY

While we could carry on infinitely listing the benefits of swimmable cities, ranging from physical and mental health improvements (Völker & Kistemann, 2011), to heat stress reduction (Brimicombe, 2022), to a higher sense of belonging and social connection (Völker and Kistemann, 2011, Watson 2019, Bates & Moles, 2024), *not many cities in the world are actually swimmable*. Over the past few decades, many city dwellers have distanced themselves from their waterways due to pollution and deteriorating infrastructure which transformed city waters into unsightly, often contaminated areas unsuitable for bathing (Ruby & Shinohara). Additionally, privatisation has further exacerbated the situation by converting public water into private harbours or dumping places, denying citizens their rightful access to what should be a communal asset (Dedulle, 2023).

Fortunately, an increasing number of initiatives advocating for better swimming facilities in urban areas are popping up worldwide (The Renaissance of Urban Swimming, 2023). However, the path towards swimmable cities is not a case of supply and demand. Many initiatives face resistance from local governments, citing reasons such as financial constraints for cleanups,

technical and safety issues, and fears for increased nuisance around swimming facilities (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2022). On top of that, the complexity of water management and the many interest at play, compounded by various externalities that notably impact water quality downstream, cause the pace in which cities across the globe respond to the call for more places to swim to be way too slow.

## INITIATIVES FOR CHANGE

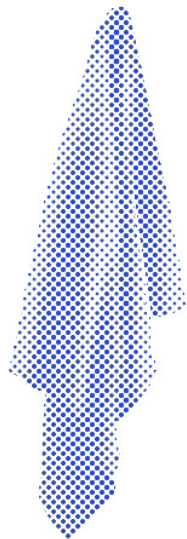
Yet, despite all the difficulties, the clock is ticking. Urban populations face numerous challenges related to their health and well-being. Stressful and hectic living environments without places to soften and relax are taking their toll. Meanwhile, the summers are getting hotter and hotter, asking for more places to cool down. This means that **swimmable urban waterways are not just a fun extra - they are a necessity to maintain the quality of city life**. Pioneering cities like Copenhagen and Bern show us that a swimmable city *is possible*. These examples teach us that swimming *can* be a part of our everyday life as city dwellers, integrating a new use of urban waterways in the fabric of our urban experience.

City water does not miraculously clean itself from years of toxic pollution, nor does it autonomously reclaim its quays and waterfronts from privatised use. Good examples show us that it requires decades of sustained collaboration between local governments and citizen initiatives to attain high water quality and establish excellent swimming facilities (Ruby & Shinohara, 2019).

To **MAKE MORE CITIES SWIMMABLE**, we need voices to be raised and actions to be taken. That is why we wrote this manifesto. Join us and many other citizens and grassroots initiatives to reclaim our urban waterways and re-imagine a future where swimming in your local canal, river or harbour *is possible*.

## THE MANIFESTO

- 01/ Reclaim your local city waters
- 02/ Design accessible facilities
- 03/ Prioritise inclusive access
- 04/ Protest your local swim restrictions
- 05/ Demand safe and clean swimming water
- 06/ Foster local community engagement
- 07/ Create networks of expertise
- 08/ Liberate your body
- 09/ Press for places to play
- 10/ Put open-water swimming on your city's (political) agenda







## 01/ Reclaim your local city waters

In the words of +POOL: “Tell your city you want your river back!”. City waters should not be reserved for private (industry) interests. Spread that message.

## 02/ Design accessible facilities

Architects, designers, and engineers, let's shape accessible spaces for urban swimming together.



## 03/ Prioritize inclusive access

Urban swimming shouldn't be just for daredevils, but made accessible to individuals of all backgrounds, abilities, and ages. There should be good education, information, and safe and accessible physical infrastructure.

## 04/ Protest your local swim restrictions

Challenge outdated swim restrictions. Do it your way - from plunging into unappointed water sites (but watch your safety!), to organising float-ins, to writing letters to your local administration.

## 05/ Demand safe and clean swimming water

Cleanups, filtration technology, and water quality monitoring can make urban swimming safe again. We know it can be done and we need to implement this everywhere.

## 06/ Foster local community engagement

Swimming in your local urban water is the perfect occasion to connect with your neighbours. Find your want-to-become-swimclub and advocate for better swimming facilities together.

## 07/ Create networks of expertise

Engage with experts to advance the cause of urban swimming.

## 08/ Press for places to play

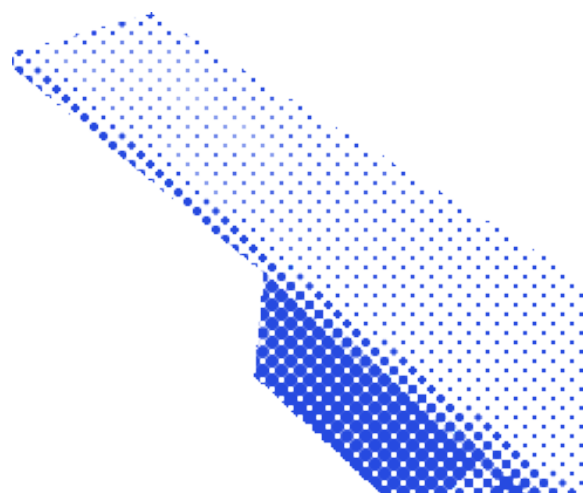
Your city should feel like a playground and not as a commercial centre. Get mad about not having the option to plash in your lunch break.

## 09/ Liberate your body

If you can, using your body is a great way of resistance for claiming your right to the city.

## 10/ Put open-water swimming on your city's (political) agenda

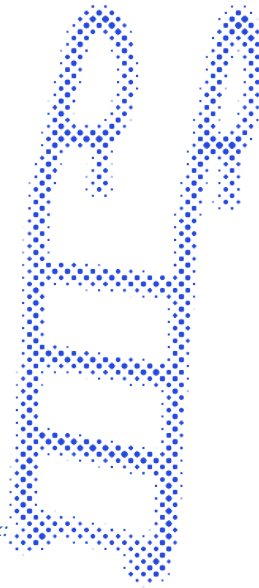
Citizen initiatives have proven to work in many pioneering cities. Start checking your city's plans for making (more) urban waterways suitable for swimming. If they're not doing enough, start holding them accountable!





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# More swimming

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# My City My Home

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## In our home we are equal

Each of us is different, but to be treated equally and rightfully is what makes your city feel like home

We advocate for authorities to treat women with equity, extending equal opportunities and orchestrating urban landscapes to ensure the well-being of all genders.

Despite women playing a pivotal role in shaping cities, their diverse needs are often neglected.

It is crucial to recognize women as citizens with diverse roles and demands. Cities must cease to be designed to privilege men, impeding women's ability to navigate freely without fear of sudden hazards such as rape, harassment, violence, and humiliation.

The city experience for women involves navigating through mental maps, evading dark alleys and ominous areas—a taxing and unjust endeavor.

A just city should mirror the safety and equality found within women's homes.

The assertion that "Gender equality is at the center of building an inclusive and cohesive society that supports sustainable and steady urban development," as articulated in "Gender Inequalities in Cities," underscores the intrinsic link between gender parity and urban progress.

Mere acknowledgment of women's rights is insufficient; authentic impact in constructing a just city requires tangible actions, transcending rhetoric.

We urgently demand concrete changes in long-overdue urban design measures, rejecting the adaptation to constant hidden fears. It is time to embrace a city planned for everyone, free from injustice and fear. Our call is for solutions with a gender perspective, reshaping narratives, fostering inclusivity, and advocating shared leadership.



## In our home we feel safe

In the complicated composition of urban life, the city reveals itself as a vast interconnected house. Its streets are the corridors, and its buildings are the rooms that house the dreams and aspirations of its inhabitants. Security, one of the sturdy foundations of a home, is the groundwork upon which the city's essence thrives. Just as the well-illuminated rooms of a house invite warmth and assurance, a well-lit cityscape signifies safety, comfort, and order. The glow of streetlights becomes the guiding stars, illuminating the path for inhabitants as they navigate the labyrinthine streets. In this urban dwelling, the fusion of safety and luminosity paints a portrait of a city, where every corner whispers tales of security.

It is crucial to rethink the urban planning strategies employed. Prioritizing the lighting of every corner within the urban landscape emerges as an essential strategy intended for ensuring the safety, security, and overall well-being of the citizenry.

## In our home we express

Each of us is unique in how we express ourselves, experience life, and perceive our place in the community. This distinctiveness must be preserved, to authentically manifest our human nature, contributing to the prosperity and abundance of our world.

In our homes, we receive appreciation for our true selves and encouragement in our aspirations. In the Just City, every talent, profession, or activity is recognized and respected. Whether you're an artist, doctor, baker, or homemaker, pursued academic studies, or opted for unconventional paths like becoming a street artist, musician, or social media influencer, your work is acknowledged as a valuable facet of the city's cultural scene. You're afforded the same opportunities and professional development as those in more traditional careers.

Whatever your role, whoever you are, your contribution is valued, and you hold significance within the community. Your authenticity is the cornerstone of our Just City's development, where each individual counts and contributes to the collective flourishing.



## In our home we are dignified

Imagine dignity as an inner garden, a precious plot that each individual cultivates within themselves. The home represents the intimate haven where this garden can fully bloom. It's a place to seek refuge from external storms, where warmth, understanding, and respect are found. The walls of the house symbolize the protection of this dignity, creating a safe space where residents can be authentic without fearing judgment.

Now, envision the city as the vast landscape surrounding this house. A well-designed and compassionate city is like a communal garden, where each plot of dignity contributes to the beauty and vitality of the whole. Streets, parks, schools, and public spaces are elements that influence the quality of the communal garden. A city that respects the dignity of its citizens; by ensuring well-being, fundamental rights are granted by creating spaces that cater to essential needs and expectations; involves universal access to adequate housing and land, as well as access to basic services; and provides fertile ground where everyone can thrive, diversity is celebrated, and equality blossoms.



## In our home we have a roof

The fundamental right to secure housing is a crucial principle of social justice and human rights. It is essential that every individual, regardless of socio-economic status, ethnicity, gender, or background, be afforded the opportunity to access adequate housing. Recognizing housing as a basic human right emphasizes the principles of equality and dignity. With the aim of promoting inclusive and sustainable communities, it is crucial for policymakers and stakeholders to execute policies and strategies that ensure equitable access to housing, thereby empowering all members of society to fulfill their potential and contribute meaningfully to the public welfare. Upholding the right to housing not only enhances individual well-being but also fortifies the fabric of a just city.

Analogously, a just city is akin to a home with a protective roof, symbolizing security and inclusion. This analogy highlights equal rights, crucial for social integration. Housing equality is pivotal for societal cohesion and individual fulfillment.



we're different but connected

WE CAN ACCESS ALL THE ROOMS

**Everything looks beautiful**

**We discuss our problems**

**We Celebrate**

**WE ARE COMFORTABLE**

**IN OUR HOME**

**WE'RE EQUAL**

**we welcome guests**

**we're safe**

we do activities with Our neighbors in some occasions

*We're comfortable*

**OUR PRIVACY IS PROTECTED**

WE CARE FOR EACH OTHER

**WE HAVE PETS WE CONNET TO NATURE**

**we express freely**

THERE IS LIGHTING ACCORDING TO OUR NEEDS

**WE'RE APPRECIATED FOR WHO WE ARE**

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# A Manifesto for Sustainable Mobility in the University of the Philippines Diliman

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## PROMOTION OF IMPROVED PEDESTRIANIZATION

UP Diliman promotes pedestrianization to increase walkability, safety, mobility, and ecological sustainability. If pedestrianization is further improved, the institution can hope to enhance safety, lower pollution levels, reduce fuel consumption, lessen traffic on campus, and promote social and cultural activities even more, which will benefit the university as a community.

## AFFORDABLE FARES FOR THE FILIPINO PEOPLE

Anticipated fare increases to ranges of 26-34 PHP pose a substantial financial burden on workers relying on jeepneys for their daily commute.

Increased prices will have a domino effect on the commuters as it will equate to higher costs of living which, will limit also their access to opportunities such as jobs and education.

## LOCALIZED MODERNIZATION OF JEEPNEYS

The call for jeepney modernization must be done gradually - allowing local companies to take over the jeepney engine and fabrication market with considerations to emission standards under the Clean Air Act.

This ensures fair prices for commuters, job and income security for drivers and their families, and sustainability for the purpose of keeping the environment clean and habitable.

## EQUITABLE WAGES FOR FILIPINO DRIVERS

The daily average income of Filipino public utility vehicle drivers ranges around 300-400 PHP, well below the acceptable livable wage in the Philippines.

As the cost of petroleum products continue to fluctuate due to major oil companies, more drivers struggle financially.

The government must intervene and protect its consumers from the unregulated price hikes of petroleum products, and should amend The Downstream Oil Industry Deregulation Act of 1998 as it gives oil companies sole control over the prices of their goods.

## PRIORITIZATION OF COMMUTERS

Beyond policy adjustments, there is a critical need to prioritize urban spaces, specifically the development of infrastructure conducive to efficient public transportation. This places importance on the commuters, and includes the enhancement of facilities supporting walking, cycling, and road-based public transportation.



## SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES - DILIMAN

## FOSTERING OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS

As jeepneys are considered to be the main mode of public transport within UP Diliman, it is important to recognize its significance, especially to the community.

Although often jam-packed, these spaces provide passengers with connections amongst each other. It is common to see different scenarios within these jeepneys, such as vendors selling items, caroling during the holidays, people sharing their stories, and more.

## PROVISION FOR OTHER MODES OF TRANSPORTATION

Sustainable mobility advocates for a diverse range of transportation options. University facilities should facilitate walking, biking, opting for electric vehicles, personal cars, and utilizing public transportation like jeepneys. In essence, every student should enjoy equitable access to various transportation modes.

## STUDENT-FRIENDLY TRANSPORTATION OPTION

UP Diliman requires accessible and affordable transportation for its students that ensures convenience, efficiency, and sustainability. Optimization of all means necessary for the betterment of the mobility of the students must be considered while ensuring that it is financially economical for the student population.

## PROTECTION OF THE FILIPINO'S IDENTITY

More than a mode of transport, jeepneys have become a symbol of our country's identity as it is uniquely ours. Historically, it was meant to be a temporary solution to make use of discarded post-WWII Willy Jeep scraps from American soldiers, but have stayed in our culture to this day. As these colorful vehicles that display all kinds of unique art roam our streets, they also represent the Filipino's spirit of community, resilience, and resourcefulness.

## UPHOLD THE FREE COOPERATIVE AND DRIVERS' RIGHT TO ORGANIZE

Current cooperative models require drivers to voluntarily give up their franchises, which takes away the operators' right to gain the independence of their own franchise.

Though cooperatives can be beneficial in a perfectly just system, their current organization neglects the drivers' individual struggle - most of whom come from the lower to middle class.

The drivers' plights must be heard and addressed, and this can only be done if their calls are opened to the masses.

# Woman, Life, Freedom

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“ In the dark and quiet streets of my own city of Tehran, I felt a bit uneasy once – someone was walking behind me. A quick look confirmed it, making my walk home a bit nerve-racking. While crossing the street, lost in my thoughts, I unexpectedly bumped into the same person. He asked, “Ma’am, why did you change your path? Are you scared of me?” He was an immigrant and his words didn’t just point out my vulnerability as a woman, but also brought attention to the biases immigrants face. This encounter made me think a lot, showing how different injustices are linked in our city. We both said sorry. It all made me realize we need some serious changes. It’s a reminder that getting rid of unfair judgment is crucial for creating a city where everyone, no matter where they’re from, can walk around without feeling scared. ”

At the heart of urban justice lies the profound significance of *Women, Life, Freedom*, the now-famous Kurdish chant which turned into the mantra of the feminist social revolution in Iran, after the murder of *Mahsa Jina Amini* for her “insufficient *hijab*”. This revolution sparked among the younger generation who seek the inherent right to a dignified existence, and endeavour to dismantle societal constraints.





# WOMEN

**WE MOVE THAT** in the Just City, women and all members of minorities and suppressed groups should stand on equal grounds, breaking free from the constraints of societal expectations. We advocate for **equal opportunities** in education, employment and leadership roles, dismantling systemic biases that hinder progress.

**WE MOVE THAT** every woman and all members of minorities and suppressed groups should have the **autonomy** to shape their own destiny in the Just City. We champion a space where women and all members of minorities and suppressed groups make choices freely, unrestricted by outdated norms or societal pressures.

**WE MOVE THAT** safety for all communities should be paramount. The Just City should ensure the **safety and security** of each and every woman and all members of minorities and suppressed groups, addressing not only physical safety but also protection from harassment and discrimination. We strive for inclusivity, recognizing and respecting diverse experiences.

**WE MOVE THAT** the Just City should **challenge stereotypes**, as stereotypes cast shadows on our cities, perpetuating injustice. The Just City should provide an environment where every woman is seen beyond societal preconceptions.

*In the echoes  
of said  
encounter,  
we call for  
change. Our  
commitment  
to a Just  
City, where  
women thrive  
without fear,  
is unwavering.  
Together, we  
transcend  
barriers,  
weaving a  
city where  
equality,  
autonomy  
and safety  
prevail— a  
city where  
shadows are  
never cast on  
a woman's  
path.*

# LIFE

**WE MOVE THAT** in the pursuit of happiness, an elusive plural melody should resonate with justice in the urban landscape, guiding the aspirations of its inhabitants. A vivid fusion of various cultures and viewpoints on ethics enhances the **collective identity** within the multifaceted structure of urban life.

**WE MOVE THAT** true justice unfolds in the embrace of respect, transcending barriers and fostering a sense of **shared humanity**. In the urban symphony, fear and caution compose discordant notes, challenging the harmony of coexistence.

**WE MOVE THAT** its **public spaces** should define the Just City. While providing for and facilitating privacy for citizens, the Just City in its spatial and functional structure should emphasize **public spaces** and guarantee their quality, vibrancy, activity and **accessibility** for all groups, as focal points of spontaneous experience.

**WE MOVE THAT** the Just City should provide access to nature as a respite, a sanctuary within the city's concrete embrace. As we navigate the urban labyrinth, the environmental pillars stand as sentinels of balance. Clean water, pure air and the steadfast presence of trees then weave a narrative of sustainability, cultivating a harmonious relationship between urban life and the natural world.

*In this holistic  
vision of urban  
justice, the  
symphony of  
life and the  
harmony of  
environmental  
pillars  
converge;  
painting a  
portrait of a  
city where  
every note,  
every breath,  
contributes  
to the melody  
of equity,  
inclusivity, and  
a shared right  
to a fulfilling  
existence.*



# FREEDOM

**WE MOVE THAT** the **right to protest**, a cornerstone of democratic societies, should be a pulsating rhythm in the Just City, echoing the desire for positive change.

**We MOVE THAT** the Just City should intrinsically comprise **multiple landscapes of freedom**: Not confined to mere possibilities of temporary bold expression in turning points as necessity, but rather, conducive to gradual authorship and consolidation of meaning also; in any collective challenge, desperation, criticism, descent or uprising against established power structures on various scales of everyday life. Thus, within the dynamic cityscape, a nuanced expression of freedom unfolds, as individuals exercise their right to openly articulate their beliefs.

**WE MOVE THAT** the Just City should augment and empower citizens in that it **assimilates and integrates** various different groups of identity and background. Segregation based on arbitrary characteristics reinforces discrimination, thus robbing citizens of the richness of their collective and individual experience.

**WE MOVE THAT** the Just city should be unassuming and unimposing toward any sets of ideological or belief systems, bound only by recourse to **secular and democratic law** on the local scale.

*In a society  
that cher-  
ishes the  
freedom  
to express  
without fear,  
this becomes  
a powerful  
antidote  
to power  
usurpation,  
disenfran-  
chisement,  
societal  
pretensions  
and intrusive  
surveillance.*

It validates how each and every citizen chooses to live, love, dress, pray, etc., not bolstering one and suppressing the other based on any established “supreme” axiomatic value, belief or ethos.

**WE MOVE THAT** the Just City should invite and incentivize **participation of citizens** in how it is run, as safeguards for transparency and representation. In turn, we call for citizens to participate in urban governance and management on any level and in any scale they see fit. Citizens of the Just City should feel free, heard and valued in how both their immediate and peripheral environments take shape and maintain around them.

**WE MOVE THAT** a just city should conceive of city life primarily from the **grassroots levels** upward. We believe a just city can only be just if it is first and foremost just on the most immediate and intimate local scales. We declare, though, that a just city should precede by emanating and inspiring feelings of worth and decisiveness in each and every citizen in positively influencing their community, their neighborhood and all the way up to their broader region.

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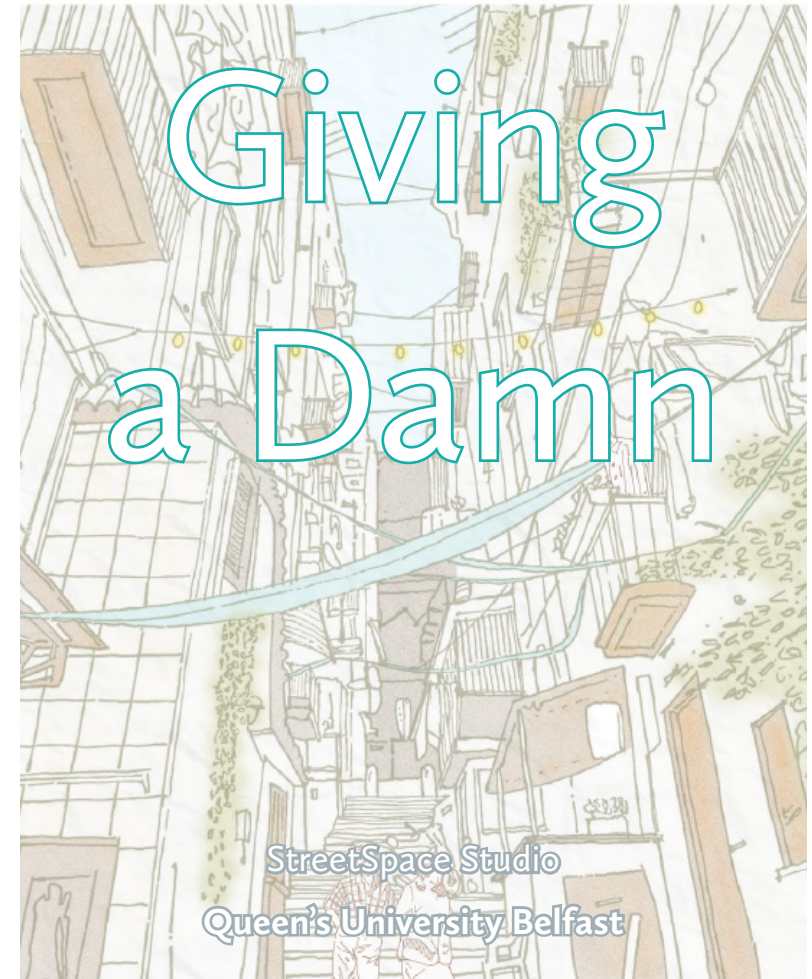
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# Giving a Damn

The Street Space Studio

Queen's University of Belfast,  
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## Architects: ACT!

Many perceive architects as increasingly irrelevant in the construction industry, yet daily, everyone is profoundly influenced by the choices architects make. From the windows shaping our view of the world to the spaces providing safety and joy, architects impact our lives. However, architecture (and its architects) can also contribute to discrimination, perpetuate inequalities, and foster spatial injustices. To pursue an architecture that addresses global issues of social and spatial exclusion, architects must be genuinely invested. This requires cultivating **hope and joy**.





## 1 - Power in hope and joy

We assert that architecture has the power and responsibility to instil hope, not just as a distant wish, but as an active embrace of the unknown. This type of hope, as described by Rebecca Solnit(2016), involves broad perspectives with specific possibilities, compelling us to take action. Furthermore, we believe that creating and advocating for hope must be accompanied by joy, specifically the joy of cultural diversity. As bell hooks suggests, this joy has the potential to transform educational institutions and society, aligning our way of living, teaching, and working with our appreciation for 'cultural diversity, commitment to justice, and love of freedom' (1994).

## 2 - Act and Transform

As architects, we want to act and transform. While architects may not develop life-changing medicine or foster peace in conflicted communities directly, they play a pivotal role by designing the spatial conditions where these vital activities occur. Architects can create environments that facilitate positive experiences and enable others to thrive. This power comes with responsibility, as architecture reflects the increasing complexity of human life (Hetreed 2017). Hopeful architects have a duty that extends beyond design, to shaping a better society, hoping that society will embrace positive change. To wield this power responsibly, architects must prioritize serving the community and adhere steadfastly to ethical principles, ensuring that their influence is not misused. Architects must care. **Architects must give a damn.**



## 3 - Ethics

The term "ethics" in architecture can serve as a broad and often subconscious signal among architects to convey a sense of moral virtue. What is unique to ethics in architecture is the problematic confusion between ethics with aesthetics - that if a building looks a particular way it is inherently good. It is commonly used to project a positive image while simultaneously endorsing yet another impressive concrete structure. Ethics are essential; they are not extraordinary feats but rather the fundamental standards we should uphold. Caring about the environment, the sources of funds, and clients should be at the core of being an architect. To truly make a difference, our ethics should go beyond these basics, aspiring to instigate change and create hope and joy.

## 4 - Participation

Using incremental urbanism and participatory design processes evolve the capacity of places and communities, buildings and urban design should support the changing needs of the high street so it can continue to be a vibrant part of local communities.

## 5 - Safety

As architecture students, we believe it is important to create places for residents in our cities to feel safe, and to re-create a sense of community which is missing today. Incorporating settings for social interaction at the fronts of homes can enable safer neighbourhoods.





## 6 - Intergenerational

We believe that it is vital to design architecture that accommodates the diverse needs of all generations within a community, ensuring that spaces not only encourage social interaction but also prioritise health and well-being through the provision of safe environments for people to gather and connect. We aim to focus on children, prioritising their education, personal health, and safety during daily activities, particularly during travel.

## 7 - Shared space

Creating accessible, high quality living spaces that meet the dwellers individual needs by rethinking the traditional boundaries between public and private, with the intention to strengthen community networks through shared spaces and facilities.

## 8 - Memory and heritage

Our projects are ethically centred on creating a space where the memories and history of the community can be preserved and archived. We believe that the conservation and restoration of our built heritage can support economically inactive communities.



## 9 - Inclusion of those most vulnerable

Accessible and healthy architecture providing safe social spaces should be incorporated in every city corner especially towards those vulnerable and prone to isolation during times of uncertainty for their physical health and mental wellbeing. Creating inclusive spaces for people suffering homelessness and hunger, we hope to integrate the most disadvantaged into the community by designing social gathering spaces that encourage exchange and roles for all members of society. Re-establishing sports clubs and providing co-operative housing around them can enable a brighter future for care leavers.

## 10 - Affordable and mixed tenure housing

Affordable housing will be adaptable for current and future uses for existing residents. Mixed tenure in a mixed-use neighbourhood is essential to sustain an inclusive environment, where services such as health, education and leisure are provided in the same spaces to people of different socioeconomic backgrounds.



This manifesto encapsulates the principles and ethics guiding the StreetSpace studio, a research and teaching initiative based in the School of Architecture at Queen's University Belfast. Functioning as a collaborative effort involving academia, government, and local communities, StreetSpace aims to analyse and enhance streets and neighbourhoods, making them more people-centric, accessible, and inclusive public spaces. The project delves into the significance of everyday streets by fostering connections and facilitating dialogue among academia, policy makers, and the public through local workshops, symposia, and exhibitions. Operating within the Masters of Architecture program, the StreetSpace studio is situated in Belfast, a city still emerging from its troubled past. The studio actively collaborates with local resident groups in inner-city neighbourhoods experiencing various levels of deprivation. The primary objective is to challenge prevailing stereotypes about divided communities labelled as 'troublesome' and overlooked. The studio prioritizes actively listening to and amplifying the voices of residents, proposing innovative physical transformations to create healthier, more accessible, and inclusive built environments in response to local need. Regular engagement with local and regional government is a vital aspect of the studio's work, ensuring that research findings and design proposals that influence policy and decision making to contribute to the transformation of the physical environment for the betterment of residents' quality of life.

The projects conceived in the studio are carefully woven into the existing fabric of the area, preserving the distinctive character of these robust and resilient communities. The studio is committed to listening even when others may choose to overlook. Streetspace studio is a collaborative effort, bringing together individuals with diverse experiences and backgrounds to enrich our design process.

**We give a damn.**

## **StreetSpace Studio**

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## **Funders**

Department for Communities  
Public Engagement at Queen's University Belfast

## **Core Collaborators**

Jamie-Lee Peden (Sandy Row)  
Angela Johnston (Greater Village)  
James Hennessey (Paul Hogarth Architects)  
Niamh Mulrine and Callie Persic (Belfast City Council)  
Jasna Mariotti, Laurence Lord and Ruth Hunter (Queen's University Belfast)

## **Images**

1 - Joel McNeill  
2 - Rachel Murphy  
3 - Alexa James  
4 - Alexis Payot  
5 and 6 - Sam McCracken

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# Living In A Just City Is Our Greatest Right

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Let us construct an imaginary space in our minds. Let's assume such a space where everyone has equal rights and opportunities. No one should be discriminated against because of their religion, language, race or gender. Cities should be places where everyone feels free, where no one is discriminated against, where all opportunities are accessible to everyone. Today's cities are places where inequality and discrimination prevail and where those who are not in the privileged class are ignored. This order must change and just cities must be created for everyone.

But how will this be realized?

One of the most fundamental factors that must be considered in urban planning is the protection of the rights of all living beings in the city. Everyone has the right to live in a city where they feel free and safe, and no one can be deprived of these rights because of their language, religion, race, gender or sexual orientation. The concepts of just city and urban justice gain importance at this point.

Urban space is in a constant state of change and transformation. Within these processes, one of the most important actors of the city is us, those who use the city with women, men, old, young and children. We establish mutual relations by spending time in the city, socializing, and actually continuing our daily lives. By using the opportunities offered by the city, we add something of ourselves to it. In this relationship, the opportunities offered by the city come to the fore. It is very important for individuals to be able to benefit from the opportunities offered without discrimination and for the individual to realize himself/herself in this way. This can only be possible with a just urban approach.

Istanbul is one of the most difficult cities to conduct a just city analysis. One of the main factors that make it difficult to examine is the urban transformation efforts. Access to safe housing and living in a healthy and quality environment are the most fundamental rights of everyone. These rights constitute the main purpose of urban transformation efforts. However, when we look at the studies carried out, it is seen that this purpose remains only on paper and is not reflected in practice. The transformation works are not aimed at those in need or those with average incomes, but for the benefit of those with high incomes.

Planning in a just city should provide a livable, healthy physical and social environment for all, and prevent the wealthy from benefiting



disproportionately from opportunities to increase equality. Housing should be affordable for all budgets and all segments of society, and everyone in the city should have access to safe housing. Projects to create a just city should be carefully scrutinized. The rights of the city and its inhabitants must be respected, and the project must benefit everyone, both economically and socially. As long as these conditions are met, it is possible to talk about a fair urban environment.

For a just city, everyone living there should be able to benefit from urban services freely and equally. Most importantly, they should not have problems in accessing these services. Access should be increased both by strengthening transportation systems and by creating service centers in residential areas. It is possible to achieve these through good urban planning. Public spaces where people spend time, socialize and do activities as they wish are indispensable for a city. A city cannot be imagined without squares, parks, activity areas, picnic areas and other public spaces. There should be public spaces that everyone living in the city can use in accordance with their needs and feel safe.

One of the basic needs of society in a just city is to have a healthy environment. Natural resources must be protected and sustained in order to meet the basic rights and needs of every individual such as clean air, water and food. Today, the climate crisis has become a global problem. Problems such as food, water and air pollution are a major threat to all living things, especially the environment. The basis of the climate crisis lies in human and money-oriented cities and lifestyles such as carbon emissions, uncontrolled development of cities, wrong water consumption, GMO products and pesticides used in soil, forest fires, industrialization. Although many countries in the world face the climate crisis, they do not take sufficient preventive actions. It is not a situation that can be prevented by only a few countries using practices such as electric cars and green buildings. The climate problem will be prevented when all countries adopt a world-compatible urban approach by using environmentally sustainable systems.

In addition to ensuring recycling without depleting natural resources, it is imperative to adopt an urban development approach in conditions suitable for the relationship between nature and human beings. In this context, a system where green infrastructure meets social needs, natural water resources are used with conscious systems, and the environment is protected from all threats is a major factor in ensu-

ring a fair city. Cities need sustainable settlements and environments where energy production can be achieved without carbon emissions in harmony with the environment. Soils need clean seeds, air, water and sunlight to grow clean food. Individuals have the right to live in a city that is compatible with this environment. When these conditions are met, there will be a livable and sustainable environment that is part of a just city.

Apart from the basic issues addressed, equality and justice must be ensured in all areas of the city. It will only be possible to talk about just cities when an accessible, safe, free and healthy city is provided for everyone. Cities are society, they belong to society. Unless every individual living in the city feels free, equal and safe, we cannot talk about just cities. Cities are ours, and living in a just city is our greatest right.

# Justice Through Publicness

**Beatriz Gotoda**

**Veronica Diaz**

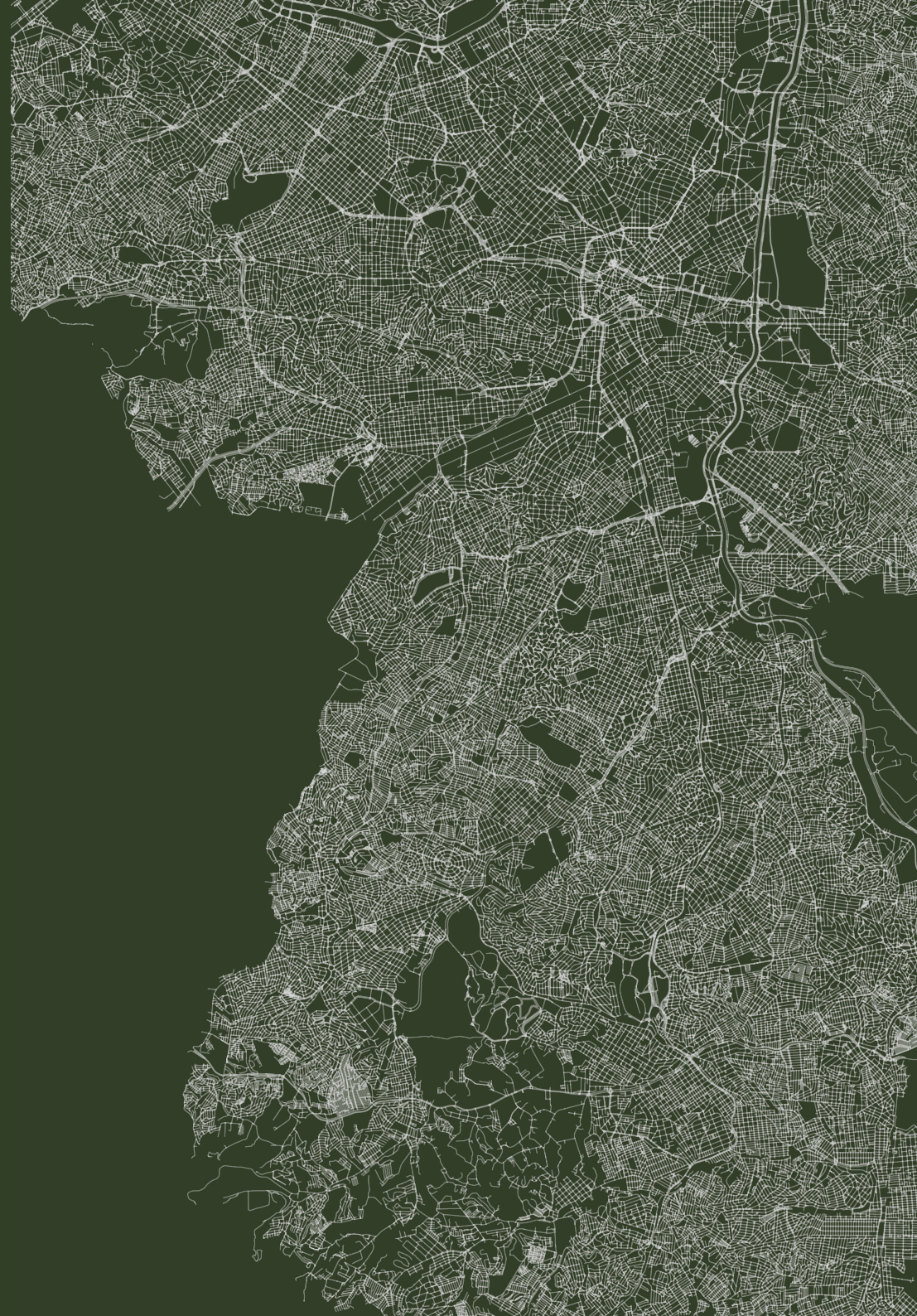
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## WE ARE COMMITTED TO HAVING A SAFE SPACE A SPACE FOR LIBERATION OF ALL PEOPLE .

We cannot call for Justice when thousands of people are attacked for no reason in public, when people have no safe place to shelter, and when open spaces for common living become battlegrounds.

Public space is the space of justice. When there is freedom of access, all people of the city can meet and interact, develop a sense of community in public, and feel contemplated, safe and justified in the urban environment.

To defend the just city, we call for answers to these questions:

What is Justice?

Are public spaces representing justice?

What happens to justice in conflict zones, when public life is replaced by violence?

People in countries that are affected by war, conflict, and violence cannot access public spaces and practice the social realm. On the other hand, physical barriers acting as conflict infrastructure contribute to social divisions in the urban environment, that fuel ethno-political violence.

In this manifesto, we say there is a need for the existence of just public spaces for a city to be called just. And, especially in conflict zones, the need for spaces that enhance our collective sense of community, that generate urban equality in the city, and that promote justice among all people.



## THE PUBLIC IN THE CITY

In our ever-growing global interconnectedness, cities have become human's main habitat. They are the places of much justice and injustice in our human world.

### is there a just city?

Cities do not exist individually, they exist in a world of cities. There may be a city that is apparently just, but in this world of cities there is much inequality among people, as well as among cities. We live under persisted divisiveness in the urban environment, especially at the global scale.

### is there justice in the city?

But, *what is justice?*

It is difficult to conceive of justice and have a single definition come crystalised into mind. We ask this millennia-old question not to attempt a final answer to it, but to highlight an inherent characteristic of justice: **the public**.

When humans gathered to live in groups, a certain understanding of justice became essential to our survival. We understood that it was in our best survival interests to pursue justice through balance, order and harmony in the group. The process of applying these principles saw the emergence of the public sphere, our collective realm of existence.

**cities are the current evolutionary step in mankind's social and political trajectory, and they are strongly oriented towards publicness.**

Streets, squares, common-use buildings, urban infrastructure...

These are the public parts that link every individual and private life in the city. They are the places that generate spontaneous encounters that vibrate the collective.

They are the places of publicness, so, through them, there might justice in the city.



# THE PUBLIC IN **CONFLICT ZONES**

---

The main aspects that qualify **urban public spaces as spaces of justice** are acceptance of diversity, the natural encounter in the urban environment, and the opportunity to co-design the public and open spaces.

with these essential characteristics, the city becomes an environment where **the citizen can change their way of thinking and creating.**

But currently, we notice the emergence of **public spaces as unsafe places**, where people who reside in conflict zones cannot go outside safely, since control strategies prevail and restricted access becomes more frequent.

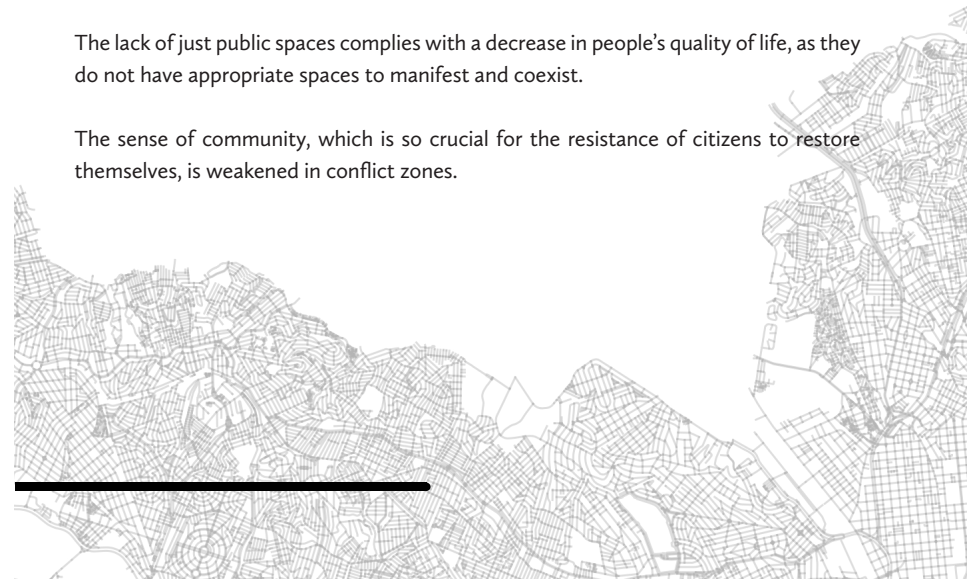
**the public space**, which should symbolise community and enrich social experiences, **has become a battleground** with mobility and expression limitations.

In authoritarian States, the actions and regulations destined to promote economic and social stability are set aside, and the urgency of regulations and actions to restore the resilience of vulnerable populations is underestimated.

Overall, justice in public spaces is closely related to safety in public spaces.

The lack of just public spaces complies with a decrease in people's quality of life, as they do not have appropriate spaces to manifest and coexist.

The sense of community, which is so crucial for the resistance of citizens to restore themselves, is weakened in conflict zones.





## AS IT IS...

when citizens are not able to have a safe public life, all the justice is gone.

---

We believe that public spaces are arenas for numerous potential conflicts, but also, if properly allocated, controlled and structured, they are places of social interaction, participation, integration, and co-production.

We also see as a critical characteristic of successful public spaces the ability to allocate justice by self-organising the structure of territorial regions in cities, erasing political and societal barriers, and guaranteeing the rights of all individuals in safe movement, participation and integration in the community.

Public spaces as a habitat for social life dynamic plays a monumental role in shaping cities and communities. Stating justice and safety actors in public spaces in conflict zones is essential for stabilisation. Access to justice in conflict zones can be managed through offerings of insights into the process of reforms designed to strengthen the public spaces.

we end our manifesto by telling our conflict-ridden world:

**for there to be justice in the city, we need public life to flourish.**

**for public life to flourish, we need adequate, safe and accessible public spaces.**

**it is through them that individual lives in the city may be justified and liberated.**

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# A City for All: Beyond Human Desires

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## NOT SOLELY ON HUMAN NEEDS BUT BEYOND!

A city is often described as a place where a large number of people live, with houses, roads, and infrastructure designed to serve human needs and desires.

Edward Hall argues that regardless of the culture one is from, humans are essentially organisms at their core. Therefore, understanding the behavioral systems of earlier life forms leads to comprehending more complex human behaviors and their relation to the environment. Viewing human societies from this ontological standpoint allows us to trace the rudimentary individualistic distance observed among animals in the wild, which maintains a defined separation from conspecifics within the context of human habitats. Countries and cities that define territories by fixed geographic locations and boundaries create degrees of distance between fellow humans based on perceived or prejudiced differences. However, human societies that limit the inn due to the lack of similarities tend to create even more drastic buffer zones in the physical environment against different species. That is, the process that began with the ontological survival instinct has evolved towards establishing dominance over nature, characterized by the exclusion and disruption of both animal and vegetation habitats. We acknowledge that confining animals in institutions and controlling vegetation species with industrial agriculture reflect humanity's hierarchical attitude towards nature.

A PERSPECTIVE  
CHANGE IS  
NEEDED FROM  
A SMALL SCALE  
TO A BIGGER  
SCALE BY  
CREATING A  
VARIETY OF  
HABITATS IN  
DIFFERENT  
LAYERS AND  
LEVELS.

This manifesto challenges this hierarchy for the liberation of nature and rejects the Anthropocene.

The more connected the human societies to each other the more, once-localized micro-level human territories such as in neighborhoods and cities reach the macro-level territories to exclude or limit the involvement of the rest of the ecosystem. However, it should not be forgotten that while cities are built for the benefit of humankind, they also serve as homes to various other life forms. Whether it's a street connecting to a park, a small pool in the middle of a square, or even a seemingly small part of the city, the urban environment supports diverse ecosystems, including animals, plants, and microorganisms. Besides our cultural landscape and built environment, there is always a need for articulated structures to accommodate and attract the biodiversity of different species in a city without focusing only on humans. There are always infrastructures for citizens in construction plans, but there is no slot or parcel, or even vacant spaces dedicated to the trilogy of domesticated space-green infrastructure-wild life.

Available pocket green spaces, window boxes, or limited within hedgerows insect hotels, bee hives, frog houses, and bird boxes or green corridors, stream beds, or river revitalizations are the attempts of the thinner proliferation of wildlife.

To cohabitate all demographics together, all land and building typologies can work in a participatory design via their flexibility. So that green and building ratios, re-inventing unused spaces, wastelands, overpasses and inner and outer corridors of residential or public buildings with their elevations, cantilevers, and rooftops can be used in operational strategy on a meta scale instead of limited scales.

Just a city of all kinds can change nest, zoo, farm, lantern, or park perspective for non-humans to penetrate free-roaming metrics for a lived space as part of nature-culture accompanied structuring of cities.

With a refer to from Deleuze and Guattari, it can be understood that life's essence is desire, a force of continuity and transformation. This manifesto accepts "becoming" as vital to a just city's existence, shunning rigid city definitions and embracing the fluidity of change. A just city is where all, regardless of species, enjoys access to opportunities and resources. This manifesto is a starting point—a declaration of intent.

This call to action is not an abstract ideal but a holistic invite that transcends human-centric perspectives toward envisioning cities as dynamic ecosystems with collective dedication and determination.

Putting humans first is not justice! Enhance biodiversity, utilize sustainable infrastructure, plan with smart urban systems, built resilient to climate change, consider water management, allow the city to be accessible, and foster engagement!



# **Illuminating the Voices in Our Cities: A Manifesto for a Heard City**

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## 01 Accessibility

A heard city ensures that the public actively participates in policies that allow for equity and planning for all with a focus to accessibility-enhancing planning strategies from mobility-enhancing strategies.



03

## Safety and Privacy

A heard city is where its residents feel secure, protected regardless of their opinion, because cities are created for everybody.



02

## Dignity

A heard city protects the dignity of all its residents in 'its legal, ethical and performative aspects'



## Inclusivity

A heard city ensures inclusivity for all its residents in all aspects

04

05

## Equity

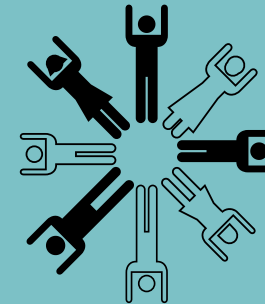
A heard city looks like equitable rights to the city, access to services, employment, public open space, public transportation and other opportunities.



## Diversity

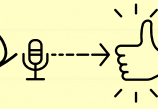
06

Diversity in a heard city looks like offering: a variety of housing options and modes, accessibility to urban services, a wide range of jobs, walkability etc.



# A HEARD CITY

## Manifesto







The freedom to make and remake our cities and ourselves is, I want to argue, one of the most precious yet most neglected of our human rights.

DAVID HARVEY

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# Fighting Urban Neglect & Inequities

## Decoding the forgotten spaces of Panama City

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## URBAN NEGLECT AND INEQUITIES

### Decoding the forgotten spaces of Panama City

The reality of the neglect of Panama City can be reversed if the local government aims for a city where

**ACCESIBILITY**  
is a fundamental right  
guaranteed through design.



It's imperative to create an urban landscape where everybody, regardless of ability, can enjoy seamless access to public spaces, services, and opportunities; providing essential services for the community to improve their quality of life, ensuring that schools, hospitals, supermarkets, and other facilities are within a 15-minute walking distance.

**SAFETY**  
is not a privilege;  
it is a birthright.

Let every corner of our city be a haven, where people live without fear and have the right to secured spaces that can be enjoyed by all.

**GENDER EQUALITY**  
and womanhood are celebrated.



A truly just city stands as a beacon of gender equality. We should empower women to experience equal opportunities, representation, and respect. An environment where women thrive alongside their male counterparts.

**peaceful  
PROTESTING**  
is supported.



Civic engagement should be facilitated for the betterment of our shared community. Public spaces should serve as vibrant locations for our dialogues, peaceful assembly, and free exchange of ideas.

**OUR JUST CITY STARTS WITH**

**A united front relentlessly advocating for a city where every citizen has equal opportunities and a voice that resonates in the collective narrative of Panama City's future. Promoting an inclusive urban transformation that addresses these topics, ensures that every citizen can thrive and contribute to our diverse and dynamic society.**



Image 2

# UNIBERSITYUDAD

## Wayfinding Guidelines for the Just UniverCity

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# UNIBERSIYUDAD

## Wayfinding Guidelines for the Just UniverCity

Wayfinding provides a comfortable environment for people to navigate a familiar or unfamiliar place. What wayfinding initiatives can be strategically leveraged to transform the University of the Philippines Diliman into a more accessible, equitable, and inclusive institution for the people?

### On Street Signage

### On Safety Perception

### On Route Design

### On Accessibility

Provide **charging stations** for e-vehicles and provide alternative modes of public transportation for people with disabilities like university buses with wheelchair lift

Define **pedestrian-first infrastructures** with wider sidewalks, well-defined crossings, bike lanes, public seating, and pedestrian-only zones in all spaces of the university to minimize the impulse to use private vehicles

Increase **inclusive wayfinding tools** within the campus such as tactile strips, handrails, braille on signage, and color coding for easier navigation

Integrate **accessible infrastructure** in all spaces of the university and consider diverse navigation factors that will answer the needs for better accessibility and safety, such as lighting, sound, and tactile features

Incorporate user-friendly digital technology in **guiding signs** for clear and legible navigation, even under low-light conditions

Reflect consistent **campus map stations** with landmarks and transportation and evacuation routes, especially in hotspots, to be updated regularly

Create and design **landmarks** in harmony with existing buildings but with distinct qualities such as gateways for a better sense of place

Increase the **general illumination levels** in certain prominent dark areas within the campus during nighttime

Introduce more **public CCTVs** to improve the perceived degree of safety

Deploy more **security personnel and guard post stations** to monitor prominent dark zones on campus, particularly during nighttime

Incorporate natural surveillance among empty, crime-ridden places within the University by turning these areas into **public gathering spots such as parks or hubs**

Improve the implementation of school zone speed-limits and traffic-calming measures within the university like **speed bumps and textured road surfaces**

### On Street Signage

### On Safety Perception

### On Route Design

### On Accessibility

# Eyeing a Just City!

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Image Source: AI generated

# Eyeing a Just city!

## Summary of the Manifesto:

Our manifesto delves into the exploration of what a 'Just City' truly embodies, anchoring on two pivotal themes: **equity** and **adaptive urban governance**. These principles are the pillars of a Just City, where equity ensures fair access to opportunities for all, and adaptive governance responds dynamically to the city's evolving needs. We present a set of guiding principles that define a Just City, proposing a replicable model of urban development. This model maintains core principles, yet adapts them to each city's unique context, fostering global knowledge sharing while emphasizing local customization. This manifesto is an invitation to reimagine our urban spaces as hubs of justice, opportunity, and shared humanity, tailored to the diverse needs and aspirations of their inhabitants.

**A** Just City. What is a just city?  
This term has evolved into a pervasive buzzword, echoing through the corridors of policy-making

resonating in political discourses, and weaving its narrative across media platforms. But beyond its frequent usage, what does 'Just City' truly embody? Does it hold a universal meaning, or does its essence vary with every interpretation? More crucially, what significance does it hold for you, the reader, the urban dweller, the policymaker, the visionary...

Our manifesto delves into this question, anchoring on two pivotal themes: equity and adaptive urban governance. These principles are the pillars of a Just City, where equity ensures fair access to opportunities for all, and adaptive governance responds dynamically to the city's evolving needs. We present a set of guiding principles that define a Just City, proposing a replicable model of urban development. This model maintains core principles, yet adapts them to each city's unique context, fostering global knowledge sharing while emphasizing local customization. This manifesto is an invitation to reimagine our urban spaces as hubs of justice, opportunity, and shared humanity, tailored to the diverse needs and aspirations of their inhabitants.

Just Cities are not merely built; they are woven from the aspirations and actions of every citizen, embracing equity, opportunity, and shared humanity.

”

In Kenya and India, home to some of the world's largest slums, the urban landscapes of Nairobi and Mumbai present a complex interplay of challenges and opportunities. Nairobi's Kibera, often cited as one of the largest slums globally, epitomizes the struggles with basic infrastructure, healthcare accessibility, and education. Parallely, Mumbai's Dharavi, Asia's second-largest slum and one of the largest in the world, mirrors these challenges with its own issues of inadequate housing, sanitation, and societal marginalization. Yet, within these dense urban fabrics, there exists a remarkable potential for growth and innovation.

Kibera is not just a cluster of informal settlements; it's a vibrant community with a strong entrepreneurial spirit and a deep sense of solidarity. Initiatives in Nairobi slums like the Kibera Public Space Project and Muungano wa Wananvijiji in Mukuru have shown that community-led efforts can significantly improve living conditions, creating essential amenities like public spaces, schools, and sanitation facilities. Similarly, in Mumbai, Dharavi's sprawling network of small-scale industries, including pottery and garment manufacturing, is a testament to the economic vitality and grassroots entrepreneurialism that can thrive even in challenging environments.



Building just cities means weaving equity into every urban thread, stitching opportunity, and shared humanity into the vibrant tapestry of urban life.

”

This manifesto draws inspiration from these contrasting yet similar urban experiences, advocating for a future where cities are shaped by the principles of **equity** and **adaptive urban governance**. Equity in a just city means not only upgrading the physical infrastructure of informal settlements but also integrating these communities into the wider socio-economic and political fabric of the city. It also entails recognizing and supporting the informal economies, ensuring that urban development and revitalization plans do not overlook or displace the existing community but rather, integrate and uplift it.

Embracing the fluidity of urban challenges, our just city adopts a governance approach that is dynamic and responsive; governance that bridges divide. This concept acknowledges the dynamic nature of urban challenges, advocating for governance structures that are flexible, responsive, and inclusive. It involves leveraging community feedback through platforms like Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and federation of slum dwellers, and engaging with grassroots organizations for participatory planning, which translates to community involvement in urban planning and decision-making, tailoring solutions to local needs. In our global south cities, it means recognizing the informal sector's contribution to the city's economy and developing policies that support and integrate these enterprises into the broader economic framework.

In weaving together the principles of equity and adaptive urban governance, this just city manifesto proposes a transformative approach to urban development. However, while these two stand as foundational pillars, they are complemented by other equally vital principles which play a crucial role in shaping urban environments that are not only just in their distribution of resources and opportunities but also in their governance and societal structures. These include transparency in action, inclusivity and collective creation, resilience amidst adversity, celebrating diversity, and accountability and responsibility.

## Principles and values

In embracing these principles, urban development is directed towards pathways that are not only inclusive, equitable, sustainable, and resilient, but also reflective of the specific socio-cultural, economic, and environmental fabric of each city. The aim is to create a replicable model of urban development, where the core principles remain constant, but their execution is adapted to fit the local context. This model allows for the sharing of knowledge and strategies between cities, fostering a collaborative approach to urban development. However, it also emphasizes the importance of customization, ensuring that the strategies employed are relevant and effective in addressing the unique needs and aspirations of each urban area.

In this manner, the Just City becomes a dynamic concept – a framework adaptable to the evolving landscapes of cities worldwide. It's a vision that encourages cities to learn from one another while also forging their own distinct paths to justice, opportunity, and shared humanity. This approach not only fosters a sense of global community among urban centers but also champions the uniqueness of each city, celebrating their individuality as much as their commonalities.

“

(in)justice  
city



## Conclusion

This manifesto is more than a collection of ideals; it is an urgent call to action. It reaches out to policymakers, community leaders, urban planners, and citizens, urging them to collaborate in shaping cities that truly embody the principles of equity and adaptability. It envisions cities where every individual, regardless of socio-economic status, actively contributes to and influences their city's future. This is the heart of a Just City – an urban realm that embodies justice, opportunity, and shared humanity, reflecting the spirit and challenges of places like Nairobi and Mumbai. In such a city, the collective aspirations and actions of its people sculpt not only its physical landscape but also its societal and political contours. As we consider this vision, let us ponder: How can we each contribute to realizing this ideal in our own cities? What steps can we take, both small and large, to bring the essence of a just city to life in the unique landscapes of our urban environments?

”

Let our collective actions sculpt cities that echo justice, opportunity, and shared humanity, where every individual shapes their urban future regardless of circumstance.

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# Manifesto for stepping out of your comfort zone

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All images in this Manifesto were produced by the author Sara Nourikia.

Our manifesto evolved from a series of conversations we had as practitioners of architecture and urbanism, coming from diverse cultural and geographical contexts. Through sharing personal and professional experiences about striving for just cities in Iran, Brazil, the Netherlands, and Morocco, we articulated this manifesto as a collection of personal adjustments that we, as practitioners and citizens, can incorporate into our daily behaviors. At the end of the day, the full extent of our agency lies in our individual actions, cumulatively creating significant change. This manifesto summarizes our main ideas revolving around “stepping out of our comfort zones” and embracing our own agency in our day to day lives.



## 1 Be critical about yourself, your actions, your surroundings and your working place

Being critical of oneself, one's actions, surroundings, and workplace is an essential practice that extends beyond personal introspection. This involves actively observing and questioning the representation of various groups in our immediate environment, moving beyond mere visual acknowledgment to understand who may be unseen or underrepresented, even if physically present. For instance, in the bustling tapestry of society, marginalized groups like refugees and the homeless may be present yet remain on the peripheries of society, often going unnoticed and unserved. It requires a conscious effort to recognize their existence and to question the societal structures that may be neglecting their needs. By recognising that it is the system, rather than the individual, that is faulting, we can advocate for change, fostering a more inclusive and equitable society that ensures representation and provision for every individual, irrespective of their circumstances. This approach should be actively considered by urban practitioners who strive to create diverse and inclusive spaces which consider the needs and experiences of all inhabitants, not only the most visible.

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## 2 Recognize your privileges, avoid guardianship, be a facilitator

In our alarmingly polarized world, within the fabric of each community, certain groups occupy the “center”, possessing authoritative power, while others are pushed to the “margin”, enduring oppression and discrimination. By reflecting on the intersections of our identity layers — including our race, ethnicity, religion, legal status, wealth, gender, sexuality, etc.— we can identify our social standing within the “center-margin” structure dominating our communities. The resulting self-awareness not only enables us to assertively reclaim our rightful space as a citizen but also helps us recognize and acknowledge the privileges we enjoy compared to other groups with subordinate social statuses. By promoting active involvement of marginalized communities in the decision-making processes we can take a pivotal step towards eradicating the existing discriminatory systems. However, we also need to be cautious about a potential pitfall; as experts, practitioners, or activists we tend to associate deprivation with a lack of awareness and knowledge. Believing that we are more capable of recognizing the needs and priorities of marginalized groups -- a viewpoint also stemming from our privileges-- we may assume the role of representatives or guardians. To avoid this paternalistic stance, we must trust and respect the autonomy and agency of marginalized communities. Instead of acting on their behalf, we should utilize our privileges to amplify their voices and to facilitate their access to sources of power, knowledge, and decision-making processes.



### 3 Prioritize people over immediate outcomes

As mentioned in point number 2, our current world is becoming every day more polarizing. This makes people feel that they are part of opposing teams, leading to extreme opinions, low tolerance and less empathy. This sense of “otherness” is amplified through the rise in cancel culture and the ability to curate selective social circles of like-minded people through the means of social media platforms. To reverse this scenario and increase understanding of those different to us, we need to take a few steps back and rescue the sense of community that we once had. One way of doing it is by opening dialogues with the people around you, especially ones who think differently to you. It may not be an easy task, but keep in mind that you don’t have to agree with everything they think or say. Instead, be curious to understand the why of a certain statement or opinion and make an effort to build bridges - not walls - and judge less.

The previous recommendations can be applied to everyday situations, as well as to participatory planning processes in decision-making procedures. While involving all stakeholders requires prolonged efforts, the urgency of certain challenges or the external pressure for quick results and top-down improvement might lead us to minimize the involvement of minority groups to less significant aspects of the action. We must refrain from this tokenistic approach, and as people are the main players and owners of the actions, their engagement should not be a superficial display. For a meaningful and just transition, it is essential to resist the urge to rush and ensure that everyone’s contributions are genuinely valued and incorporated into the process. We are all in this world together and we need each other.



### 4 Make time to do volunteer work

One of the most powerful ways to enrich your practice is to offer up your time and skills to people and projects who need it and might not have available funds to pay for it. Powerful in the sense that it provides an instant feedback loop, allowing you to directly see the impact of your actions. This approach is not only a great way to meet interesting, passionate people and experience dynamic working environments but also to build empathy and human connections with those who are sometimes dehumanized and seen merely as statistics. Remarkably, volunteer work can take many forms, depending on the context you are in and the level of involvement you desire. For instance, you might choose to do something practical, like helping to cook in a soup kitchen on the weekends, or give your number to a homeless rehousing scheme so that they can reach you for advice on improving insulation of apartments in winter. You could get involved with an NGO to rebuild a school devastated by disaster, or collaborate with friends and colleagues to secure funding for a passion project, such as designing and building a playground in otherwise mundane public space in your town. It is amazing how much spark and satisfaction you can gain when you remove the ‘for money’ element from your work, focusing solely on how your efforts contribute to improving the lives of others and the planet.





## 5 Be critical about the culture you consume (news, media, commerce, museums, advertisements)

No story is unbiased: the very act of repeating the truth changes it. As a critical thinker, it is essential to have an inquisitive view on what kind of media you consume and question what is being presented to you - and more importantly - why. The mainstream narratives we consume day-to-day represent the motives of the dominant power(s) and enable the promotion of their political incentive. Whether by explicitly influencing people's mentalities and actions via slogans or semantics or subliminally encouraging or discouraging certain behaviors, the dominant powers use their platforms to reinforce the very systemic oppression that keeps them in charge. With one group's accumulation of wealth or power often resulting from the exploitation of another. Discriminative language can perpetuate that power - and words hold weight. With the dehumanization of certain groups rapidly becoming normalized, speak up at the very first signs of discriminative sentiment. Pay attention to when alternative media spaces or narratives telling different variations of that same truth are silenced. When access to information is restricted through censorship or through data blackouts, or when independent journalists on the ground are violently targeted, question: why is this story considered a threat to the mainstream powers? What is hidden and cannot be exposed?

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## Images

All images in this Manifesto were produced by the Sara Nourikia.

# Manifesto for Just Cities by Inter-continental cousins

**Tushar Siddhart Pradhan**

Tata Institute of Social Science,  
India

**Daria Gatsun**

University of St. Petersburg,  
Russia

# Manifesto

## For just cities

### "We take pride in the historical heritage of our city and cherish it."

- The just city cares for its history and culture. Historical landmarks are either restored or well-maintained, presenting a neat and tidy appearance.
- Many historical sites serve public functions and are open for visitation. Even the details are not overlooked. Both residents and visitors are well-acquainted with, or can easily discover, the city's rich history."

### Good navigation and accessibility

- In the just city, it is always clear how to get around and how to find what you need in an unfamiliar neighbourhood. Signposts, city maps and the environment itself help citizens and visitors to navigate the streets.
- In just city, the urban environment is accessible to low mobility groups of citizens, be it people with disabilities, parents with strollers, seniors.
- Cyclists and scooters have their own space in the city and do not interfere with pedestrians.

### The just city gives voice to everyone

- Every citizen, regardless of background, has the freedom to express themselves.
- Diverse perspectives must be genuinely heard, discussed, and debated openly.
- Embracing different viewpoints fosters more collaborative and cooperative decision-making. Ex: Participatory budgeting is a well-spread practice as well.

### Good for children

- The just city is good for children of different ages and their parents. Children feel comfortable in the city, can move independently on the streets and play on playgrounds.
- Children feel secure and safe about their surroundings.

### The just city is clean

- Clean streets are one of the most important factors. Citizens don't litter too much, and if litter does appear, it is quickly cleaned up.
- There is separate garbage collection as well as hazardous waste segregation. There are no or almost no illegal dumps. Puddles and mud do not form everywhere, and if they do, it is possible to cross them.

### NGOs, initiative groups and their work are visible in the just city

- The just city is a place where the work of NGOs and initiative groups is visible. You can become their client or volunteer, participate in their events. You can help different people, minorities and even animals and other unheard voices.
- You can easily give away unwanted things, clothes, donate money. You can see that people help each other and unite to improve city life. The just city gives an opportunity to everyone.

### The city is green and resilient

- The just city is necessarily a green city. There are many parks and squares in the city, trees and shrubs receive proper care, and flowers are not uncommon on the city streets.
- Greening the just is taken care of not only by the administration and management companies, but also by the citizens themselves. It not only looks and feels good and healthy, but also becomes more resilient to future hazards such as flooding, extreme weather events and other.
- It pays significant attention to risk governance at all levels, both vertically and horizontally, involving all public, private, academia, and civil societies.

### The just city is educated

- Education is pivotal in shaping attitudes, fostering inclusivity, empathy, and civic responsibility. It goes beyond academics to instill critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and a commitment to social justice.
- The educational system equips citizens to challenge biases, understand diverse perspectives, and actively engage in creating a fair and equitable society.

In essence, education in a just city is a catalyst for cultivating attitudes that align with the values of justice and collective well-being

### The just city is open to smart approaches

- A fair and equitable urban environment is receptive to intelligent and strategic methods for addressing its challenges and improving overall well-being. This involves being open to innovative and thoughtful solutions that enhance efficiency, risk resilience, sustainability and inclusivity within the city.

### The just city has a Face, a Brand

- A good city tells stories about itself. It has a vibrant personality and this personality can be touched in many ways.
- A good city has original physical and symbolic details. They show that there is room for creativity, experimentation and humor in the city

# Hope Harbour

## The Urban Refugee Oasis

Farhana Jerin

Samiha Shreya

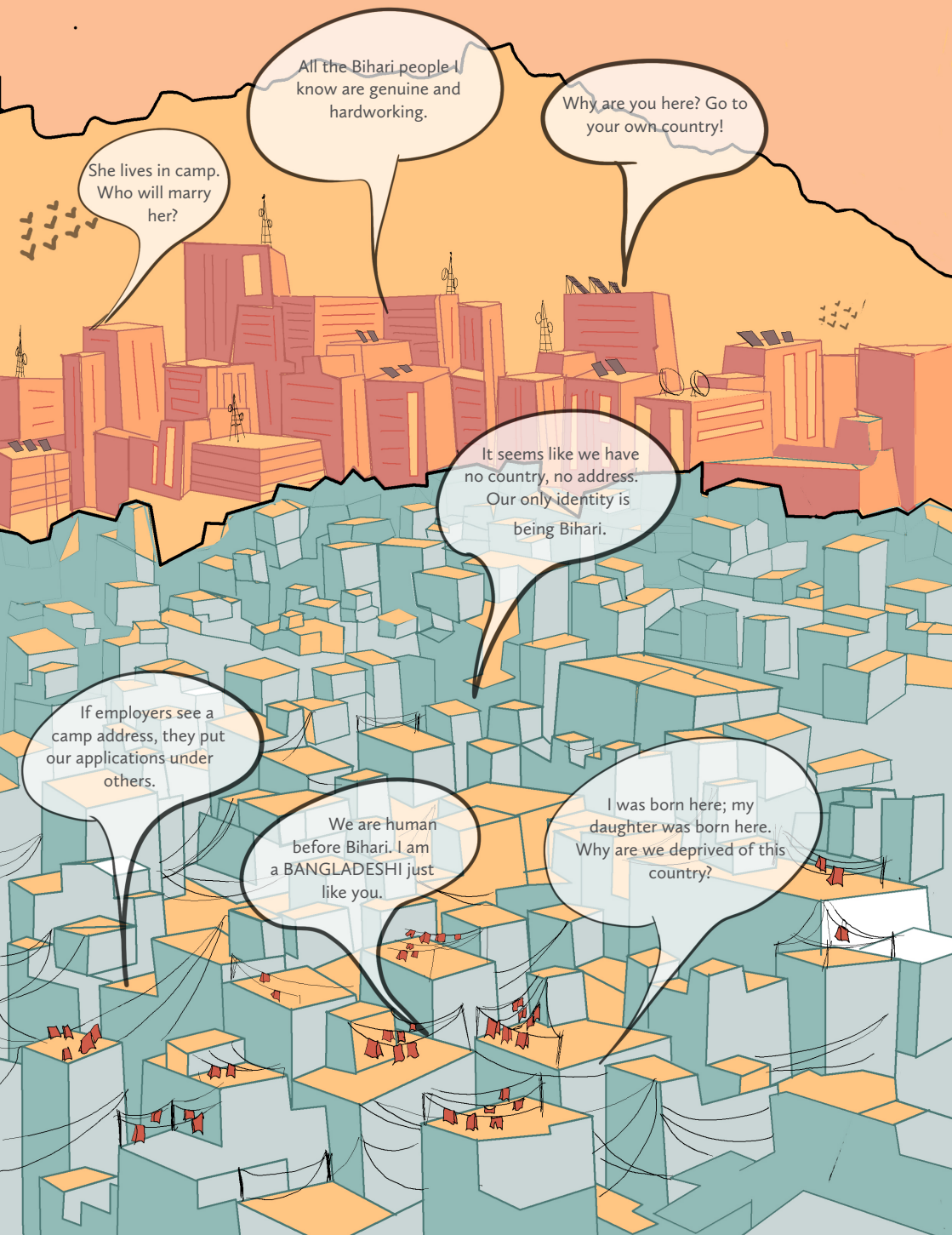
Artina Mumtari

Tahsina Tabassum

Sayed Amrin Anjum

Military Institute  
of Science and Technology, Dhaka,  
Bangladesh





She lives in camp.  
Who will marry  
her?

All the Bihari people I  
know are genuine and  
hardworking.

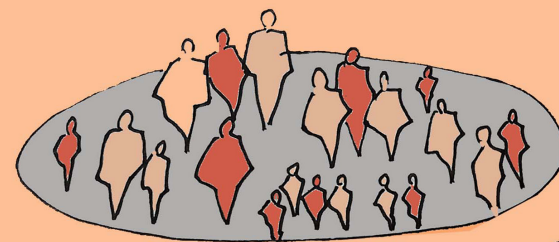
Why are you here? Go to  
your own country!

It seems like we have  
no country, no address.  
Our only identity is  
being Bihari.

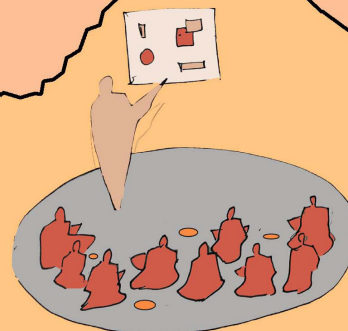
If employers see a  
camp address, they put  
our applications under  
others.

We are human  
before Bihari. I am  
a BANGLADESHI just  
like you.

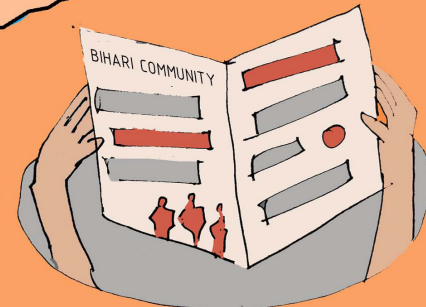
I was born here; my  
daughter was born here.  
Why are we deprived of this  
country?



ACCEPTING DIVERSITY



PROVIDING VOCATIONAL  
TRAINING



INTRODUCING BIHARI  
COMMUNITY  
IN CURRICULUM



FORGING URBAN SPACES:  
BOOSTING COMMUNITY INTERACTION

## HOPE HARBOUR: THE URBAN REFUGEE OASIS

Envision a city prioritizing its diverse inhabitants' needs. This manifesto, rooted in humanitarian values, calls for social equity, economic integration, and cultural enrichment. It challenges prejudices, advocates for basic human rights, and urges the Bangalis and the Biharis to dismantle divisive policies. Together, let's build a city that celebrates diversity, ensures well-being, and fosters a harmonious, secure environment defined by compassion and justice.



In northern Dhaka, **Geneva Camp** shelters over **30,000** **Bihari** individuals on a mere **14.5-acre** space. An additional **3 million** **Biharis** navigate city life, while a staggering **900,000** reside in **116** **slum-like "camps"** across Bangladesh. Descendants of 1947 Muslim refugees from India, they **speak Urdu**, setting them apart from the majority Bengali population. Though they constitute near about **1% of the population**, the Bihari minority ethnic group remains unseen in the textbooks.



**● HINDRANCE IN RECEIVING MAINSTREAM EDUCATION**

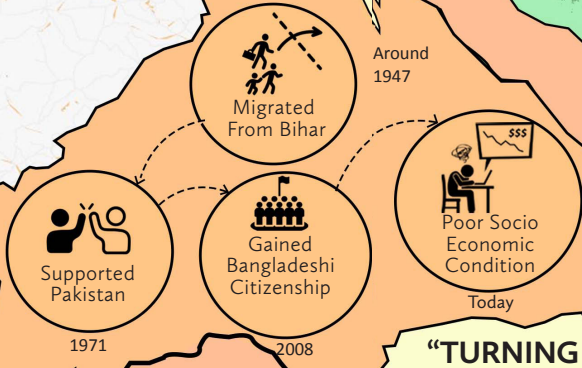
**● SOCIAL STIGMA & ECONOMIC MARGINALISATION**

Pakistan

India

MIGRATION TIMELINE

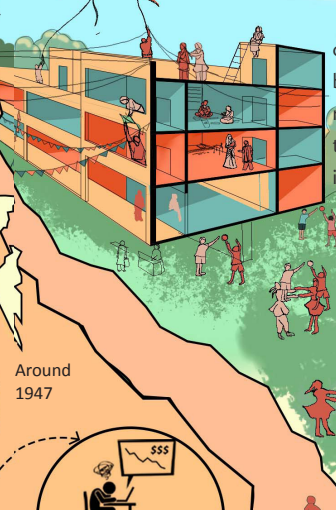
1947  
1971



**● LACK OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**● POOR HOUSING CONDITION**

## "BRIDGING CULTURE, & BUILDING BONDS"



## COMMUNITY BONDING

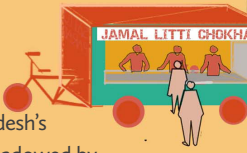
Despite the absence of legal restrictions on the Bihari community's movement, they continue to be restrained by social stigma. To free them from this confinement, establishing an equitable community that encourages shared interests & interactions is the only solution.



## "FROM HANDS TO HOMES, WHERE ARTISTRY ROAMS"

### CULTURAL MARKET PLACE

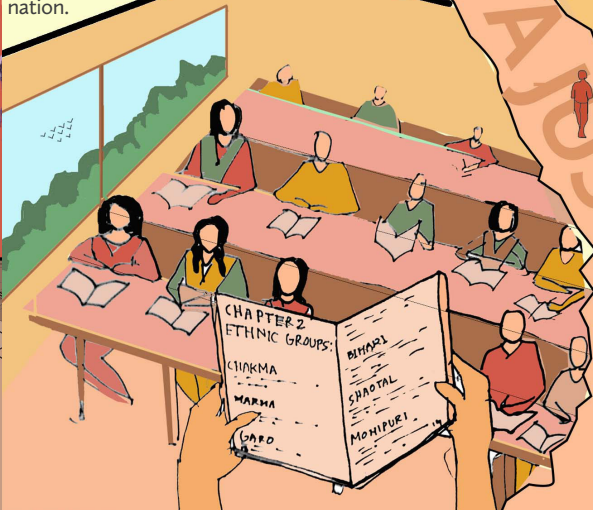
The Bihari community, with their unique cuisine, clothing, and artistry, enriches Bangladesh's cultural tapestry. Yet, these traditions fade, shadowed by lack of publicity. We propose a solution: a year-round marketplace, bolstered by professional training. This platform preserves Bihari culture, fosters Bengali-Bihari interaction, and dismantles stigma. Together, let's celebrate our shared cultural wealth.



## "TURNING PAGES, BRIDGING CULTURES"

### TEXTBOOK INCLUSION

The Bihari, integral to Bangladesh's ethnic diversity, are absent from our curriculum. This omission fosters ignorance. We demand change: inclusion of the Bihari in our curriculum. Let's replace this ignorance with understanding, making education a reflection of our nation.



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# Empowering Women, Transforming Cities

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Empowering women is important for creating an inclusive city. Cities are economic and cultural pivots. Yet, women often encounter challenges which obstruct their access to resources and public spaces.

Now we recognise the impact of empowering women, which is adopting strategies to address systemic issues, such as economic disparities and safety concerns. Here, we shall explore the dimensions of empowering women in urban settings. We shall also emphasize the importance of establishing and promoting gender equality.

A city can be inclusive of all when it empowers its citizens- women.



“ Ensuring a safe space for everyone ”

“ More lighting on the street ”

“ Less negative space On the street ”

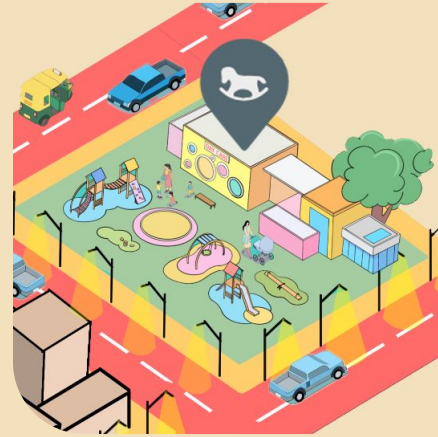
“ More accessible public space ”





### **“Creating confidence, Fostering safety”**

- Having adequate amount of lighting in streets, footpaths, parks etc.
- Public spaces should be visible
- Well designed bus stops
- Natural surveillance
- Safe place making
- Wider paths
- Having frequent police stations with more female officers
- Design of active streets



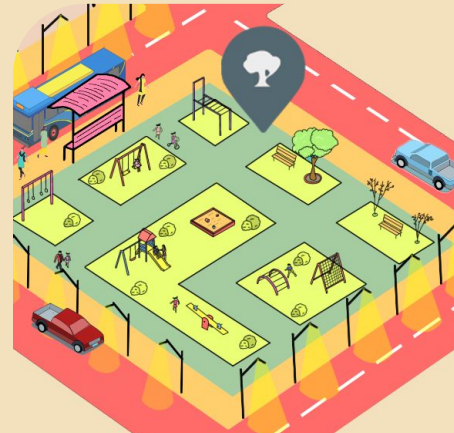
### **“Nurturing dreams, Supporting moms”**

- Ensuring child-care facilities strategically located throughout the city which are easily accessible for working moms.
- Advocate policies that support working mothers. For example advocating for flexible working hours for moms and tax incentives for businesses offering child care services.



### **“Empower her commute”**

- Emphasis on safety in public transportation
- Inclusion of women as bus driver
- Wellness room or space for new mother or sick person
- Emergency call out system
- Well-lit bus station or train station
- Feedback system
- Socially inclusive transport hub
- Frequency of bus stop and arrivals



### **“Enhancing her voice, Respecting her choice”**

Since women are neglected in society despite having laws to protect them, we must emphasize on:

- Empowering and amplifying their voices.
- Ensure their spontaneous participation in decision making
- Enable the provision of giving feedbacks in city experience

# Unbounded Urbanity: Celebrating City Diversity

Exploring the Limitless Horizons of City Living

**Aheer Afreed Ronon**

**Hridita Chakraborty**

**Sabbir Ahmed Siam**

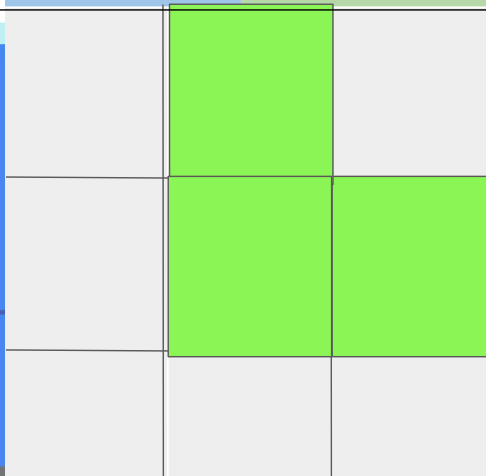
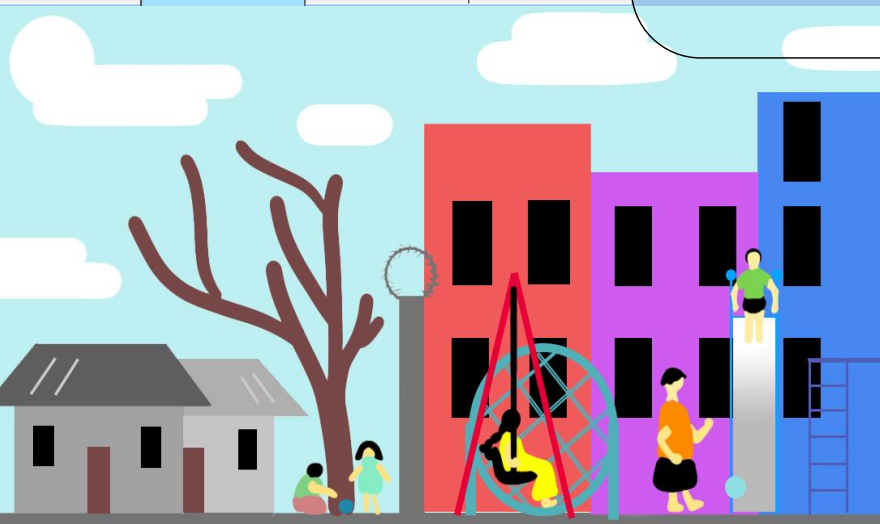
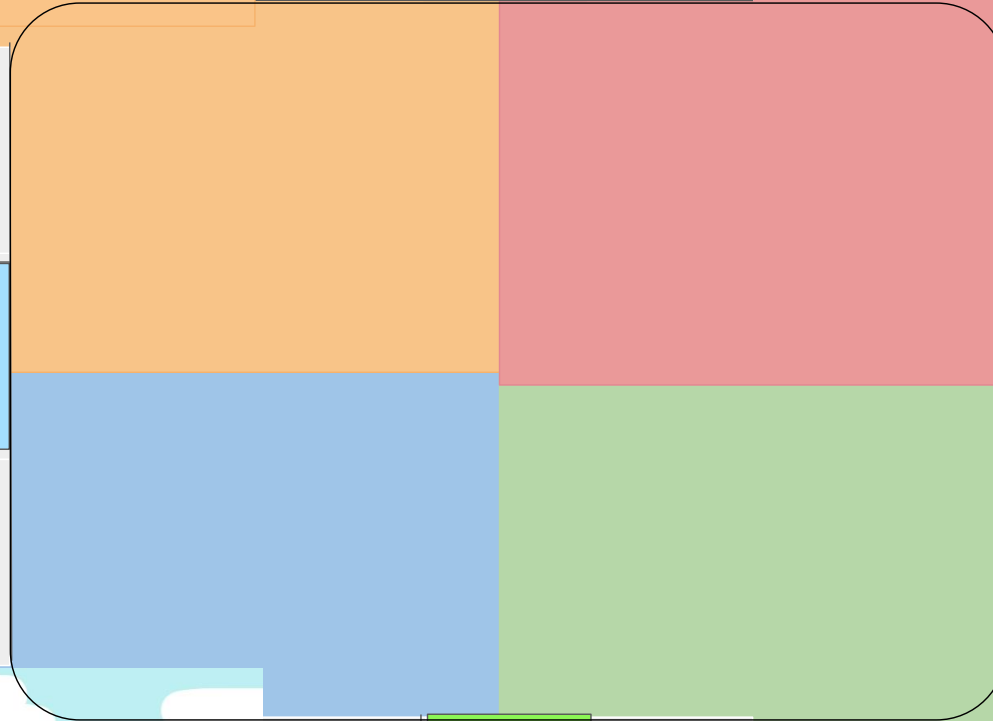
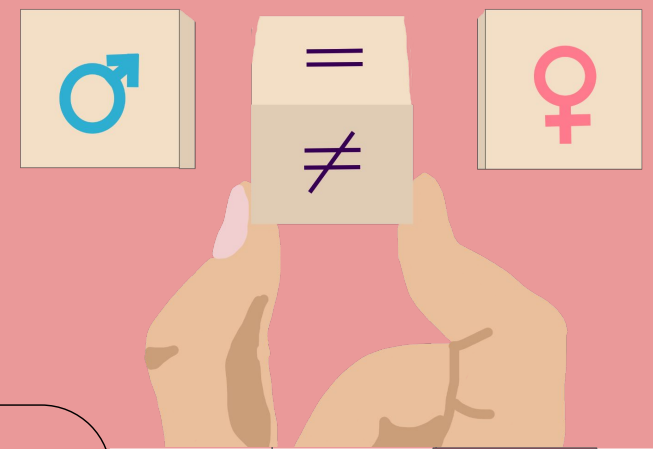
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original artwork by the group.



**DOORS OPEN**





## BREAKING THE DIVISION BETWEEN AFFLUENCE AND ADVERSITY: NO ECONOMIC BOUNDARIES

Promoting diversity and inclusion within the industry can positively impact financial equality. By actively encouraging and supporting everyone from underrepresented backgrounds, we can help level the playing field and create more opportunities for all. This involves advocating for transparent salary structures, equal pay for equal work, and providing resources for negotiating fair contracts. People should be allowed access to any place based irrespective of their level of income. Everyone should be treated as humans rather than limiting them within boundaries based on their earnings.

Steps to be taken to solve this include:

- 1) Creating boundaries with natural elements and greeneries instead of boundary walls.
- 2) Build shops that serve people from every financial background.
- 3) Creating free recreational spaces that can be accessed by all.



In some of the higher-income areas of Bangladesh, the dwellers don't let lower-income people enter their society. They have an assumption that it might be unsafe and their security will be hampered. For this reason, they build boundaries around their societies. As a result of such actions, the absence of diversity takes place, and the creation of various opportunities decreases. To make a healthy city, every human of different levels of income should have equal accessibility to every part of the city.

Addressing these boundaries requires a comprehensive approach that includes social and economic policies aimed at reducing inequality, improving access to education and healthcare, and promoting equal opportunities. Along with changing the outlook of thinking, the addition of inclusive design can help in attracting people of different income levels to a place.



## REDEFINING SPACES TO ENSURE PARTICIPATION OF ALL : NO GENDER BOUNDARIES



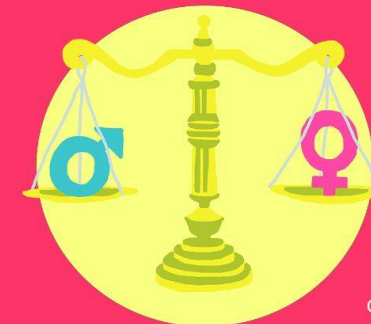
Architects can challenge gender stereotypes in design by avoiding rigid gender norms in space allocation. All people irrespective of gender need to be treated equally. For this, various steps can be taken including **reimagining traditionally gendered spaces**, such as nurseries or changing rooms. Another step to be taken can be being more **inclusive and adaptive** towards diverse needs and identities. To make a **safe environment** so that people of all genders can freely stay is another way. Fulfilling the basic needs of **hijra communities**, for example, making **public toilets** for them, ensuring **educational and healthcare facilities**, etc can help a lot in this case as well.

Steps to be taken:

-Creating an inviting environment for everyone in **religious spaces**: Religious spaces should encourage the entrance of all genders. For this, a welcoming environment needs to be created.

-Facilitating outdoor sports activity for every gender: Involvement of all genders in outdoor activities can help in breaking barriers.

-Equality to be ensured in local **marketplaces**: Local markets should not target a specific gender. Rather, provision for both genders to avail of the facilities should be made.



-**Stopping discrimination at workplaces**: Work spaces need to be free from discrimination and anyone should have the freedom to do any job they want irrespective of gender. Stereotyping and assigning a specific profession for a specific gender needs to be stopped.

-**To provide facilities to the Hijra (eunuch or transgender) community**: The Hijra community is also a part of our society. So, they should be given an equal amount of attention and consideration.



# Future Playground Designing for Urban Childhoods

**Rayhan Kotowal Primo**

**Shaily Sinha**

**Tahia Tabassum**

**Turha Yasha**

Military Institute  
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Bangladesh

# Future Playground

## Designing For Urban Childhoods

In the heart of today's bustling cities, our kids are facing a challenge that's hard to ignore—they're losing their playgrounds. As towering buildings multiply, our precious parks are vanishing, squeezing out the space where the laughter and games essential for their growing bodies and minds once thrived. The concrete jungle should not be a barrier to the simple joys of childhood. It's time for a change.



“Children are a kind of indicator species. If we can build a successful city for children, we will have a successful city for all people.”

—Enrique Peñalosa, mayor of Bogotá

We're at a crucial point in city evolution. How we care for our kids today will define our legacy. The questions we ask, the choices we make, and the leadership we demonstrate in creating better neighborhoods and cities for children will shape the lives of generations to come. It's time to keep it simple and act for a brighter urban future.

Thus, the typology of child-friendly urban public spaces are

- Involve children in decision making
- Consider the scale of children
- Everyday freedom of mobility
- Children's infrastructure

60% \_\_\_\_\_ of all urban dwellers will be under the age of 18 by 2030  
70m \_\_\_\_\_ overweight children by 2025, the number of overweight children is expected to reach 70m globally, compared to 42m in 2013

Source:  
<https://www.arup.com/perspectives/publications/research/section/cities-alive-designing-for-urban-childhoods>





# Unbridled Aspirations Unravelling the Culture of Poverty

Zerf Jafnat

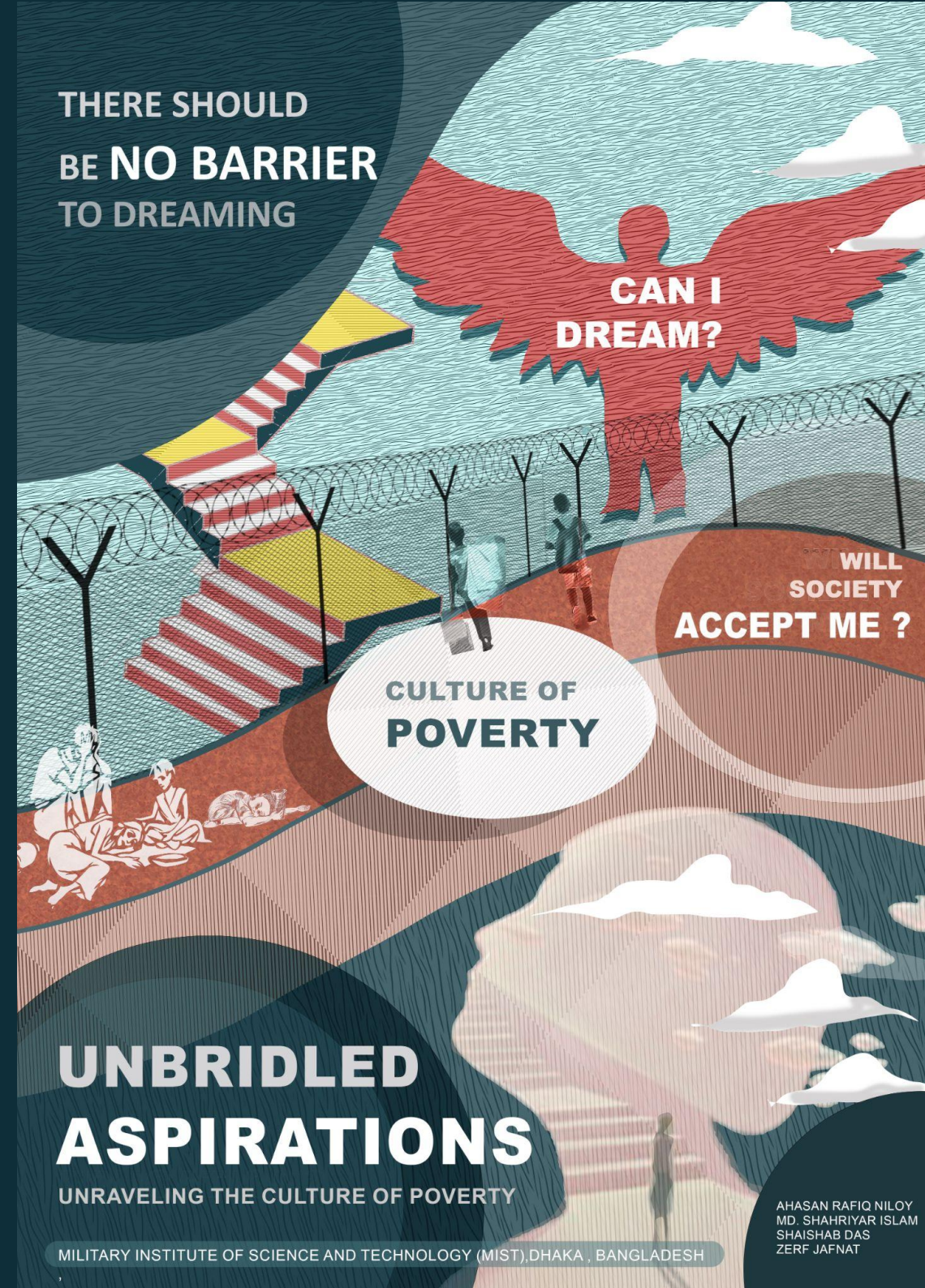
Ahasan Rafiq Niloy

Shaishab Das

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Bangladesh

Original artwork by the group.



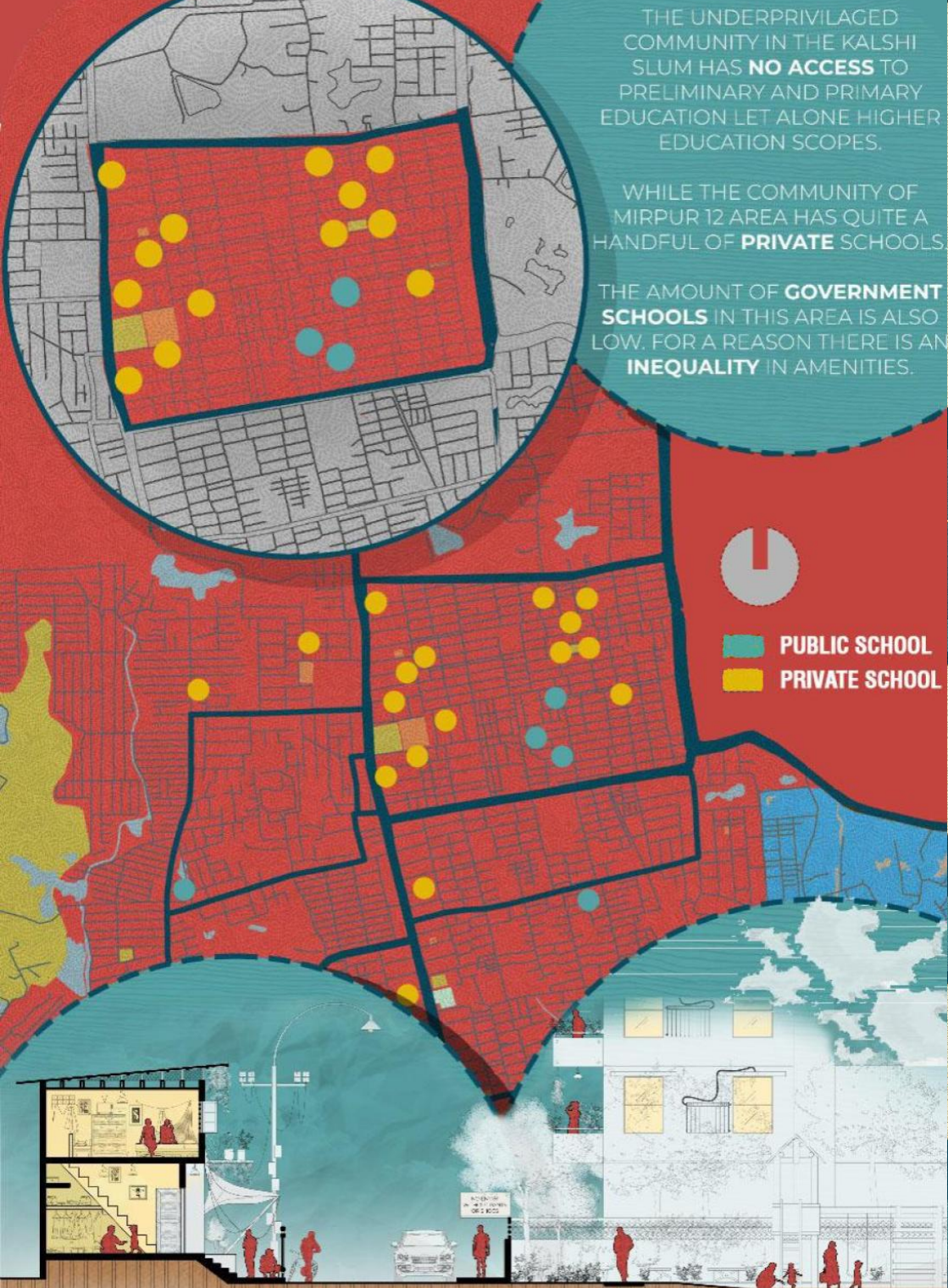
## UNBRIDLED ASPIRATIONS

UNRAVELING THE CULTURE OF POVERTY

MILITARY INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (MIST), DHAKA, BANGLADESH

AHASAN RAFIQ NILOY  
MD. SHAHRIYAR ISLAM  
SHAISHAB DAS  
ZERF JAFNAT





1. **EQUAL ACCESS TO EDUCATION:** PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE FUNDED BY THE GOVERNMENT AND ARE INTENDED TO PROVIDE EDUCATION TO ALL CHILDREN WITHIN A PARTICULAR JURISDICTION. THIS AIMS TO ENSURE THAT EVERY CHILD, REGARDLESS OF THEIR ECONOMIC BACKGROUND, HAS ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION.

2. **SOCIAL COHESION:** PUBLIC SCHOOLS OFTEN REFLECT THE DIVERSITY OF THE COMMUNITIES THEY SERVE. HAVING STUDENTS FROM DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS, CULTURES, AND SOCIOECONOMIC STATUSES IN THE SAME EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT CAN CONTRIBUTE TO SOCIAL COHESION AND UNDERSTANDING.

3. **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:** PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE TYPICALLY SEEN AS COMMUNITY ASSETS. THEY ARE GOVERNED BY ELECTED SCHOOL BOARDS OR LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITIES, WHICH MEANS THERE IS A LEVEL OF COMMUNITY CONTROL AND ENGAGEMENT. THIS CAN FOSTER A SENSE OF SHARED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOLS.

4. **FOCUS ON EDUCATION, NOT PROFIT:** PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE GENERALLY NOT DRIVEN BY PROFIT MOTIVES. PRIVATE SCHOOLS, IN CONTRAST, MAY NEED TO FOCUS ON GENERATING REVENUE, POTENTIALLY AFFECTING DECISIONS RELATED TO ADMISSIONS, CURRICULUM, AND OTHER ASPECTS OF EDUCATION.

5. **ADDRESSING INEQUALITY:** PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE EXPECTED TO ADDRESS EDUCATIONAL INEQUALITIES BY PROVIDING ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND SUPPORT TO STUDENTS WHO MAY FACE CHALLENGES DUE TO SOCIOECONOMIC FACTORS.

# NO PRIVATIZATION OF EDUCATION

THE STATEMENT "NO PRIVATIZATION OF EDUCATION" SUGGESTS OPPOSITION TO THE IDEA OF TRANSFERRING THE CONTROL OR OWNERSHIP OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS TO THE PUBLIC SECTOR FROM PRIVATE ENTITIES. PREVENTING THE POTENTIAL NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF PRIVATIZATION WITHIN THE NEOLIBERAL ECONOMY CAN INVOLVE ADVOCATING FOR TRANSPARENT AND EQUITABLE EDUCATIONAL POLICIES, SUPPORTING PUBLIC EDUCATION INITIATIVES, AND PROMOTING REGULATIONS THAT ENSURE ACCESS AND QUALITY FOR ALL STUDENTS REGARDLESS OF SOCIOECONOMIC FACTORS. ADDITIONALLY, FOSTERING PUBLIC AWARENESS AND ENGAGEMENT IN EDUCATION-RELATED DECISIONS CAN CONTRIBUTE TO A MORE INCLUSIVE AND BALANCED EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM.



**ENGAGE  
INTERACT  
EDUCATE**

**PROMOTING  
PRACTICAL  
LEARNING:**  
ADVOCATES CALL  
FOR EMPHASIS ON  
REAL-WORLD  
EDUCATION OVER  
BOOKISH  
KNOWLEDGE

**EDUCATION REVOLUTIONIZES  
CULTURAL REVIVAL:**

EMBRACING TRADITIONS AND  
CREATIVITY FOR A  
VIBRANT FUTURE

**LEARNING  
FLOURISHES IN  
OPEN SPACES**

- OPEN PLATFORM FOR MULTIPURPOSE ACTIVITY (SEMINAR, EXHIBITION, OPEN LEARNING)
- FLEXIBILITY IN LEARNING
- COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: INVOLVE THE COMMUNITY IN SHAPING EDUCATION.
- EMPOWERED EDUCATORS: SUPPORT EDUCATORS WITH CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**"COMMUNITY  
EMPOWERMENT  
BEYOND THE BELL:  
A HOLISTIC  
APPROACH  
TO EDUCATION  
ENRICHMENT"**

This phrase indicates that the concept goes beyond the traditional boundaries of school hours..

After-School  
Enrichment  
Programs:

Diverse programs  
covering arts, sports,  
STEM, and life skills.

Mentorship and  
Role Models:

Mentorship  
connecting  
students with  
positive role models.

- **Skill Development Workshops:**
  - Practical workshops covering coding, cooking, and life skills.
- **Cultural and Arts Integration:**
  - Participation in cultural and artistic activities.
- **Outdoor Spaces:**
  - Establishment of community gardens and outdoor spaces.



# Rapid Urbanisation in Cape Town

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## OUR OBJECTIVES

Our objectives are to create sustainable, inclusive, and resilient urban spaces that enhance the quality of life for all residents. This urban transformation should foster economic development, social equity, environmental preservation, and cultural richness.

## OUR VISION

Our vision is a Cape Town where urbanization is a force for positive change. We envision vibrant, interconnected communities that offer affordable housing, access to quality education, healthcare, and job opportunities. We aim to build a city that values its natural environment, celebrates its diversity, and ensures equal participation and representation for all citizens in decision-making processes.

## WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN

Managing Cape Town's rapid urbanization necessitates comprehensive planning. This involves optimizing land use through a master plan, strategically placing residential, commercial, and industrial zones to encourage mixed-use development. Prioritizing affordable housing, upgrading informal settlements, and promoting densification in key areas are crucial steps. Infrastructure development, including improved roads, water supply, sanitation, and waste management, is vital for the growing population. Enhancing green spaces is key for residents' well-being and biodiversity. Affordable housing requires subsidies, incentives for public and private projects, and the promotion of mixed-income neighborhoods. Community land trusts can ensure long-term affordability. To address traffic congestion and promote sustainability, Cape Town should invest in accessible public transportation, safe cycling lanes, and pedestrian pathways. Protecting natural resources involves water conservation, biodiversity preservation, transitioning to cleaner energy, and responsible waste management. Community engagement through town hall meetings and consultations is essential. Supporting local initiatives, education campaigns, and collaboration among government, private sector, civil society, and individuals are crucial for Cape Town's vision of a more inclusive, sustainable, and resilient city.

## WHO NEEDS TO ACT

### Government and Local Authorities:

They play a crucial role in shaping the urban landscape through policy-making, enforcement, and resource allocation.

### Communities and civil society:

Are essential stakeholders in the urbanization process, contributing local knowledge and ensuring inclusivity.

## THE CHALLENGE

The rapid urbanization in Cape Town presents a complex challenge. It leads to overcrowding, strained infrastructure, housing shortages, increased inequality, and environmental degradation. This situation demands immediate attention and strategic solutions to manage growth sustainably.

### Private Sector:

The private sector can significantly contribute to urban development through investments and initiatives.

### International Organizations and NGOs:

These entities can provide valuable support, expertise, and funding to address challenges associated with rapid urbanization.

## WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE TO ACT

To effectively address the challenges posed by rapid urbanization in Cape Town, a multifaceted approach is imperative. While policies are integral to shaping successful urban contexts, it is crucial to recognize their limitations in addressing complex community issues. Policymakers must engage in a comprehensive reform of existing policies, fostering an inclusive dialogue with communities. Prioritizing sustainable urban development, incentivizing affordable housing, and promoting green initiatives should be the focal points of these reformed policies.

Financial resources play a pivotal role in building a thriving urban environment. Channeling investments and funding through passionate change-makers ensures a secure allocation for infrastructure development, affordable housing, and community programs. By placing emphasis on individuals committed to driving positive change, a more impactful and sustainable transformation can be achieved.

Outsourcing entities that actively seek insights into community needs and concerns is essential for informed decision-making. Prioritizing community engagement throughout the decision-making process ensures that urban development plans are reflective of the diverse perspectives within the community.

Echoing the wisdom of Nelson Mandela, education emerges as a cornerstone for societal development. Raising public awareness about sustainable urban living, environmental conservation, and the signifi-

## HOW

**Collaboration and Partnerships:** In order to combine resources and efforts, encourage partnerships and cooperation between the public and business sectors, civil society, and international organizations.

- Inter-Sector Collaboration:
- Community Engagement
- International Support Networks

**Technology and Innovation:** Apply cutting-edge technologies to infrastructure development, environmental preservation, and urban planning.

- Smart Urban Planning
- Renewable Energy Integration
- Digital Inclusion

**Monitoring and Evaluation:** Keep a close eye on the advancement of urban development projects, assess their effects, and modify plans as necessary.

- Data-Driven Decision Making
- Regular Assessment and Reviews
- Transparency

Rapid urbanization in Cape Town presents challenges but also immense opportunities. By prioritizing sustainable, inclusive, and resilient urban development, we can create a city that thrives, where every citizen can enjoy a high quality of life. It's crucial for all stakeholders to work together, act decisively, and make a collective commitment to build a better future for Cape Town.

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# Nightscales of Inclusion: Illuminating Up Diliman's Urban Design For A Just City

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## Nightscales of Inclusion:

### Illuminating UP Diliman's Urban Design for a Just City

An Urban Design Manifesto by Z. Cordez, K. Olap, A. Palima, and C. Quirante

#### Introduction

A just city, anchored in the principles of equity, democracy, and diversity, is not merely an aspiration but a necessity for fostering an environment where every individual can flourish. UP Diliman, as the flagship campus of the University of the Philippines System, is uniquely positioned to exemplify and embody these principles, creating an urban space that nurtures connections between people and nature. This particular campus, often described as a microcosm of the Philippines, hosts a diverse community of students, instructors, and residents, as well as animals. This diversity necessitates a nuanced approach to the campus environment, catering to the varied needs and perspectives of its inhabitants. The historical character of the campus further complicates these considerations, demanding a dynamic response to evolving environmental standards, movement patterns, and social dynamics. Through the lens of a just city, this manifesto explores the concept of harmonious coexistence within UP Diliman, focusing on the crucial role of street lighting in creating a campus environment that encourages people to exist in unity with one another and their natural surroundings.

#### Street Lighting as a Catalyst for Harmony

Within the framework of a just campus, the role of street lighting becomes paramount. It is not merely a utilitarian aspect of urban design; rather, it is a crucial element in fostering harmonious coexistence between people and nature. In the quest for spatial justice, UP Diliman must recognize the need to reimagine its street lighting strategies and ensure that they align with the principles of a just city.

#### Street Lighting for Equity

As one of the remaining large green spaces in the metro, UP Diliman is home not only to its scholars but also to a myriad of avian species — inducing the necessity for wildlife-friendly street lighting. Having lighting systems which minimize impact on birds' migratory activities are crucial to balance the welfare of people and animals, and this can be done by considering factors such as lighting direction and color temperature. Shielded lights with warm color temperatures have been proven to be the most favorable for both human health and avian behavior since these cause the least strain in the eyes as beings with sensitive sight. Through this cognizant effort, the overall behavior of humans and animals, including their circadian rhythms, can be impacted positively and equally, and consciousness on the importance of urban wildlife conservation and protection is put forward.

#### Street Lighting for Democracy

UP Diliman, as a public institution producing many of the great minds of the country, strives for its community members to develop trust within one's self. This begins with opportunities to express themselves, with feeling a sense of safety and security within the campus. Effective street lighting can be a means to evoke such emotions, specifically through adjustable lighting systems that are motion-sensored and have step-generated energy, instilling autonomy among the users in terms of lighting control and allowing them to witness how the fixtures respond real-time to its environment to aid navigation and provide visual experiences. By having adequately-illuminated paths, people may gain confidence in utilizing the campus spaces to their full advantage, reflecting the essence of democracy. Moreover, with this integration of modern and energy-saving technology into the campus' everyday street lighting, everyone can be more mindful of responsible lighting practices.



## Street Lighting for Diversity

Within the complex fabric of diversity that characterizes UP Diliman, the objective of street lighting goes beyond basic practicality to transform into a vibrant representation of inclusiveness and environmental responsibility. With interventions that would not only illuminate the paths but also celebrate the rich variety of life within the campus. These could include motion-activated lighting to create a symphony of activity, reduce energy consumption and disruption in wildlife; dynamic lighting which adapts the radiance to accommodate all users; and educe emotions through color temperatures. This conscious step towards balance embodies a philosophy that views the illuminated paths not as mere conduits for movement but as dynamic expressions of the commitment to diversity, inclusivity, and sustainability.

## Conclusion

The campus' street lighting is as important as the design of the buildings themselves. When implemented properly, it goes beyond the purpose of mere illumination — it can also be a tool to revitalize the whole campus experience by igniting the users' perception of their surroundings and raising awareness of the existing urban wildlife.

Personal experiences give credence to the exigency of reassessing the current street lighting within UP Diliman. Hence, this manifesto proposes two lighting designs — one for general street lighting which may be used as a template for all the roads and pedestrian walkways in the campus and another specifically for its academic zone since it is one of the most highly populated areas in UP Diliman (see illustrations).

The main lighting system involves double-headed LED motion sensor lamps with height and spacing interval based on global street design guides. All the lights are directed downwards, with warm color temperature, since these are known to be the least disruptive to both humans and wildlife activities. Moreover, with UP Diliman taking pride as a highly walkable campus, highlighted pedestrian crossings are considered to maintain pedestrian safety. Recessed floor lights powered by step-generated energy are also utilized along pedestrian lanes in order to conserve resources as well as render immersive walking experiences. In the main, the two tendered lighting designs aim to elevate the nightscapes of UP Diliman, comprehensively targeting issues of visibility, wayfinding, and wildlife disturbance.

With its community members taking various initiatives to address existing issues, UP Diliman can transform into a beacon of responsible urban design that exemplifies the principles of a just city. This manifesto not only calls for a reevaluation of the campus' lighting systems but also emphasizes the importance of education and community involvement in creating an equitable society enabling the growth and development of all beings. Together, the proposed interventions can pave the way for a more luminous and ecologically conscious future for UP Diliman, demonstrating that thoughtful and responsible street lighting is an essential component of a thriving and harmonious urban environment.

# Harmonious Coexistence

Nightscapes of Inclusion: Illuminating UP Diliman's Urban Design for a Just City

An Urban Design Manifesto by Z. Cordez, K. Olap, A. Palima, and C. Quirante

## 1. Harmony with Nature

- Preserve the nocturnal wildlife by integrating lighting technologies and interventions that would minimize disturbance during the night.

**2. Guiding Light, Not Blinding Light** - Provide sufficient illumination without neglecting its possible impacts to the local wildlife by using directional and shielded luminaires.

**3. Circadian Considerations** - Integrate lighting fixtures that replicate the circadian rhythms of both human and animals.

**4. Motion-Activated Lighting** - Use motion-sensor technology, where the activation of the lamps will depend on the detected activity, resulting in reduced energy consumption and wildlife disruption.

**5. Dimming and Dynamic Lighting** - Make use of adaptive lighting systems that adjust its color and brightness to allow for adaptability and least harm done towards both the people and the wildlife

**6. Promote Visibility and Clear Wayfinding** - Implement clear signage and visibility measures across the campus, aiding navigation for individuals to locate buildings, facilities, pathways, and points of interest.

**7. Educate and Illuminate** - Raise awareness and promote responsible lighting practices within the campus and its community.

**8. Educe Emotions** - Employ lighting systems with warm color temperature to create a sense of comfort and security, encouraging people to traverse the illuminated path

**9. Resource Conservation** - Incorporate energy-saving strategies such as step-generated lighting systems to provide illumination only when needed

**10. Accentuate Autonomy** - Establish a sense of control and liberty among people through the implementation of lighting systems that are commanded by mere motion such as those with motion sensors and step-generated energy

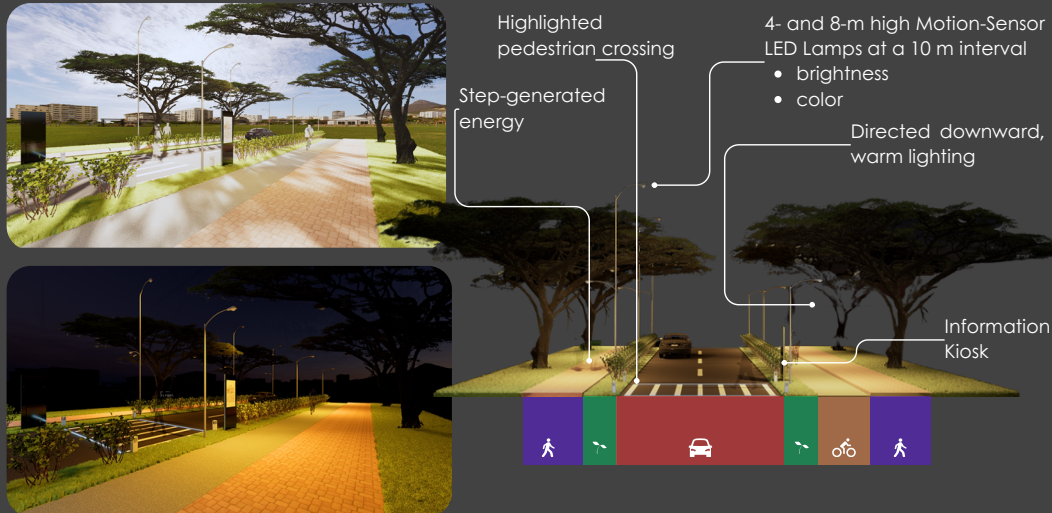
## The Ten Commandments



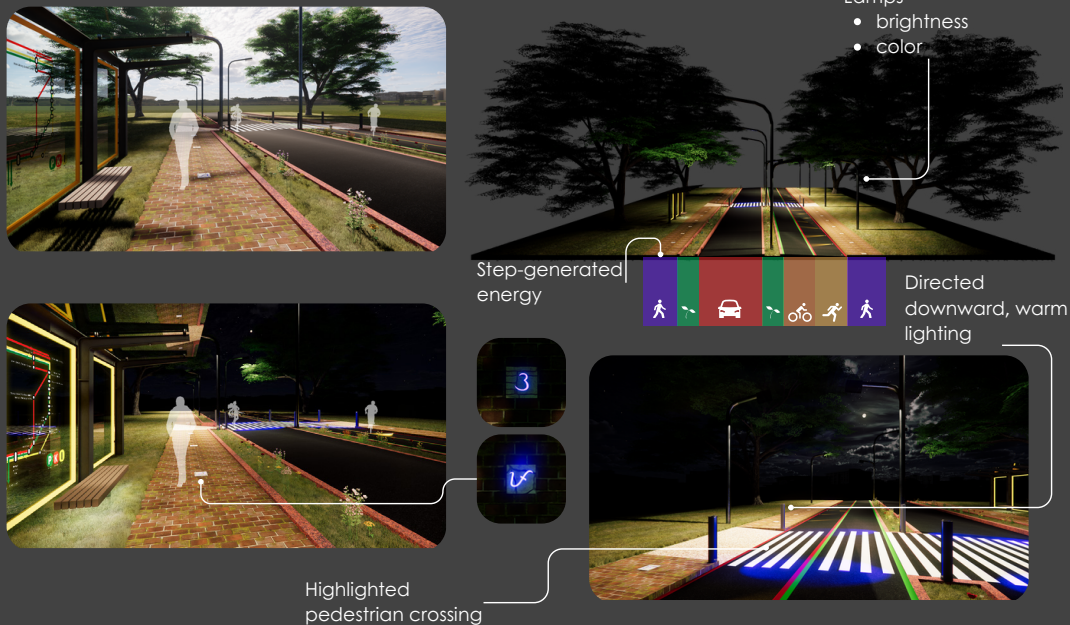
# Architectural Interventions

(Street Light, Waiting Shed)

## 1 General Street Lighting Design



## 2 University Avenue & Academic Oval Street Lighting Design



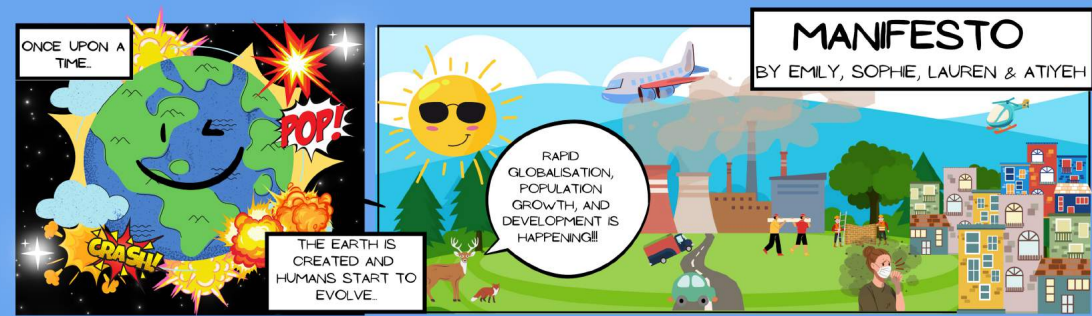
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# A Manifesto

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Original artwork by the group.



## Climate Change and Environmental Pollution



### Causes

The climate crisis is a **deep rooted issue**, developed from years of reliance on fossil fuels which have structured our global economy and lifestyles (Doppen, 2023). Cities are constructed to rely on cars and unsustainable modes of transport, presenting limited options for us to function in the community without them. Humans have exploited the earth's resources, through deforestation, over farming and destruction of key habitats.

### Extreme climatic events

The effects of climate change are undeniable and **increasingly severe**. Extreme climatic events, have had prolonged effect on a global scale and the cities we live. Over the last year, a few of the extreme climatic events experienced include; warm winter (Europe); flooding (UK and Italy); flooding induced landslides (Brazil); monsoons (Malaysia); cyclones (Myanmar); freezing (Afghanistan).

### Climate injustice

Impacts of the climate crisis, have not affected the population equally (King and Harrington 2018). Resilience to the climate crisis is stronger in more developed countries, where there are more resources and responses to cope with the changes incurred. Countries which are less developed, **do not have the capacity to cope** equally. Additionally, countries which contribute more carbon to the climate crisis, are not facing the brunt of the consequences (Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2014). Effects of the crisis are not equal amongst different race, genders, and nationality.

### Health inequalities

Climate change contributes significantly to health inequalities globally, and within a city. Whether this may be from extreme climatic events, or from the contributors to climate change such as greenhouse gas emissions. **13 million a year die due to preventable environmental issues** such as air pollution (Doppen, 2023).

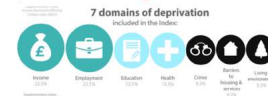
## Inequalities and Deprivation

### Causes:

The crisis of inequalities and deprivation are driven and measured by income. Historically inequality if from racial segregation and governmental policies. Inequality exists through the inaccessibility of equal access to opportunities and the exclusion of particular groups or individuals in society. Deprivation can be caused by a combination of factors such as poor education, lack of governmental support, conflict, and climate change.

### Deprivation:

Deprivation and poverty **affect billions of people**. Depriving families and individuals of basic human rights! The **top 5 countries** which suffer from poverty and deprivation are **mostly located in Africa**.



### Inequality:

The crisis of inequality urgently needs addressing. It is crucial to identify the main areas that suffer from inequality: **wealth, race, ethnicity, sex, religion and disability**. Dubai is a city which has become divided through the inequality of wealth. Additionally, they are facing the challenges of being encroached by deserts, this further **emphasises the inequalities** already being experienced.

**A critical step is needed towards creating a more inclusive and just society.**



## Conflict and Health



### Impact on Cities

Pandemics like COVID-19 and current conflicts/wars like Palestine, have a significant impact on cities and continue to do so. You might have to stay at home throughout the pandemic to protect yourself from other people, or you might have to leave because of **devastation or fear** that your home and family would be destroyed.

### Pandemics

During COVID-19 people experienced health effects, global impact, difficulty accessing healthcare, strain on the healthcare systems, financial consequences, effects on education, effects on mental health, and lasting effects. The pandemic's effects are still being felt: in some cities today. For instance, high streets are affected since more people than ever are buying goods online, because it was convenient to do so. As a result, several high streets had to close. This has had a significant impact on how people live in cities following the pandemic as these facilities are no longer available (Sci Total Environ, 2020).

### Conflict

Local cities suffer substantially from conflict and war; these events can result in human casualties and deaths, infrastructure damage, humanitarian crises, economic ruin, psychological and emotional trauma, educational disruption, social disintegration, violations of human rights, and environmental degradation. All of these devastating ramifications of what is occurring in Palestine, a **call for action to implement support and resolution**. History has been shown with conflict for a very long time, and significant reform is needed to change this (Abujdi N, 2023).

### Summary

These have a major impact on cities since they lead to **humanitarian crises, population declines, and economic declines**. People felt unsafe both inside and outside of their homes, and the anxiety this creates about the future will have a **long-term effect on communities and cities**.

Injustice in our cities has become prevalent, we need to look at possible solutions to these.



# I am the City

## Making Public Space Public

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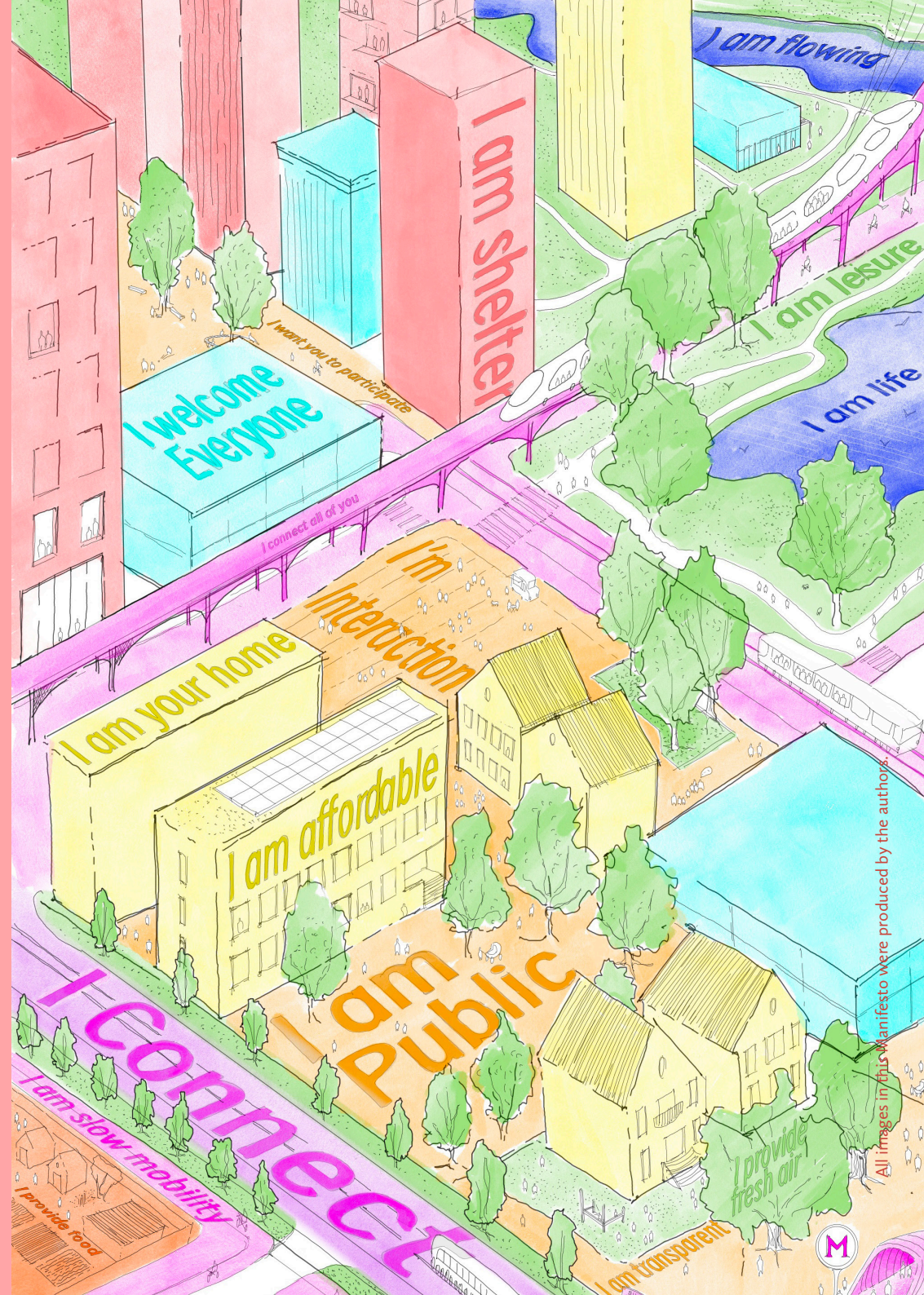
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Original artwork by the group.



All images in this Manifesto were produced by the authors.





# Making Public Space Public

## Buildings

- I am shelter/refuge/retreat
- I am aesthetically pleasing and ecologically friendly
- I am your safe haven, your home
- I am affordable for everyone

The Just City provides affordable shelter for everyone. New buildings are circular & modular, seamlessly fitting into the existing building stock and promoting adaptive re-use. Therefore, buildings in the just city are environmentally friendly refuges for its inhabitants, providing an aesthetically pleasing, safe haven & home.

## Parks

- I am accessible for everyone
- I welcome everyone
- I keep you healthy
- I am leisure

The Just City invites and is accessible for everyone. It fosters diversity and interaction among citizens by offering health-promoting leisure spaces.

## Greenery

- I provide shade
- I keep you cool
- I provide fresh air
- I provide food
- I am ecologically friendly
- I am a habitat for every form of life

The Just City's intensive greenery offers a habitat for all living creatures. It provides a multitude of important benefits for a city of the 21st century, like, for example, fresh air, shade and an abundance of food. Therefore, it promotes peaceful cohabitation among humans, animals and plants alike.

## Streets

- I am connectivity
- I connect all of you
- I am slow mobility

The Just City is interconnected within itself and the outside. Actively promoting walkability, bike use and its public transport network, the just city tackles many problems of contemporary city design. Slower forms of mobility and higher usage of public transport reduce air and noise pollution, while at the same time occupying less space and leading to a more densely woven urban fabric.

## 520 A Manifesto for the Just City

## Volume 4 521

## Squares

- I am public
- I am interaction
- I want you to participate
- I am transparent

The Just City is a public space, providing a forum for bottom-up initiatives. Citizens are encouraged to participate and raise their voice in order to lead positive change through collective action. Therefore, it actively fosters citizen engagement through design and counters authoritarian tendencies through transparent processes.

## Water

- I am life
- I keep you safe
- I am flowing

The Just City has the right amount of water to promote life but also provides safety. Functioning like a sponge, it can soak up water during heavy rainfalls and store it for upcoming dry periods. Therefore, it is a climate resilient environment for all its inhabiting species.

## Vacant Junk Spaces

- I am an opportunity
- I foster creativity

The Just City offers its Inhabitants space for participation that has not been used well before. By encouraging the citizens to occupy vacant junk spaces, new creative ways of usage can be developed. Those Places are a great opportunity to connect with other people, get creative and to properly use them.

## Infrastructure

- I connect
- I am close by
- I am open

The Just City connects through open infrastructure. It provides a functioning network to connect different areas, to bridge streets and rivers. Its infrastructure and data is openly & freely accessible to everyone.

## +the human itself

I am a participant, I am essential

THE JUST CITY IS MADE BY HUMANS  
HUMANS ARE THE INTEGRAL PART OF EVERY CITY FOR BECOMING A JUST CITY  
THE JUST CITY NEEDS YOU TO MAKE THIS HAPPEN

# A Manifesto for a Just City

**Diamond Smarr**

**Diamond Green**

Winston-Salem State University  
North Carolina, USA

The city is a symphony of sound, from the sirens to the laughter to the footsteps of strangers in the city, but what happened to the cry that echoed in the distance of the wind? Over the decades, marginalized people have experienced many forms of spatial injustice- urban renewal, gentrification, redlining, and many more that plague marginalized communities around the world. In a perfect world, equity is at the forefront, where resources contribute to all sectors of life, including the environmental, social, economic, and political well-being of people. Our mission of a just city starts by understanding the needs of the communities being infiltrated.

Before we drive into urban renewal, let's observe the groundwater approach. Have you ever seen an individual affected and thought it was an isolated event? No, it is not because we live in an ecosystem. If you see a group of fish floating at the top of the lake, you will think the lake is infected, but where is the issue coming from? It is embedded in our society. Groundwater is where we receive about 30% readily available water. What is the last embedded issue of communities like Winston that aren't receiving the correct funds in development. For example, "Choice Neighborhood \$30 million grant to replace Cleveland Avenue Homes, to a more recently advanced proposal for new single-family housing Happy Hill, the city's oldest Black neighbourhood" (Young, 2023). What tone are you setting for the community regarding receiving the liquidated assets? Now, look at the groundwater in society with different systematic institutions, including discrimination, educational achievements, professional career advancement, health care, wealth accumulation, gentrification, and displacement. These inequities are caused by systems relating to culture or socio-economic differences.

We will focus on Winston-Salem, NC when creating a "just city" and learning the rich history and the effects of urban renewal and possible solutions. Winston-Salem was created in 1913 after two neighbouring towns merged. Winston was founded in 1849 and named after a Revolutionary War hero, Joseph Winston. The Moravian colonists laid out Salem (Hebrew meaning for peace). Winston-Salem was known for the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, which contributed to the city's economic growth. Bring Depot Street, an enterprise of black businesses like Clark's Brown and Sons Funeral Home located on Patterson Ave.

Spatial injustice is the unfair and inequitable distribution in the space of socially valued resources and opportunities to use them. It results in

specific communities or individuals having limited access to essential resources such as education, healthcare, and employment opportunities. Many perspectives make up a spatial justice city between economic rights, rights to the public, housing, and cultural rights. Focus on the geographical aspect to determine whether it is justice or injustice. The role spatial justice plays in urban renewal involves the physical and social infrastructure. Urban renewal can be challenging, complex, and contentious to tackle issues to revitalize and improve urban areas. For decades, the uneven development of urban renewal has been hard to shape and mold together.

Most urban renewal projects often attract wealthier residents, which can lead to another issue: gentrification. Gentrification results in the displacement of low-income residents who could lose affordable housing options. This causes marginalized to be forcefully pushed out of their neighborhoods. Displacement is a crucial issue we need to avoid when revitalizing urban communities. Current residents are being relocated to less accommodating housing due to space, increased prices, and safety which are an issue. Displacement is more likely to happen because of the rise in property values.

Urban renewal is redeveloping and replacing dilapidated buildings with over price homes. Urban planners and local governments considered "slums," referring multiple areas in Winston-Salem that are considered deteriorated, which may have lower-quality infrastructure. Urban renewal involves many strategies and initiatives to transform and redevelop multiple areas to create more vibrant, secure, sustainable, and livable places. Some of the strategies that urban planners use to target marginalized people is by cash offer and quick turnaround rates that cheaper than the property value. Also, they target young adults who don't have the correct knowledge of property inheritance value.

The City of Winston-Salem has had several solutions to address urban renewal and revitalize multiple areas. Starting with affordable housing initiatives for residents to ensure they can live in the area. Winston-Salem Housing Authority helped African American residents of affordable housing units and provided financial assistance. This resulted in preventing displacement and maintaining the diversity of the community. Displacement of residents for redeveloping homes can be an easy fix for this issue to ensure residents a place to stay. Offer to relocate families into new centers, townhomes, and small apartments.

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Targeted investments helped in infrastructure, housing, and economic development. Includes improving roadways, lighting to enhance safety at night, and sidewalks for better walkability. The city provided financial incentives and support for businesses and helped the community create job opportunities. As well as a better opportunity for children in the education department. Winston-Salem has many of historic buildings around the area, impacting urban renewal. New development of new parks and improving existing green spaces to promote a healthier environment. Creating green spaces and parks enhances the change for a better quality of life for residents in Winston-Salem. Lastly, community engagement is so important by engaging the community and residents through decision-making for a successful urban renewal. The City of Winston-Salem worked closely with residents, stakeholders, organizations, and the community to hear their needs and priorities. The city also worked closely to see their vision and goals to help redevelopment efforts.

Most importantly, with the helping hands from the community, it can be a little harder problem to attack. The decision-making process involves policymakers, government officials, developers, and other stakeholders for their input. However, the community voices are barely heard in multiple meetings. If the community can't bring the meetings to every redeveloped area. Ways for the community to participate are by pushing the community to speak up, show up, and show action, and with the help of a community leader, can create a set developed plan based on demands. Another issue could be not being able to afford transportation for every meeting.

In conclusion, a just city should make people feel a sense of belonging while embracing modernity. Creating a design for the people, being used for the people, and most importantly, doing continuous work to improve for the people. These solutions have helped address issues of urban renewal in Winston-Salem. Overall, urban renewal has faced many challenges and sometimes criticism along the journey. Increasing economic mobility, creating a healthier environment, providing amenities, and improving displacements. To increase homeownership and the overall appearance of the neighborhood as well as the community. In due time, urban renewal will have become more just than unjust.

Reference: Young, W. (2023, November 5). City sells \$1 lots for more housing in eastern Winston-Salem. *Winston-Salem Journal*. [https://journalnow.com/news/local/winston-salem-sells-lots-for-affordable-housing/article\\_eb6a2b24-7284-11ee-832a-432a86bf654f.html](https://journalnow.com/news/local/winston-salem-sells-lots-for-affordable-housing/article_eb6a2b24-7284-11ee-832a-432a86bf654f.html)

# BMORE GREEN

## by Real Life Solutions

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Original artwork by the group.

# BMORE GREEN

BY: REAL LIFE SOLUTIONS





Several neighborhoods in Baltimore lack sustainable practices and a sense of community.

High housing vacancy rates, crime rates, gentrification, and declining population are all examples of how neighborhoods in Baltimore have been negatively impacted. The lack of a cohesive strategy to improve and maintain communities, has proven to tear Baltimore apart.

### **COMMUNITY**

A group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common.

### **UNDERSERVED COMMUNITY**

Groups that have limited or no access to resources or that are otherwise disenfranchised.

### **SUSTAINABILITY**

Avoidance of the depletion of natural resources in order to maintain an ecological balance.

### **GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE**

An area of grass, trees, or other vegetation set apart for recreational or aesthetic purposes in an otherwise urban environment.

### **GREENSPACE**

A strategically planned network of natural and semi-natural areas with other environmental features, designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services, while also enhancing biodiversity.

### **COMMUNITY**

A group of people who live in the same area and share common spaces within it, engaging with one another and the environment that they share thriving through the company of others who share their experiences.

### **UNDERSERVED COMMUNITY**

A group of people who live in an area that is consistently overlooked and underdeveloped compared to the surrounding environments/neighborhoods.

### **SUSTAINABILITY**

Integration of environmental factors into a functional design/space,

ensuring that minimal harm is done in the original ecosystem.

### **GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE**

Intricate and meaningful systems that use natural elements to enhance an environment, leading to a more biodiverse space.

### **GREENSPACE**

The integration of grass, trees, gardens, etc. into a landscape that benefits and provides for the surrounding community/environment.

We are solving the real-life problem of underdeveloped and underserved spaces in “Johnston Square” by making BMore Green.

### **WHO?**

Predominately African American Community with 3,000 people.

History - Johnston Square originated as a suburb of Baltimore in the early 19th century. It was named after the Johnston family who owned a square-shaped estate in the area.

### **WHY?**

Johnston Square experienced decline in the mid-20th century due to suburbanization, loss of industrial jobs, and racist policies which led to divestment. In turn, there is a high crime rate, high vacancy rates, and declining population.

- Urban Forestry
- Biodiversity Conservation
- Sustainable Transportation
- Green Infrastructure
- Energy Efficiency
- Urban Agriculture
- Waste management
- Community Engagement



## CONCLUSION:

For the Johnston Square Community, vacant and abandoned lots are a common challenge facing many communities, especially those that are economically disadvantaged. However, recent research suggests that transforming these unused spaces into community assets can provide social, environmental, and economic benefits. Converting these vacant lots into parks, gardens, and green infrastructure and engaging residents in the planning and design enables an inclusive process that promotes ownership in community development. Overall, developing vacant spaces in Johnston Square can serve as a model for communities in Baltimore to develop community land trusts and partnerships, and to highlight the potential to create greener, healthier, and more vibrant neighborhoods when underutilized land is repurposed to meet community needs.

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# Voices of Resilience

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## VOICES OF RESILIENCE THE PLIGHT OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN

MARY KOINANGE

GLORIA CHEBET

WANJERI NJAU

### *Why should we listen to women and children?*

Women and children constitute over 60% of Nairobi's population, with 51% women and 15% children under 6 years (2015, KNBS Population Progression). This demographic, despite being the largest in Nairobi's growing population, is often oppressed, their concerns overlooked in decision-making processes. In spite of societal changes made thus far, urban development and planning systems still subject them to unjust situations.

Inclusivity goes beyond "allowing" women in workspaces; it involves reexamining how the world accommodates women and children.

Unfortunately, given that active parenting duties are still left solely to the mothers in most societies, the children get to experience the city just how their mothers experience it, unjustly. Almost like an outsider.

This realization stirred something in us. It prompted the question: What is our role as architects, as urban planners, as policy makers, in making womens' and childrens' lives easier? No, better!

*"When positioned as a privilege, play is granted to children who are in the dominant group while those in non-dominant groups are denied the right to play." (Souto-Manning, 2017).*

### CITY WHERE KIDS CAN BE KIDS

The playground is a place to positively boost children's moods, fostering social interaction, and improving mental and physical well-being.

When a city allows a mother to let their child walk to school alone or play in the park at the end of the street, then we can say it's a just city. It's a great city

This is an **appeal** for the inclusion of children's **basic** needs in the planning of cities. **'Play must be the right of every child.**

**Not a privilege.'** Souto-Manning, 2017



# VOICES OF RESILIENCE

## WHAT ASPECTS NEED CHANGE?

### LIGHT IT UP!

Dark streets are a **maze of danger-wired** paths. Who is walking the streets? Who is roaming the streets? Creating a safe, **everyday** path for women starts by allowing them to see 50 metres into their walk. Allowing them to visually manifest their next steps. Allowing them to see how far away the next puddle is. How close the **nearest danger** is...

*Public transportation is like a magnifying glass that shows you civilization up close. Chris Gethard*

### UNVEILING A TRANSPORTATION REVOLUTION

At the centre of our urban landscape, we stand a cusp of a transportation revolution- one that transcends **mere commutes** and envisions a dynamic and secure public transport system **tailored** for the **safety** and empowerment of **women** and **children**.

### SAFE AND SANITARY WASHROOMS FOR ALL

Our facilities have great washrooms, but there's a **missing piece**. Only adults and those with disabilities get designated spaces. With rising safety concerns for children, let's set up washrooms for kids under 12 or family washrooms. Parents need peace of mind, especially with **worries** about defilement and kidnapping. Also, let's **ensure** changing stations in all washrooms for the health and safety of children.

# VOICES OF RESILIENCE

## WHO OUGHT TO DO WHAT?

### THE GOVERNMENT'S DUTY: ENVISION SAFER CITIES

The government serves as the cornerstone in shaping our urban landscape. There are several ways in which we require the government to act, and make urban areas inclusive of women and children.

- You **must** ensure well-lit transportation hubs and stops
- Surveillance cameras inside vehicles and at transport stops
- You should guarantee easily accessible emergency communication systems
- You **should** invest in public spaces and mobility - in their place, set up parks and open playgrounds and include the discriminated.
- You should allocate funds to support inclusive public washrooms, including facilities dedicated for children under 12.
- Embrace **inclusivity** through safety audits, consulting women, and tailoring solutions for identified risky zones.
- The government also **ought** to attract the private sector through incentives to adopt inclusive facilities.

**#The time for collective action is now!**

### NGO'S : BUILD ALLIANCES

Much research has been done addressing children and women, NGO's should consolidate this **work together** and present it to those that implement policies. AKA the GOVERNMENT.

- You **must** advocate for play.
- You must influence the masses to recognize the importance of play for the children. The need to build alliances with other urban policy advocates with overlapping agendas must be realized.
- This is your time to **rally** and troop your funds. Invest in **mass outreach**.

### URBAN PLANNERS: BLUEPRINTING TOMORROW'S CITIES

Urban planners hold the key to creating spaces that cater to the diverse needs of our society. They should:

- Integrate **safety** features, such as well-lit pathways, **secure** waiting areas, and **strategic** placement of surveillance in their designs.
- **Work** with women- they are the ones who can provide insight on how, on where, they feel most unsafe.

### PRIVATE INVESTORS: BEYOND PROFIT, TOWARDS SOCIAL IMPACT

Private investors play a crucial role in shaping the urban infrastructure. They should:

- Embrace a commitment to **social impact** by investing in projects prioritizing the **safety** and **convenience** of women and children.
- Foster **collaboration** with the government for **innovative** initiatives, incorporating measures such as CCTV surveillance of the streets, supporting provision of regulated public transport, and establishing inclusive facilities in their establishments



# VOICES OF RESILIENCE

## TOWARDS A FUTURE WHERE ALL THRIVE

Let this manifesto be more than words on paper—it is a resounding call to action. As we unite for a future where all thrive, let governments, urban planners, private investors, NGOs, and society **rise to the occasion**. Together, we can reshape the urban landscape, transforming public transport into a vehicle of empowerment and equality. By placing the safety and well-being of women and children at the forefront, we embark on a journey towards cities that are **not just inclusive but nurturing**, where the light of progress shines on **every citizen**. The time for collective action is now, and our commitment to this vision will echo through the generations, leaving an indelible mark on the cities we build and the lives we uplift.

**#The time for collective action is now!**

**JUST AND INCLUSIVE CITIES COMMUNICATE  
TO THEIR RESIDENTS: YOU BELONG HERE.**

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# Healing the Declining City of Baltimore

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IS IT FAIR AND “JUST“ TO KEEP A  
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IS DEATH NECESSARY  
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WHAT TRULY ARE THE  
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PROLONGING THE INEVITABLE?



# MEDICAL + HISTORY

PATIENT NAME: Baltimore City, Maryland

Baltimore City was the **PROMINENT CENTER** for many industries like **steel production, shipbuilding, automotive manufacturing, electronics, and chemical production**. During the course of the twentieth century, Baltimore became closely associated with the steel industry, as the local region commenced steel production in the year 1887.

In the pre-1970s era, **the urban population experienced significant growth, surpassing 900,000 inhabitants**. This increase can be attributed to the arrival of working-class families from many regions, including Europe, the South, and other areas.



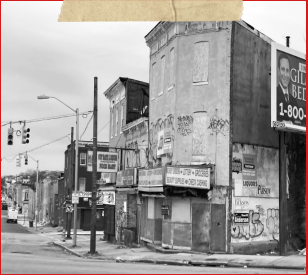
The numerous manufacturing industries present in the area provided employment opportunities that motivated these people. During this particular era, a significant proportion of Baltimore's populace, around one-third, was engaged in the manufacturing sector (Barrickman, 2015). The city, which currently houses a **population of 622,000 individuals**, now finds itself in a **condition of significant deterioration and decline**.

The presence of inactive factories and extensive abandoned industrial areas has resulted in **a landscape characterized by desolation and neglect**.



## 1 DEINDUSTRIALIZATION

In accordance with the findings of Thomas J. Vicino, the author of a comprehensive study conducted in 2009 on the phenomenon of deindustrialization in Baltimore, the proportion of individuals engaged in **manufacturing occupations in the city's labor force experienced a significant decline**. Specifically, the percentage of those employed in manufacturing decreased from almost one-third in 1970 to fewer than seven percent by the year 2000 (Barrickman, 2015)



## 2 UNEMPLOYMENT

The impact of this procedure has had severe consequences for the labor force residing in urban areas, resulting in an **official unemployment rate of 8.2 percent**. This figure exceeds the state average by more than three percentage points and surpasses the national average for the United States. (Cutieru, 2023)



## 3 CITY DETERIORATION

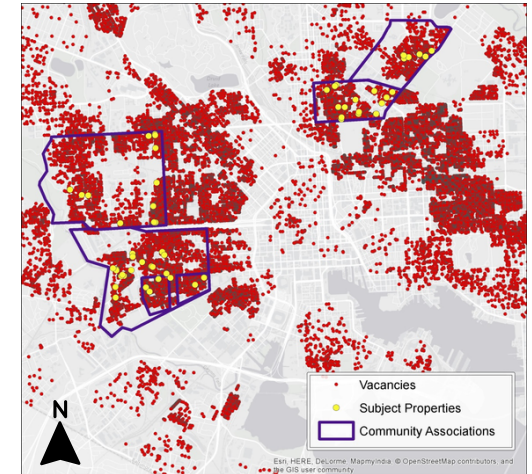
The state of our city, Baltimore, is deteriorating rapidly. Each day in our city, we heal fresh wounds only for previous ones to resurface. In order to facilitate the discovery of a remedy, it is imperative that we get a comprehensive understanding of the underlying condition. The phenomenon observed in our city is a multifaceted process of urban deterioration, which can be attributed to **several factors such as deindustrialization, internal migration, population decline, and the depletion of natural resources**.



## BALTIMORE CITY:

### Shrinking City

THE PHENOMENON WAS HEAVILY DISCUSSED ACROSS EUROPE IN THE EARLY 2000S, AS POST-SOCIALIST TRANSFORMATIONS LED TO AN INCREASED INTEREST IN THE TOPIC OF DEURBANIZATION. THE TERM **SHRINKING CITIES** WAS POPULARIZED BY ARCHITECT PHILIPP OSWALT, WHO DESCRIBED IT AS A PROBLEM OF MULTIPLICITY AND DIFFERENT SCALES. (CUTIERU, 2023)



(Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance, 2023)  
Used with permission. No further use allowed.

IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT NUMEROUS SYMPTOMS, LIKE BLIGHT, CRIME, DETERIORATING INFRASTRUCTURE, AND NEGLECTED NEIGHBORHOODS, ALL ORIGINATE FROM THE DIAGNOSIS OF A **SHRINKING CITY**. IN RECENT DECADES, URBAN PLANNERS AND MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS HAVE PUT FORTH MANY IDEAS. HOWEVER, SOME OF THESE RECOMMENDATIONS WERE FLAWED, WHILE OTHERS HAVE YET TO YIELD RESULTS.

DIAGNOSIS

**“ARCHITECTURE ITSELF CAN NOT MAKE A MORE EQUITABLE WORLD... BUT WE CAN CONTRIBUTE WITH SPECIFIC ACTIONS.”**

Mariam Kamara



# Rx MEDICAL PRESCRIPTION FORM <sub>1</sub>

## Patient Information

Patient Name: **BALTIMORE CITY, MARYLAND, USA**

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### Directions:

Hirt and Beauregard (2019) suggest in their research study that **expanding and shrinking urban city centers both have their inherent issues and we should not look at growth as only positive and shrinking as only negative.** All cities either shrinking or growing may have serious issues, but both may also have advantages. However, in today's pro-growth culture, only shrinking cities are viewed negatively. Urban politicians continue to treat growth and decline asymmetrically. **Growth is understood to generate both costs and benefits, whereas shrinkage generates only costs.** Hirt and Beauregard's hopes would be to have urban policy-makers question the common idea that shrinkage is equal to distress, but that the leaders of these cities are willing to experiment with a broader array of planning tools (Hirt and Beauregard, 2019).

Signature: *Urban Cure*



# Rx MEDICAL PRESCRIPTION FORM <sub>2</sub>

## Patient Information

Patient Name: **BALTIMORE CITY, MARYLAND, USA**

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### Directions:

It is now more important than ever to improve Baltimore's livability in order to raise the city's population and relieve its financial constraints. The idea of **"rightsizing"** describes an unproven process of shrinking cities to a "right" size, or one that is in line with the capacity of local government to support itself (Ryan, 2012) Rightsizing has a more **"common sense"** approach in light of the city's "fiscal squeeze," which is not politically advantageous, since it keeps the focus off of competing objectives and the disparities in power and wealth that exist within the city government. **The city's goal is to entice a hypothetically mobile and (relatively) rich populace, while the 'black butterfly' people are even more confined and have little say in creating a more equal and livable city for themselves.** Consistent with the dual city theory put forth by academics who are thinking about the growing disparity caused by neoliberal urbanism, Hirt and Beauregard's (2019) conclusion implies that Baltimore will remain a "twin-track" city.

Signature: *Urban Cure*



TREATMENT

TREATMENT



IN AN IDEAL WORLD, THE FUTURE  
SHRINKING CITY WOULD BE A  
“PATCHWORK CITY” OF NEW, OLD,  
VANISHED, AND VANISHING  
NEIGHBORHOODS INTERSPERSED WITHIN  
THE HISTORIC CITY’S BOUNDARIES.



THESE CITIES WILL NOT BE PRESERVED  
AS HISTORIC MONUMENTS, BUT THEY  
WILL ALSO NOT BE RUINED WASTELANDS.  
EVENTUALLY, SHRINKING CITIES MAY  
BECOME A VIBRANT MIX OF DIFFERENT  
TYPES OF ENVIRONMENTS (RYAN, 2012).



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# Altering Practices for Urban Inclusion

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## **Urgent Challenges:**

Decades of globalization have transformed countries into super-diverse contexts settled by migrants of various backgrounds. Despite this, marginalized communities remain systematically excluded from opportunities and institutions, leading to limited representation in the society.

The recent Social Turn in spatial design practices, sparked by initiatives like the Alterities Conference in Paris in 1999, has sought to address spatial injustice through community-engaged and tactical research. However, upon closer examination from an intersectional perspective, these initiatives lack diversity among their leading researchers. It is evident that diversity and inclusion initiatives must move beyond superficial changes and confront systemic biases and prejudices to provide equal opportunities for individuals from marginalized backgrounds.

Marginalized communities face continued misrecognition, stigmatization, and exclusion in public spaces and planning processes. Informality and diverse identities are often excluded or misrepresented in formal planning frameworks (Wacquant, 2007). This is often due to lack of knowledge regarding informal settlements and spaces with vibrant social, economic and cultural value.

Efforts to address exclusion and promote inclusivity in practice remain insufficient with diversity initiatives often prioritizing surface-level changes and neglecting deeper systemic issues. Biases and prejudices persist within academic institutions, impeding the progress of marginalized individuals. Spatial injustices persist on a global scale, denying many groups representation, resources, and self-determination in shaping the spaces they inhabit (Yiftachel, 2006).

Enduring spatial inequities require urgent data-driven activism and policy changes to challenge dominant narratives (Milan & Velden, 2016). Realizing spatial justice within emerging economic paradigms like the Circular Economy requires prioritizing inclusion, participation, and social sustainability (Friant et al., 2020). Relativist postmodern perspectives that emphasize blurring boundaries and cultural relativism make spatial justice complex to define and pursue in a diverse world (Dovey, 2019). Without critical examination of exclusionary norms and power structures, inequities will persist.

## **Vision:**

We envision cities where holistic spatial justice is pursued through recognition, representation and redistribution of resources to marginalized groups (Fraser, 2008). Where informality is leveraged by mapping community assets and collaborating across governance levels to include diverse identities and practices. Where data activism empowers communities to inform policy and claim space. Where inclusion and participation lead to spatial justice within the Circular Economy. And where exclusionary norms are critically examined to equitably distribute resources.

We value the dignity and inclusion of diverse persons, identities and cultures in spatial processes (Wacquant, 1999). Community empowerment through spatial knowledge and self-determination (Gutiérrez, 2018). Social sustainability prioritizing people over profits (Dovey, 2019). Participation and collaboration in spatial decision-making (Arnstein, 1969/2019). And spatial equity in the distribution of resources and opportunities (Rawls, 1971).

To advance this vision, actions are needed at multiple scales:  
At the urban governance and policy level, legislation and programs should be established to promote spatial justice through recognition, representation and redistribution. Urban authorities must acknowledge spatial justice as a construct emerging from privileged classes and expand decision-making processes to marginalized groups. Participatory planning and budgeting can enable more democratic influence on spatial outcomes. Policies should identify and reduce structural inequalities, and reverse patterns of marginalization, stigma and discrimination.

Through critical spatial discourse and designs, exclusionary norms and practices can be challenged. Creating platforms for marginalized narratives and identities to be voiced can foster recognition and representation. Spatial frameworks and technical systems like GIS should be re-examined for biases. Speculative designs and data-driven visualizations can reveal inequities and catalyze advocacy.

Through emerging economic paradigms like the Circular Economy, principles of social sustainability, inclusion and justice should be centered. Participatory initiatives can engage marginalized groups in co-creating and transitioning systems. Accessible knowledge and technological resources can empower grassroots circular innovations. Eco-centric policies ignoring social equity should be resisted.

And through expanded data activism, geodata should be democratized and made accessible for community education and empowerment. Developing alternative data collection methods can capture excluded narratives and counter dominant assumptions. Using data to inform policy changes towards spatial justice goals is key.

Through recognition, representation and redistribution, we can imagine cities where diverse communities openly shape public spaces, resources and decisions - where plural identities flourish and spatial justice reigns. Through these lines we need to activate critical thinking on the agency and responsibility of academia to address this issue and proposes a method to accomplish this goal.

By taking coordinated actions above across sectors, scales and emerging paradigms, we can promote spatial justice to imagine cities where diverse communities openly shape spaces and urban life flourishes equitably. But this requires political will and continuous struggle. What role will you play?



groups can leverage this knowledge. Mainstream spatial justice based on empirical evidence of



# Addressing Inequality Through Economic Innovation

Brynn Cornelissen

Darren Adams

Daniel November

Aubrey Coetzee

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While apartheid officially ended in South Africa during the early 1990s, the country still grapples with deep-rooted social and economic disparities as a result of the oppressive governance that appropriated segregation, opportunity monopolization and the disenfranchisement of individuals of color. The transformation into an equality-based “rainbow nation” however, has been a dilatory journey consistent of several “inclusivity” policies and efforts towards addressing the injustices of the preceding government. Today, with unemployment at 30% (comparative to 13% in 1994) and perpetual infrastructural degradation, an argument towards the viability and affectivity of these policies arises. Given the complexity of the aforementioned disenfranchisement, and further understanding the socio-economic disparities that were institutionalized during the apartheid era is imperative to address collaborative means by which remediation can realistically be achieved.

The apartheid model saw the expropriation of quality education, healthcare, and employment opportunities for individuals of color during the “removal” process of individuals from the economic, and infrastructural forum comprising the South African societal structure. This model then remained in effect for 46 years. During this time, multiple generations were impacted by the inaccessibility to quality services (accompanied by a host of associated injustices), and upon re-unification remain at a disadvantage in comparison to the several white generations that had been availed, amongst other variables, quality education and opportunities for valuable industry experience resulting in a lack of diversification in the corporate sector due to the broad inexperience and systemic discrimination. This necessitated a large percentage of the population to seek employment in the informal sector out of desperation for income, bearing job insecurity, poor legal protection, and limited empowerment.

Today, given that inequality amongst the South African populous has degraded further yielding the status of the “most unequal country in the world”, as designated by Time magazine. Perhaps there is cause for analysis of economic and socio-development models that have yielded successful results, such as that of the Israeli Kibbutz. This model is represented as a communal settlement whereby residents live and work together, sharing resources and responsibilities. Originally focused on agriculture, modern kibbutzim have diversified into a variety of industries that ultimately contribute to the Israeli GDP. Members of the kibbutz contribute to communal decision-making and share in the economic benefits thereof. The primary emphasis is on that of equality, cooperation, and a sense of community, with resources such as education, healthcare, and housing collectively being provided. Conceptualizing the establishment of these micro-economies outside of urban sectors would result in a more equal distribution of opportunities, education and resources, limiting the necessity for individuals to live on the urban periphery through rural incentivization.

In South Africa, where concerns associated with land ownership and the re-distribution thereof persist, a **community-based agricultural** approach would be a realistic implementation. This involves the pooling of resources and labor to collectively manage and benefit from agricultural activities, fostering a degree of self-sufficiency and addressing historical disparities of land ownership. Furthering the concept of self-sufficiency, the adaptation of **alternative economic activities** such as that of technology, manufacturing and tourism would aid in the establishment of a diverse economic base within these communities. Through collaboration with the government, mediums such as tax-incentives could be actioned to empower the prioritizing of products and services yielded by these “micro-economies”. This may further open the door for partnerships with established local businesses, industries, and educational institutions, enriching prospective skill development programs. This scheme of Industry-specific training, internships, and mentorship programs would create a direct pathway for community members to enter various sectors of the existing economy, should they seek to. Through the familiarization of the various levels within the supply chain, community members would further find themselves within an **entrepreneurship incubator** whilst participating in the activities of this eco-system. Welcoming further economic diversification, the communities would figuratively have the means to expand laterally (a term defining the provision of all complimentary services within a supply chain as seen exercised by Andrew Carnegie during the industrial revolution). Through access to funding, a supportive community environment and the aforementioned partnership schemes, the provision of aspiring entrepreneurs with the knowledge, skills, and mentorship needed to start and manage successful businesses and overcome traditional barriers faced by marginalized groups can not be understated. This holistically speaks to the primary value add of the Kibbutz model, the associative emphasis on **skill development, accessibility to education** and the subsequent economic opportunities. Exclusive to the schemes associated with industry participation, the establishment of quality educational programs can address one of the primary historical disparities which happens to remain as a large limitation in our existing economy. These programs could include schools, training centers, and workshops that cater to the diverse educational needs of community members. And beyond traditional academic subjects, the educational system could incorporate vocational training and practical skill development (agriculture, technology, craftsmanship, and entrepreneurship). This approach would ensure that community members acquire a diverse set of skills, making them versatile and adaptable to various industries and contribute meaningfully to the community's economic activities. Further considering the virtual nature of our modern, global economy, community members that are vocationally competent and entrepreneurially inclined are equipped for opportunities within the global context.

In adapting the kibbutz model to the South African context, the communal approach to living and economic cooperation holds the potential to address historical inequalities and foster a mentality towards inclusive economic development. By implementing community-based agriculture, the diversification of industries, and the prioritization of skill development and education, a South African kibbutz model would empower individuals, particularly those historically disenfranchised, to actively participate in and contribute to a more equitable economy. The emphasis on shared resources and empowerment aligns with the goals of social cohesion and inclusive growth proposed by the “rainbow nation”. Through this model, our society could overcome barriers to economic opportunities, promoting a sense of collective responsibility, and furthering the creation of a foundation for sustainable development, echoing the successful aspects of the kibbutzim experience in Israel.

# Safe Charm City: Innovating Baltimore's Public Spaces for a Secure Future

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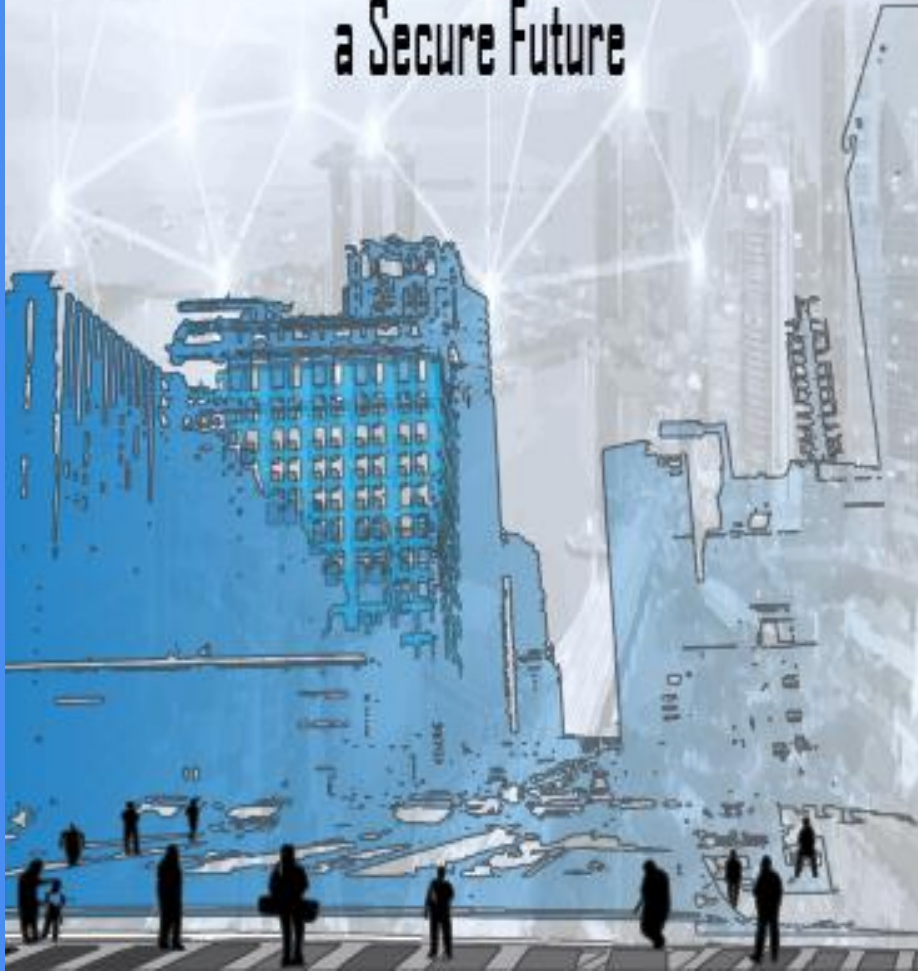
*Our Manifesto is a call to Action,  
A declaration of our commitment  
to Innovate and revolutionize safe  
and secure public spaces in  
Baltimore City*

All images in this Manifesto were produced by authors

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# SAFE CHARM CITY

Innovating Baltimore's Public Spaces for  
a Secure Future



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## Our Aim

We aim to create safer  
and more engaging public  
spaces in downtown of  
Baltimore city using  
sustainable technologies.





# Our Declaration



We Advocate for Public Spaces with Technologically Innovative and Inclusive Designs.



We Advocate for a state-of-the-art Live Video Surveillance and Facial Recognition System to safeguard the streets of Baltimore Proactively.

We Advocate for a Community Focused Public Realm for All who live in Baltimore City.



We Advocate for entertaining Public Spaces for the Community where everyone feels safe and Secure.

We Embrace a Sustainable System where our technological systems are powered by renewable and safe energy sources.

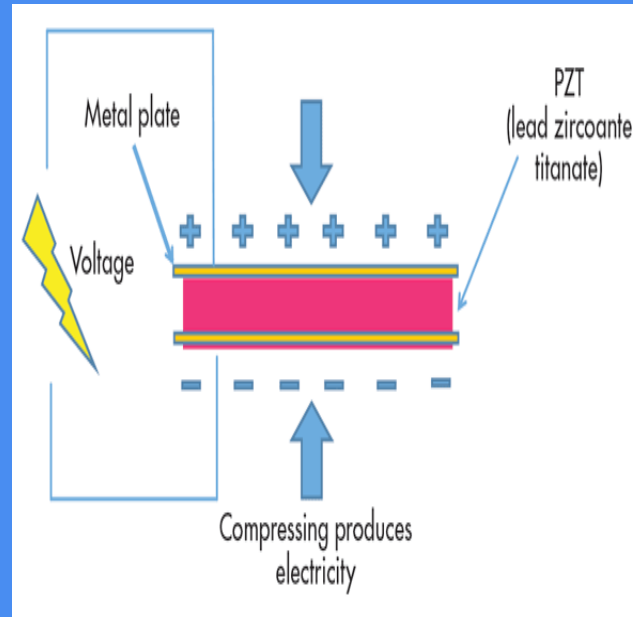


# Proposed solutions: Safety using Advanced technology in public spaces

## Piezoelectric tiles

These Tiles will be embedded in the ground on the sidewalk on streets where there is high traffic and will generate electricity by the weight of people walking on them.

The Electricity generated from the tiles will be used to power street lights, sensors, and other low-power devices.



## Augmented Reality/Mixed Reality & Virtual Reality

By using Augmented Reality (AR), Mixed Reality (MR), and Virtual Reality (VR), we have the opportunity to visually manifest artistic experiences within public spaces. This transformative use of immersive technologies turns abstract spaces into meaningful interactive settings within the neighborhood, enticing people to venture outdoors and, consequently, enhancing the safety of the public space.

## Emergency Call Boxes

Installing emergency call boxes or intercom systems at strategic points throughout the neighborhood provides a swift means for individuals to seek assistance in the event of an emergency or when encountering suspicious activities.



## Solar WIFI Benches

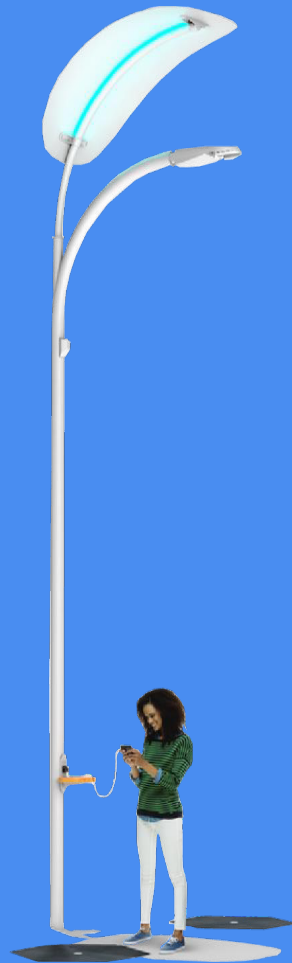
Smart benches create Wi-Fi connectivity, additional lighting at night, systems to detect weather - and even play Music. These abilities assist in creating a more active and appreciated space that is capable of fostering community engagement. Giving people another reason to be outdoors. They can also be utilized with solar power, to avoid any excess energy use.



# Proposed solutions: Safety using Advanced technology in public spaces

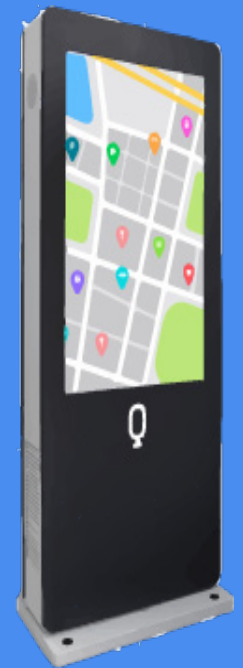
## Solar Powered Street lights:

Urban areas are incorporating solar power into their infrastructure, with solar panels being integrated into buildings, streetlights, and even roads. These installations not only generate clean energy but also provide shade and reduce the urban heat island effect.



## Live Transit Display

These will display real-time transit information and enhance the commuting experience for the users. Whether taking the bus, the train, or any other form of public transit, these displays will include arrival and departure times, route updates, service disruptions, and even live tracking of vehicles. By giving people access to this technology, public transit becomes more efficient.





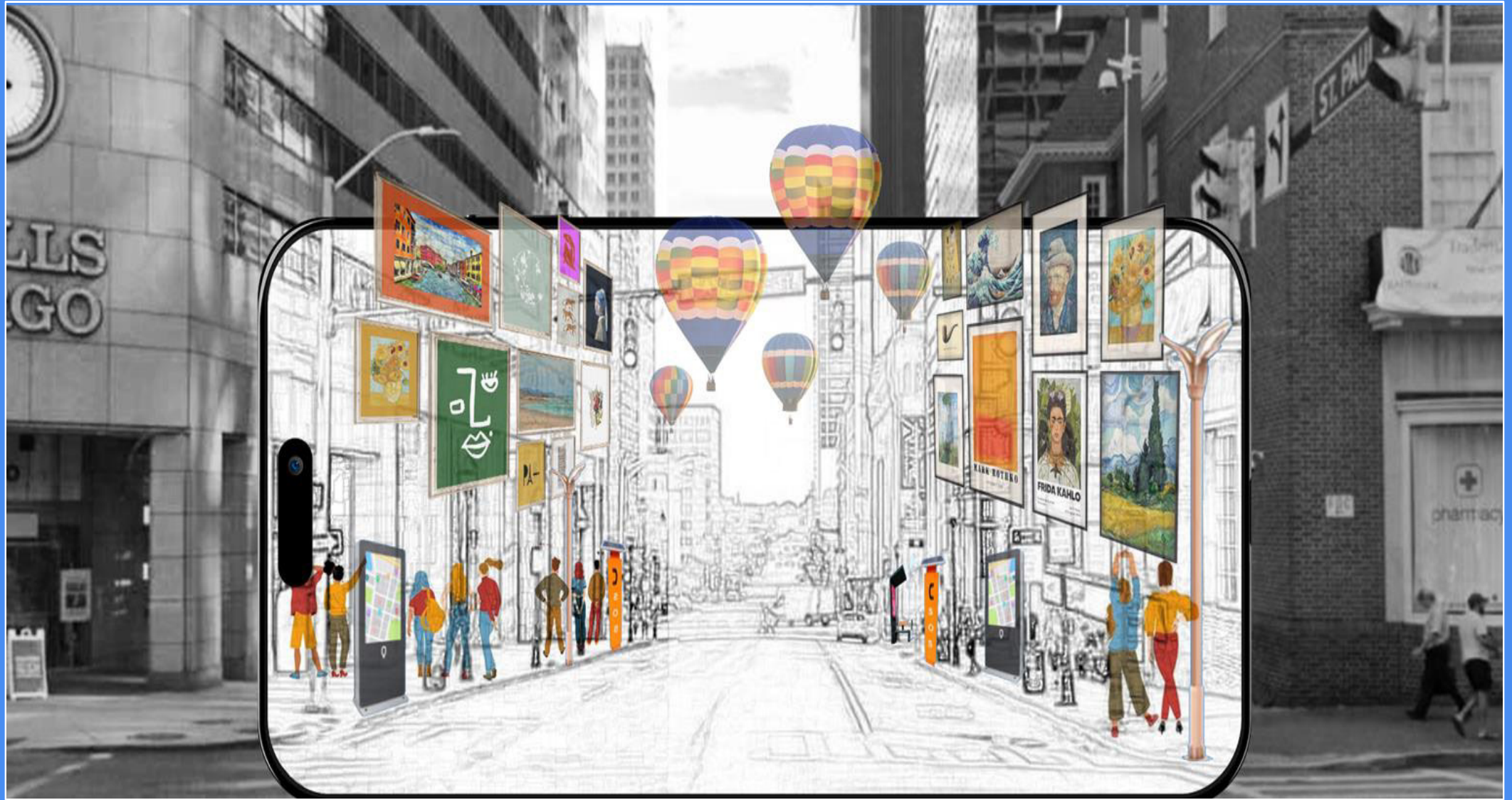
# A Safer Downtown Baltimore



This image imagines our street with Solar Panels, Wi-Fi benches, Live Transit Displays and Piezoelectric tiles



# An Engaging Downtown Baltimore



This image imagines our street within AR & VR Showcasing Art Installations Using a Smartphone

## CONCLUSION

We believe that integrating cutting-edge sustainable technological interventions is a necessity in creating a safe and secure environment in downtown Baltimore. Creating engaging spaces that draw out the residents of the city and deter any crime that could occur on the streets. By embracing these technological solutions we look forward to a safer and more secure space for all who live or visit Baltimore.

TECHNOLOGY - - -

AR & VR - - - -

PLACEMAKING - - -

-VIBRANT PUBLIC

SPACES - - -

ENGAGING ENVIRON-

MENT- - - -

LESSER CRIMES- - -

SAFER DOWNTOWN



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# BMore Clean Manifesto

**Mikaela Carandang**

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Morgan State University, Baltimore, USA

## **Preamble**

Baltimore stands at a crossroads. Our beloved city, rich in history and culture, faces significant challenges related to cleanliness and environmental sustainability. The time has come for a unified, community-driven movement to reclaim the beauty and health of our urban landscape.

## **Vision**

We envision a Baltimore where clean streets, parks, and waterways are the norm, not the exception. A city where every citizen, business, and institution plays an active role in maintaining and enhancing our environment.

## Preamble

Baltimore stands at a crossroads. Our beloved city, rich in history and culture, faces significant challenges related to cleanliness and environmental sustainability. The time has come for a unified, community-driven movement to reclaim the beauty and health of our urban landscape.

## Vision

We envision a Baltimore where clean streets, parks, and waterways are the norm, not the exception. A city where every citizen, business, and institution plays an active role in maintaining and enhancing our environment.

## Thesis

“BMORE CLEAN” is not merely a call for cleanliness;

**IT’S A RALLYING CRY**

for a transformative shift in Baltimore’s urban landscape. This manifesto advocates for a systemic re-envisioning of how we interact with our city spaces, understanding that the state of our environment directly impacts our collective well-being and safety. In Baltimore, these elements are deeply interwoven, each influencing and reinforcing the others.



### **Problems:**

The streets of Baltimore are currently in a state of neglect, marred by overflowing trash bins, litter-strewn sidewalks, and unkempt public spaces. This crisis is multi-dimensional, affecting the city's aesthetic appeal, public safety and health, and environmental sustainability (Kelley & Ambikapathi, 2016).

### **Environmental Impact:**

The accumulation of trash contributes to pollution, harms local wildlife, and disrupts the city's ecological balance (Zeemering, 2014).

**Social Ramifications:** The prevalence of litter demoralizes residents, fosters a sense of neglect, and can lead to increased crime rates as part of the broken windows theory (O'Brien et al., 2019).

**Economic Consequences:** The cleanliness crisis deters tourism, affects local businesses, and decreases property values, creating a ripple effect on the city's economy (Longo & Alberini, 2006).

**Health Concerns:** Accumulated waste poses significant health risks, including the spread of diseases and the proliferation of vermin (Campbell et al., 2016).

**Baltimore's struggle with cleanliness is not just a matter of waste disposal. It's a complex issue rooted in urban planning, community engagement, and resource allocation (Hojat et al., 2016).**

**Urban Diversity:** Baltimore's diverse urban landscape, with its mix of residential, commercial, and industrial areas, requires a customized approach to cleanliness and waste management.

**Resource Limitations:** Limited budgets and manpower pose a significant challenge to implementing widespread cleanliness initiatives.

**Public Awareness and Participation:** A lack of awareness and civic responsibility among residents exacerbates the problem. Engaging the community effectively is crucial for lasting change.

**Policy and Enforcement:** Existing policies may be inadequate or poorly enforced, leading to continued negligence and noncompliance.

## Baltimore and the Stoop

Marble steps became status symbols for Baltimoreans in the early 1900's. Despite the challenge of keeping them white, they ornament the face of many row houses and city buildings. Homeowners took pride in their clean steps and it was often a competition to see who could get and keep theirs the whitest. However, this tradition has largely disappeared over time. historical practice in Baltimore exemplifies the community's dedication to cleanliness and appearance. The meticulous care given to the white marble steps reflects a broader cultural value placed on cleanliness and community pride. It's an emotional reminder of how urban traditions can shape the identity of a place and its people, influencing their relationship with their neighborhood and each other (Olesker, 2013).

**If a property either the building or the grounds, is not kept clean and litter-free, this will further encourage**

**LITTERING or VANDALISM.**

**Our comprehensive strategy for a cleaner Baltimore involves community action, governmental intervention, educational initiatives, and innovative solutions.**

**Community-Driven Cleanliness:** Implement a system whereresidents are responsible for maintaining cleanliness around their homes, similar to grass-cutting duties. Implement fines for non-compliance to enforce this responsibility.

**Policy Reform and Enforcement:** Advocate for and implement stricter littering laws, incentivize waste reduction, and ensure consistent enforcement of cleanliness regulations.

**Corporate and Business Engagement:** Encourage local businesses to contribute to cleaning efforts, whether through sponsorship, volunteering, or adopting public spaces.

**Educational Outreach:** Launch campaigns in schools, community centers, and public forums to build awareness about the importance of cleanliness, environmental stewardship, and community pride.

## GOALS

1. To significantly improve public health by reducing pollution and health hazards associated with unmanaged waste.

To increase safety in Baltimore neighborhoods by fostering environments that deter criminal activities and enhance the well-being of residents.

2. To transform Baltimore into a model of urban cleanliness, with well-maintained public spaces, streets free of litter, and efficient waste management systems. To promote green and sustainable practices, contributing to an environmentally friendly city.

3. To cultivate a strong sense of community where people can proudly sit on their stoop and initiate responsibility towards cleanliness in their own streets. Also involving residents, businesses, and local authorities in ongoing efforts and to initiate educational and awareness programs that encourage active participation in maintaining and improving the city's cleanliness.

## CONCLUSION

The 'BMORE CLEAN' manifesto is a beacon for a city-wide revival, inspiring a movement from one neighborhood to the next, to instill a deep-seated culture of cleanliness. This initiative is about more than just tidiness; it's about cultivating a sense of respect, responsibility, and community pride. By enhancing the allure of our streets, we aim to attract residents back to areas they once left, filling the vacant homes that dot our city. Addressing the cleanliness of Baltimore is a critical step toward solving the twin challenges of safety and housing vacancy. It's an invitation for every citizen, business, and government body to partake in revitalising a Baltimore that is not only clean but also safe, inviting, and vibrant.

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# For an Entropic City

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## For an Entropic City

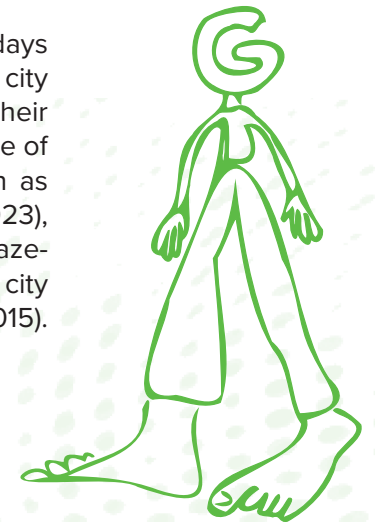
### **DATAFICATION OF EVERYDAY URBAN LIFE**

In recent years, you may have observed a growing permeability between the physical urban space and the digital one. Cities have become both the sites and subjects of intensive datafication, defined as the “process whereby more and more aspects of everyday life are captured as data” (Kitchin, 2023). Information and communication technologies have been increasingly embedded in the urban fabric, enabling the collection of extensive urban data. These data flow in the city, moving from one actor’s hand to another, at times private, at times public, almost always in a complex and opaque choreography.

Yes, data can offer the potential for valuable insights into city life, unraveling some of the most iniquitous problems found in cities and guiding decision-making processes towards well informed and just choices. But when urban data find themselves in Big Tech hands, they can only serve one end: profit.

### **SURVEILLANCE CAPITALISM**

Information technology giants are nowadays posing as urbanists, using the smart city narrative as Trojan Horses to extend their control, authority and profits. While some of their projects failed spectacularly, such as Sidewalk Labs Toronto (Filion et al, 2023), they often succeed in weaving their maze-like surveillance assemblage across the city (Haggerty and Richard, 2000; Kitchin, 2015).



With a strategy centered around the accumulation of digital traces, they are :

*Monitoring urban and digital spaces,  
Harvesting data that fuels AI-based factories,  
Profiling, predicting and forecasting,  
To finally commodify personal data and behavioral prediction.*

That is what Zuboff describes as surveillance capitalism: a mutation of capitalism whose aim is “ to predict and modify human behavior as a means to produce revenue and market control ” (Zuboff, 2015, p. 75).

In this age of surveillance capitalism, datafication of everyday city life is raising crucial questions regarding justice and democracy (Zuboff, 2023). It poses a threat to liberty, autonomy, privacy and agentivity. On our way towards a more just city, we have no other choice but to resist and dismantle the oppressive force of surveillance capitalism. Faced with this growing menace, “there is no need to fear or hope, but only to look for new weapons” (Deleuze, 2006, p.4).

**This manifesto is a call to sabotage private urban-data extractions.  
It's a call to increase degrees of disorder in urban spaces, to suffuse  
confusion into the datasets, and to blur the behavioral forecast.  
It's a call for urban data obfuscation.**

**It's a call for unpredictability,  
uncertainty and insurgency.  
It's a call for joyful chaos.  
It's a call for the entropic city.**

## CONTEXTUAL ART AS A WEAPON

By what means do we intend to pursue what we believe to be a just and entropic urban model? Although the strategies are, like the cities themselves, numerous and proteiform, we'd like to emphasize here the potential of contextual art. Specifically, a contextual art that is fundamentally subversive and could lodge itself in the interstices of a *smoothing-over* engendered by an urbanism of control and mitigation.

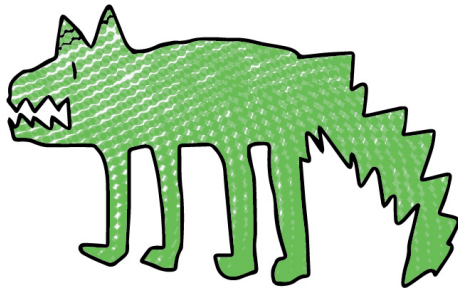
As Paul Ardenne puts it, contextual art is an umbrella term for a variety of practices, each of them inextricably linked to the context in which they take place. It is no longer a question of detaching oneself from reality through its representation, but of presenting it as it is, through situations provoked at the heart of everyday life. Among its various forms, contextual art encompasses intervention-art, art occupying urban space in a way that is often performative, and practices stemming from participatory or relational aesthetics. Everyday life then reveals its events, circumstances, drifts and chance encounters, where experience cannot be reduced (Ardenne, 2009). It also holds the power to generate confusion and interference in the collection of city-wide data, a *glitch* in the process.

Heterogeneous, contested and in constant mutation, cities are environments for encounters with alterity and a stage for serendipity. Their ability to generate the unexpected and their fascinating labyrinthine, untamable characteristics already offer a degree of protection against the predictive ambitions of Big Tech.

Contextual art increases this protection while holding the critical and dialogical charge necessary to what we mean by a *just* everyday life. Because justice also comes from being able to express oneself and listen to others, and, with a little luck, to be shaken in one's convictions, making it possible to develop a common ground for exchange. It allows us to broaden our perceptions of the world and deepen our narratives—all within a sensitive and self-determining perspective, far removed from the myths nurtured by the so-called merits of surveillance. It's also about the right to be surprised by the unexpected, and to escape from a purely functionalist logic of the city, which is much more than an aggregate of economic imperatives.

## HEY GOOGLE, DID YOU FORECAST THE BIG GREY WOLF?

In 2010, a gigantic Grey Wolf was hung in the middle of downtown Quebec City. A crowd gathered in the street to disembowel the beast and, in a festive atmosphere, put an end to this symbol of fear. With one gesture, the puppet opened up and dolls fell from its belly, each bearing the label of a fear written by an anonymous group. Celebrants were invited to shout out their fears in a gesture of atonement (Folie/Culture, 2013).



At first glance, this maneuvering action has all the elements mentioned above. It calls out to passers-by, inviting them to speak out and reflect collectively in a playfulness not devoid of commitment. It shakes up the city's normal rhythm, instills temporary madness, increases the entropy of urban spaces and runs counter to strictly productivist planning.

**This manifesto is a call for contextual art as an opportunity for dialogue and as a means of experimenting other ways of being.**  
**It's a call for contextual art as a weapon in the fight against surveillance capitalism.**  
**It's a call for contextual art as a just path towards the just city.**

**It's a call for unpredictability,  
uncertainty and insurgency.  
It's a call for joyful chaos.  
It's a call for the entropic city.**

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# Into the Invisible

## Introduction to Collective Introspection Toolkit for Spatial Justice

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# INTO THE INVISIBLE

**How do we achieve spatial justice? What is spatial justice and what is included in the scope of this? What are the core problems when it comes to spatial injustice? What can we do to mitigate the rapid growth of the issues that were caused by injustices?**

Spatial justice includes wide range, with different perspectives and focuses on different phenomena and manifestations. Not only are we tackling the matter in physical spaces with social aspects, we would also like to address the ecological and environmental factors in spatial justice.

Social Ecological Urbanism emphasizes the resilience of the social-ecological system, which leads to the focus on the regulations from institutions which strongly influences urban forms directly and indirectly. Moreover, this approach stresses the need to decrease the gap between ecologists and urban designers when it comes to creating more sustainable cities (Colding et al. 2022). With this approach, **humans are considered as the "co-creators of nature"** (ibid.), who are integrated and manage both the ecosystem and social system together. On the one hand, it is important to layout the solutions from urban planners and policymakers for the upcoming climate-change effects on cities, as well as the conservation of biodiversity in ecosystem; on the other, it is also critical to promote environmental learning in civic society through design focuses on human-nature connection (ibid.).

Since there is interconnection between social and ecological systems, we questioned **what are the cores of the spatial injustices and if these are paid attention to or even visible in order to be "resolved"**. In our manifesto, we would like to address the visibility of the factors that might be the core of the injustices in both social and environmental systems.

Furthermore, we proposed a conceptualization of the invisible factors through **collective introspection toolkit** and bring awareness to them in participation processes. From this toolkit, we would like to provide **a sense of hope**, which can be realized as reality once the awareness and knowledge of these hidden factors leading toward spatial injustice are discovered, evaluated and possibly monitored together as a community.

Lastly, as urban researchers, we would like to keep distance from human-centric perspectives in our manifesto, rather we try to focus on the integral and collective living organism as a whole in the same environment.

Illustration inspired by (1952) J.R. Eyerman Hollywood's Paramount Theater, the first 3-D movie 'Bwana Devil' premieres.

## Breaking INVISIBILITY

Several factors contribute to injustices around the world, which can manifest in various intensities, contexts, and cultures, ranging from small to significant. However, many of these injustices often go unnoticed or remain invisible until they gain prominence through global media. In the current trajectory where the world is heading towards the destruction of natural systems and human life, it becomes crucial to bring these small and invisible forces to light. These forces play a major role in the overall deterioration of our environment and societal well-being, as these invisible issues can become more significant conflicts, ultimately threatening all living beings on Earth. These forces remain invisible for reasons such as,

**Complexity of issues:** Most invisible injustices are surface symptoms of an underlying, structural problem (Heilinger, 2021). For example, factors like discrimination, stereotypes can prevent people from voicing their most basic forms of injustices. This shows that the actual suffering, deprivation, or disadvantage are understood as isolated phenomena. (Heilinger, 2021)

**Hierarchy in power:** People in power can control the narratives of injustices through their practices and make the powerless oppressed. The current exploitation of our planet and people are manifest from power dynamics. (Birney, 2021)

**Lack of Awareness:** With a lot of disparities among people, level of education, differences in cultures etc. communities experiencing injustice may not be able to make their struggles known to a wider community. Particularly, marginalised areas and vulnerable communities suffer to make it visible to the rest of society.

**Normalisation of small problems:** These injustices often manifest subtly in the form of microaggressions, biases, and gradual environmental degradation etc., which may not immediately trigger action. Though small in scale and sometimes unintended, they can negatively impact the well-being of individuals while reinforcing harmful stereotypes in society (Current Understandings of Microaggressions: Impacts on Individuals and Society, n.d.) and can escalate into a bigger problem.

**Lack of media presence:** The absence of data and digital presence on injustices can contribute to invisibility, since it becomes challenging to show the public about the severity of the problem. Though digital media can deepen, expand, and amplify existing injustice and power asymmetries, there are risks that disproportionately impact and directly relate to the vulnerable position of individuals or groups in a community (Wodajo, 2022). Therefore they need to be appropriate and fact checked before publishing in the media.

As urbanists, it is essential to practice, community-based projects with collaborative efforts from NGOs, municipalities, creating relevant awareness through digital media, activism, and promoting democratic practices can also help make these unjust problems visible to society. However, more than that, taking action is needed immediately. Therefore, this manifesto provides an introduction to a toolkit which helps in unveiling and questioning these small invisible forces.

## CONCLUSION

By having our take on these invisible injustices caused by humans, we would like to emphasise that by tackling these small unjust building blocks of our system, we could bring a change that we can all live with. Having realised that the human superiority is ignoring the resources of the Earth in its entirety, the Earth is reacting back to us with several life threatening crises. With this overload of information, people can feel helpless and this has to take a shift, because it is leading to more problems.

As urbanists, we have the ability to instill a **'sense of hope'** within people. We think that making people not lose their empathy for the fellow beings and at the same time taking care of the Earth during the process is the first step to changing these present conditions that we have. This is possible only if we help in providing a platform for the public to voice the injustices they face, make it visible to the world and act on it firmly through our expertise in our professions.

With the introduction of our collective introspection toolkit, we are anticipating the awareness toward the socio-ecological resilience in spatial justice could be produced and transferred to broader and wider audiences. Stated in the study "Frontiers in Social-Ecological Urbanism" (Colding et al. 2022) that "urban discourse shapes the interplay between institutions and urban form that ultimately creates conditions for more interlinked forms of social-ecological outcomes". This leads to our goal in our manifesto to influence changes in planning and policy-making processes. With **the involvement of wider and more diverse groups of actors' participation**, we are hoping to bring spatial justice in planning and designing with the perspective of "pro-environmental human behavior and promote cognitive resilience building" (ibid.).

## COLLECTIVE INTROSPECTION TOOLKIT

In our quest to make visible again the invisible forces that shape our city, we propose a specific journey of awareness. These forces have the power to shape our destiny and our collective existence. They are part of the fabric of our lives and our cities. They remain in the shadow of social norms. This toolkit is designed to encourage residents to (re)evaluate their own role, as well as that of other actors, in recognizing hidden strengths. We aim to raise awareness and action through collective dialogue through questions and thoughts, common narratives and determination to change. The Collective Introspection Toolkit encourages residents to confront uncomfortable issues and sanitized perspectives.

**step 1:** raise awareness + start conversation and storytelling with the Toolkit

**step 3:** taking actions on relevant matters and actor

**step 2:** collaboration + mapping and data collection of hidden complexities

**step 4:** monitoring and evaluation on these actions

SEC 4.0  
**COLLECTIVE GROWTH**

Are your disturbing introspections actually steps towards positive change?

'It's amazing to think about the invisible forces that we might be missing.'

SEC 3.0  
**UNVEILING THE INVISIBLE FORCES IN EVERYDAY LIFE**

Have you observed invisible forces around you? How do you think it affects the lives of residents?

SEC 1.0  
**UNMASKING PROFESSIONALISM**

How do professionalism and the extreme dignity of some subjects affect discussions about just the city?

'No voice should remain unheard'  
'We should voice up the injustice!'

SEC 3.1  
**STRUCTURAL FORCES**

Focus on the examination on systemic biases, institutional discrimination, and contribution from power dynamics to invisibility

Could historical events connect to invisible forces we experience on daily basis and how?

SEC 3.2  
**ECONOMIC + SOCIAL FORCES**

Inspect on inequality in economic and social factors that reinforce invisible barriers within the society

How do economic forces create unseen barriers, and who is most influenced by these in the society?

SEC 3.3  
**DIGITAL FORCES**

Investigate the possible contribution to invisible forces by technology, algorithms and digital advancements

How can the development of the digital tools assist us to identify the invisible forces?

SEC 3.4  
**CULTURAL NARRATIVES**

Undertake cultural norms, language, and media representation that influence the visibility or invisibility of certain issues

What are the examples where cultural norms and prejudices influence and shape perceptions, and how so?

SEC 3.5  
**ENVIRONMENTAL + INTER SPECIES FORCES**

Delve into environmental challenges, climate change, and the impact on both human and other-than-human species

In your opinion, what is the relationship between human and other-than-human environment activities?

SEC 4.0  
**COLLECTIVE GROWTH**

Is it possible with collective spaces to see the real complexity beyond sterile discussions?

SEC 4.0  
**COLLECTIVE GROWTH**

What is the difference between being aware of invisible forces and confronting disturbing situations individually or collectively?

'We are hopeful with the knowledge and awareness from this toolkit we can make changes in spatial justice.'

'I've always thought there's more to the story of our society and environment than what shows on the surface.'



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# Housing for Hope

## A Manifesto for Baltimore

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## Our mission

We want to rejuvenate dilapidated communities by engaging the residents in various programs all catered to solving the blight epidemic in neighborhoods and cities all over the country.

## Key Causes

1. Economic Decline
2. Disinvestment
3. Population Decline
4. Crime and Safety Concerns
5. Aging Housing Stock
6. Lack of Access to Financing
7. Lack of Coordinated Strategy
8. Environmental Contamination

# Target Groups

Baltimore faces a dire vacant housing crisis, with thousands of abandoned properties blighting neighborhoods. These vacant structures breed crime, decrease property values, and undermine community stability. Our group wants to focus on low income neighborhoods in Baltimore which include people who were forced out of their homes. We want to provide more affordable housing for those communities.

1

**Low income neighborhoods**

2

**Blighted neighborhoods**

3

**Neighborhoods with vacant homes**

# Precedents

Under Project C.O.R.E., or Creating Options for Renewal and Enterprise, Baltimore will have a fresh start with more options for small company owners to innovate and expand as well as more green space and affordable, mixed-use housing. In addition to creating jobs and improving the relationship between the State of Maryland and the City of Baltimore, the program will make places for families to settle down safer, healthier, and more appealing.

# Strategy

Engage Broadway East residents through community workshops, fostering a sense of ownership and collaboration to spearhead local rehabilitation efforts. Simultaneously, establish a task force to facilitate public-private partnerships, leveraging tax incentives for affordable housing, job training programs, and adaptive reuse projects, ensuring a holistic and communitydriven approach to rejuvenate the neighborhood.



# Incentivised Community

Incentivised Community-Led Rehabilitation: Encourage and empower local residents to take an active role in renovating and maintaining vacant properties, fostering a sense of ownership and pride.

# Public Private Partnerships

Public-Private Partnerships: Foster collaborations between the local government and private developers to invest in revitalizing Broadway East, bringing in resources for housing projects, infrastructure improvements, and community spaces.

# Affordable Housing

Affordable Housing Initiatives: Implement programs that promote the development of affordable housing units, ensuring that the community remains accessible to a diverse socioeconomic population.

# Tax Incentives for Renovation

Tax Incentives for Renovation: Offer tax breaks and incentives to property owners who invest in renovating and occupying vacant homes, stimulating private investment in blighted areas.

# Green Spaces and Parks

Develop green spaces and recreational areas to enhance the neighborhood's aesthetics, improve public health, and create a sense of community.



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The workshop **Manifesto for the Just City** is a digital lecture and debate series composed of four online sessions with leading academics and practitioners in the fields of urban theory, urban planning and spatial justice. Upon participation in the online lecture series, teams of students are invited to draft a **Manifesto for the Just City**, expressing their visions for cities that are sustainable, fair and inclusive for all.

This activity is organised by the  
**TU Delft Centre for the Just City**, and partners.

This activity is supported by the  
**Delft Design for Values Institute (DDfV)**,  
the TU Delft platform for discussing values in  
technology and design.



**The Manifesto for the Just City**  
is a publication by the  
**TU Delft Centre for the Just City**  
<https://just-city.org>

<https://doi.org/10.59490/mg.142>

ISBN/EAN: 978-94-6518-012-0

