

# PLACEMAKING TOOLKIT

GUIDE TO A COMMUNITY-DRIVEN, LOW-COST  
PUBLIC SPACE TRANSFORMATION



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PUBLIC SPACE  
NETWORK

# OBJECTIVE OF THE TOOLKIT

This toolkit aims to provide guidelines to anybody who wants to transform a neglected public open space in their area into a clean and safe community space, such as a community park, a playground or a safe vibrant pedestrian-friendly street. It assembles our experience working with community groups that have transformed such spaces across Nairobi, Kenya and is meant to guide low-cost interventions in public space transformation, especially in the context of developing and resource-limited cities. However, we welcome also residents of more developed cities to get inspired and champion for a community-driven public space transformation in their context.

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Public Space Network (PSN) is a Nairobi-based collective of civil society, public and private stakeholders and urban experts with a vested interest in creating cleaner, greener, safer and inclusive cities through transformation of public spaces. PSN provides an enabling environment for community-driven public space regeneration projects to reach scale through connecting community groups with the key actors and ensuring a sustainable public space management through a Public-Private-People Partnership model.

## WHAT IS A PUBLIC SPACE?

Public spaces are all spaces that are accessible to everybody without condition. They shall be enjoyable by all for free and contribute to the quality of urban life.

## WHICH PLACES ARE CONSIDERED PUBLIC SPACES?

**STREETS:** roads & streets, boulevards, squares and plazas, pavements, pedestrian & bicycle paths

**PUBLIC OPEN SPACES:** parks, gardens, playgrounds, beaches, rivers and riverbanks

**PUBLIC FACILITIES:** social centers, municipal markets, government health facilities, libraries

## WHY ARE PUBLIC SPACES IMPORTANT?



### HEALTH

- Public spaces encourage walking and other physical activities that are good for our body
- Access to green and clean spaces positively affects our mental health
- Clean spaces prevent us from being exposed to disease-causing bacteria that thrive in dirty and dusty places



### SAFETY

- Clean and properly managed public spaces attract a large number of users, which enhances 'eyes on the street' - the impression the space is under watch, dissuading criminal activities
- Quality public spaces are well-lit at night and without dark spots that would serve as hiding spots for criminals



### ENVIRONMENT

- Quality public spaces shall promote greenery to absorb rainwater, cool down the area and mitigate the climate change effects
- Well-managed public spaces prevent soil, water and air pollution



### ECONOMY

- Community groups can identify income-generating activities related to maintenance and activities on the space.
- Well-maintained vibrant public spaces attract businesses as a result of a clean environment and a high number of potential clients



### SOCIAL INCLUSION

- Public spaces encourage social gatherings and interaction between people of diverse backgrounds (gender, age, social etc)
- As a result, public spaces have a potential to strengthen social cohesion and enhance the feeling of community belonging
- Public spaces help to access citizens' rights and reduce social inequalities

## WHAT MAKES A GOOD PUBLIC SPACE?

- 1**  
Accessibility  
Public spaces shall be well-connected to other places frequently used by people. They should be easy to get to, easy to enter, easy to move around, free and/or affordable for the vast majority.
- 2**  
Comfort  
The place shall be kept clean and contain elements enhancing the comfort for its users. These can be seating facilities and dustbins painted in colours, and greenery (trees, lawn, flowers) providing shade.
- 3**  
Safety  
The space shall be well visible without any obstruction that could provide a hiding space for criminal activities. The space should be free of any illegal activities and the presence of motorized traffic shall be limited to avoid injuries.
- 4**  
Active use  
Spaces become places when people use them. In an always empty space, people may not feel safe or comfortable. To encourage its social function, the place shall offer a wide variety of activities that can interest various types of users. The activities may include sport and leisure activities, such as space for boardgames and team sports, playground for children as well as a regular organization of community events - such as sports tournaments, concerts, fairs etc.
- 5**  
Walkability  
Good public spaces provide opportunities for people to walk safely with minimal interruption from vehicles and other motorized transport.

## HOW CAN EACH OF US IMPROVE OUR PUBLIC SPACES?

Placemaking is a collaborative process to shape public spaces. It capitalizes on a local community's assets, ideas, and potential, with the intention to create public spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and well-being. Placemaking process promotes the 'lighter, quicker, cheaper' solutions that can transform spaces affordably and in a short time.



# PLACEMAKERS

## POSSIBLE PLACEMAKING INTERVENTIONS

### EXAMPLES FROM NAIROBI, KENYA

#### STREETS

- Cleaning
- Painting walls
- Introducing benches and dustbins
- Tree planting
- Redesigning a street to make it more pedestrian friendly

Nairobians from all parts of the city came together to bring colour to Turkana Lane in Nairobi CBD, a busy pedestrian lane with street vendors by Nairobi bus station.

Community introduced creative dustbins, planted trees and established benches on a street in Dandora, that they named "Badilisha Street" (Transformation in Swahili)



Luthuli Avenue in Nairobi CBD, previously overcrowded by unorganized matatu (buses), was transformed into a safe and vibrant street for pedestrians under a participatory project bringing together public authorities, urban experts and users of the space.

#### OPEN SPACES

- Cleaning a river bank
- Tree planting
- Creating a garden
- Creating a playground
- Creating a sports field

Believers group has transformed a previously neglected open space into an awesome playground that is always full of children - most of the used material are old tyres, a wood or iron plank and a rope!

A group in Kayole has started to clean the polluted Kayole Canal removing garbage and transforming a section of its riverbank into a clean space for community to rest and interact with each other.



Mustard Seed Court in Dandora was the first space to be transformed by Dandora Transformation League and has become a model inspiring many more new transformations. The group transformed one dumping site into a garden and another dumping site in close proximity into a playground (see case studies in the annex)



## WHAT MATERIAL DO YOU NEED?



Prioritize use of recycled, cheap and easily available materials:

- old tyres
- plastic or glass bottles
- iron drums
- iron or wood poles
- wood planks
- and other

### PROTECTIVE CLOTHING



gloves, dust masks, overall, gumboots

### CLEANING AND WORKING TOOLS



waste bags, wheelbarrows, brooms, rakes, shovels, paint brush etc.

### CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL



sand, ballast, cement

### BEAUTIFICATION MATERIAL



paints, trees, flowers, old car tyres

## HOW DO YOU GET MATERIALS?

### 1. APPROACH BUSINESSES WITH REQUEST FOR IN KIND DONATIONS OF MATERIALS AND TOOLS

Many large businesses have corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs to support community social and environmental impact projects. Examples:

- Paint manufacturers for paints and paint-related equipment
- Nurseries for trees, flowers and soil
- Hardware supply companies for construction material like steel, cement, sand, building blocks

### 2. APPROACH ASSOCIATIONS, PUBLIC AUTHORITIES, FOUNDATIONS FOR IN KIND DONATIONS

Many organizations with CSR projects prefer to pay a supplier directly for materials required rather than to give money. Consider approaching such organizations to pay directly to your identified suppliers. Also, you can gain in-kind technical support e.g landscaping advice from a landscape architect.

### 3. ORGANIZE A COMMUNITY MEETING

Share your vision for the space with people using the space and ask for in kind donations or a voluntary contribution. You can organize your own meeting or take the floor during another community gathering.

### 4. MAKE USE OF WASTE MATERIALS

Old tyres, iron drums, wood poles and planks, plastic and glass bottles etc. are all valuable materials for public space transformation. Look around you for such waste materials and solicit the community for in-kind donation of such materials.

#### REMEMBER:

1. Innovation with cheap materials can create a bigger impact than expensive transformations
2. Businesses tend to prefer in kind donations over financial donations



# HOW TO CREATE A VIBRANT COMMUNITY SPACE?

1. **Engage the whole community** through the entire process: from the beginning (creating a team, identifying a space, deciding on how the space should look), through the implementation, to the end (maintaining and activating the space).
2. **Make the space multifunctional** with a diversity of activities to make the space attractive to all generations: a playground, a business area, a leisure and exercise area, a special event space etc. The functions of the space can change throughout the day - so even if you have only a small space to work on, it can still provide loads of different activities!
3. **Keep in mind everybody likely to use the space** (both genders, all ages, different socio-economic profiles, people with disabilities etc) and design the space to be appealing to all of them.

**REMEMBER:**

The community is the expert:  
The users of the space know the best  
how they would like the space to be!



# WHAT TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN TRANSFORMING A SPACE?

## MAKE SURE THE SPACE:

- **Has an adequate drainage:** Is it clean with water flowing freely?
- **Is safe:** Have all hazardous materials been removed or fixed, including open holes that people may step in, sharp objects or barbed wire? Have all dark spots that could be used as hide-outs for criminals been removed?
- **Is clean:** Has all rubbish and litter been removed, the ground levelled, swept and looking clean? Are there dustbins to avoid littering?
- **Is usable:** Is there a seating or other equipment for the community to use the space to relax, exercise or interact?
- **Is beautiful:** Are there additional improvements in terms of flowers, green gardens, trees, paint-work etc.?
- **Is child-friendly:** Is there a special play area for children below the age of 10?
- **Is the play area safe:**
  - Are children protected from falling into open drain systems or other open holes?
  - Is the area free from any sharp objects, edges, or equipment that may injure a child?
  - Is the play area protected from motorized traffic?
  - Is there a shaded space nearby where children can relax or study when not playing?
  - Is there a system to ensure children are under supervision of an adult while playing? Is there a space for adults to relax while watching their children play?



## HOW TO SUSTAIN MAINTENANCE COSTS IN THE LONG-TERM?

To make your space transformation successful, you need to have a solid maintenance plan to keep the space in a good condition over the long-term. The maintenance of the space will inevitably incur a cost: materials for repairs, regular cleaning, new plants, and of course labour. However, it can also generate an income and create job opportunities, especially for unemployed youth.

### DIFFERENT MAINTENANCE STRATEGIES:

1. **Identify income generating activities** related to the maintenance or community use of the space: waste collection, security, parking, car wash, community and cultural events, sport activities, a shop/cafeteria with refreshments, photoshoots etc.
2. **Consult the community** living in proximity of the space whether they would be interested to pay a small fee for the maintenance. In the low-income neighbourhood of Dandora, Nairobi, Kenya, a household has generally agreed to pay KES 100 (USD 1) on a monthly basis in exchange for regular maintenance, security and waste collection. With the number of households surrounding a space ranging anywhere between 200 to over 1,000, a group in charge of maintenance can cover all maintenance costs and create jobs!



Initiate the transformation as volunteers and once the community sees how great the space is, they will be happy to contribute a small fee on a monthly or weekly basis to ensure the space remains clean and safe!

3. **Consult the landlords** to pay the fee for the maintenance costs. Landlords are often inclined to contribute a double of the amount that the tenants pay.



Once the space is transformed, the landlords of buildings around the space will see the value of their property increase

4. **Engage public authorities** if they can support the maintenance costs.



After public authorities see your transformation and the community support to the project, they may be more willing to support the maintenance - by providing the needed tools and materials or even paying for your work!

## HOW TO MANAGE A SPACE?

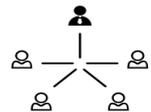
### 1. INVOLVE THE COMMUNITY

Manage the space according to the community's will. So again, make sure to involve all key stakeholders within the community, from village elders, business owners, people living in the area, to regular users of the space, in the whole transformation and maintenance process!

### 2. FORMALLY REGISTER A STRUCTURE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MANAGEMENT

The structure can be a community-based organization, a self-help group, a residents association, an association etc. with an organized leadership team: a chairman, a secretary, a treasurer.

Each of the group members shall be assigned clear responsibilities to ensure the accountability within the group. Being a formally registered body will increase your credibility when you deal with government authorities, community representatives, landlords or potential sponsors.



## HOW TO WORK WITH PUBLIC AUTHORITIES?

It is very important to work with the relevant authorities in your area as they are the custodians of public spaces. They can support your initiative or cause you a lot of trouble if they do not understand the purpose of your project. So make sure you are in good terms especially with local public authorities, such as the Area Chief in Kenya, that can help you through the process.



### 1. FORMALLY REGISTER YOUR GROUP

You can register your group as a community-based organization, self-help group, residents association, NGO etc. In Kenya, the Area Chief can help you to register as a self-help group or a community-based organization. If you are an already existing formal institution, such as a school, an association, a business etc., you are good to go.

### 2. ENSURE YOU ARE ALLOWED TO WORK ON THE SPACE

In Kenya, contact the Ward Administrator in your area to ensure the space can be transformed and present your plan to transform the space. Similarly inform your area OCS, MCA and MP of your plans.



If you are a first group initiating this type of initiative in your area, public authorities may not immediately understand your intentions and may suspect you of a vested interest. To convince them of your good intentions and importance of the initiative, bring this guide along with you to show photos of some of the spaces that were transformed elsewhere (look in the annexe for examples of placemaking interventions).

### 3. ENGAGE TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES

If you have traditional authorities (e.g. village elders) in your area, make sure to engage them as they can help you mobilize the rest of the community.

### 4. JOIN CITY CLEAN-UP INITIATIVES

Your city may already organize regular community clean-ups in your area. In such a case, join these events - it can help you to grow your network of partners and volunteers as well as to demonstrate your motivation to the authorities.

## POSSIBLE RISKS AND CHALLENGES - AND HOW TO ADDRESS THEM

### 1. COMMUNITY RESISTANCE

You may face resistance from the community at the beginning of the transformation, usually due to a misunderstanding: for example, it may be perceived as land grabbing for a private interest. To avoid such misunderstanding, the community needs to be aware of your transformation.



Organize a community meeting to share your vision for the space and invite the community to share their ideas. You can share examples of transformations that have been done elsewhere to support your narrative and inspire them.

### 2. RESISTANCE FROM LAND CARTELS

In some areas, you may face the risk of arrest, due to influential corrupt people who plan to grab the space or because some people claim the land is theirs.



Working closely with both public authorities (check the land is public and get the endorsement from the relevant authorities) and the community supporting the project significantly reduces this risk.

Don't get discouraged by these challenges.

Remember, engage the community and local authorities since the beginning and you will be fine!

# COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

## WHAT IS THE ROLE OF A COMMUNITY CHAMPION?

Community Champions are placemaking ambassadors on the ground. Their role is to recruit placemaking groups, mentor them on how best to transform a space, and make sure they have the resources they need to be successful. They are key in engaging public authorities in their area and securing their support for public space transformations in the area. The Community Champions shall also identify new spaces to be transformed and raise awareness among the community about the importance of access to quality public spaces.

## SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES OF A COMMUNITY CHAMPION

1. Mobilizing teams
2. Registering the teams with relevant authorities
3. Mentoring teams
4. Coordinating teams
5. Ensuring different teams cooperate with each other
6. Helping teams with their transformations
7. Ensuring the transformations will benefit the whole community
8. Resolving occasional conflicts



## WHAT SKILLS SHOULD A COMMUNITY CHAMPION HAVE?

- Act as a **leader** in the community
- Have **communication** skills with capacity to engage diverse stakeholders (public authorities, community, youth groups, potential donors etc)
- Be able to peacefully **resolve conflicts** that may arise between different parties (a youth group and a community, a youth group and a public authority, two youth groups etc).



# HOW TO MOBILIZE YOUR COMMUNITY AROUND PUBLIC SPACE MANAGEMENT?

## HOW TO RECRUIT TEAMS

1. Identify existing youth groups that could be interested to transform a space
2. Join a community meeting or gathering to share your vision for public space upgrading and invite interested groups and individuals to join your initiative
3. Organize your own community meeting to share your vision
4. Make use of existing structures to share your vision: churches, schools etc.

Anybody can start transforming a space.  
The easiest way to start, however, is to approach already existing groups that share the environmental and social impact agenda.

## HOW TO SUPERVISE AND MENTOR TEAMS?

1. Hold regular meetings to discuss and address the challenges they may encounter
2. Visit the teams on their sites to see how they are doing and suggest how they could improve their transformation activities

### WHAT TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN MENTORING TEAMS

1. The teams must work together with the local authorities
2. The whole community must be included in the process: Inform them, let them suggest ideas, let them participate!
3. The teams must be well organized and manage the space according to the community's will
4. The teams should use locally available material and conceive their transformation in a sustainable way

## HOW TO RAISE AWARENESS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF QUALITY PUBLIC SPACES?

1. Have a casual chat with individual community members
2. Speak at community gatherings or organize one
3. Highlight the impact quality public spaces have on the life of the community, as listed earlier in this toolkit
4. A picture speaks a thousand words! Show pictures of nice spaces to the community to demonstrate the benefits of having nice, clean, and safe public spaces in proximity.



Organize an outdoor screening for the community, showing photo slides or even a short video of transformed spaces to raise awareness and spark the interest of people. Don't forget to show before and after photos of transformed spaces to highlight the scope of the transformation!

# CREATE A MOVEMENT

## MAKE THE PUBLIC SPACE TRANSFORMATION A FUN CHALLENGE!

People are much more inclined to join public space transformation efforts if they perceive it as a fun activity rather than an obligation. For this reason, we have introduced **Changing Faces Competition** in Nairobi to challenge teams across the city to compete with each other to implement the best transformation of a public space. The best teams, selected by a jury of urban experts, receive sponsored monetary and in-kind awards.

Get in touch with us if you would like to organize such competition in your area and would you like to know more details on how to organize it

### THE GAMIFICATION APPROACH THROUGH COMPETITION ALLOWS TO:

1. **Mobilize** a large number of community groups around public space transformation
2. **Transform** many public spaces across an area at a very limited cost within a short time (e.g. 3 months)
3. Create a platform to **exchange ideas** and knowledge about public space transformation
4. **Raise awareness** about the importance of public spaces
5. **Advocate** for policies placing public space management among top urban priorities

You can organize a competition at different levels: a neighbourhood, a city or a country. You can engage youth groups, schools, resident associations or companies. You can also suggest different categories - such as the most artistic, the most child-friendly, the most environment-friendly transformations. **Be creative!**

### OUTCOMES IN NAIROBI

1. 4 editions since 2014 (3 at a neighbourhood, 1 at a city level)
2. 200+ transformed spaces
3. 4,000+ participants
4. 200,000+ public space users positively affected



# MEASURE THE IMPACT

## WHY IS IMPACT ASSESSMENT IMPORTANT?

Impact assessment is crucial to convince different stakeholders about the importance of your transformation. It can help you raise awareness about the importance of quality public spaces and get more people to join your efforts, access funding, either from your local community, public authorities, foundations or private sponsors, or to get institutional support of public authorities.

MEASURE WHAT IMPACT  
THE TRANSFORMATION  
HAS ON:

- Improvement of safety
- Environment
- Business development
- Public health
- Child development

## HOW TO DEMONSTRATE THE IMPACT OF INTERVENTIONS

### 1. TAKE PICTURES!

This is the easiest way to demonstrate the impact of your transformation. Take pictures of the space before, during and after the transformation from several angles to show the scope of your work. Make sure to have always before and after photos taken from the same angles to demonstrate it is the same space.

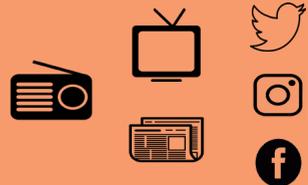
### 2. RESPONDENT SURVEY

We have developed an impact assessment tool comprising a respondent survey that helps analyze the impact of your transformation in the area of safety, environment, economic development, mental health and childhood development. Read more details in the guide to the public space impact assessment tool in annex.

## SHARE YOUR STORY!

SHARE YOUR  
TRANSFORMATION  
STORY IN ORDER TO:

1. Raise awareness
2. Get supporters (donors, volunteers, etc)
3. Inspire people to follow your example



### 1. SOCIAL MEDIA

Create an Instagram, Facebook and Twitter account to regularly share photos of your transformations with the general public.

### 2. TRADITIONAL MEDIA

Reach out to your local newspapers, radio and TV stations to cover your story!

First, do a research on which journalists focus on environmental and social issues as these are most likely to be interested in your story.

# ANNEXES

## CASE STUDIES

This section presents some examples of successful transformations in Nairobi and around the world. It will help you get inspired, motivated, guide you in your work as well as help you convince people in your area that your transformation will change their lives!

### NAIROBI, KENYA

#### RIVER BANK PARK: PEOPLE'S PARK BY KOMB GREEN SOLUTIONS IN KOROGOCHO

##### TRANSFORMATION IN A FEW STEPS:

1. Clean the area
2. Level the ground
3. Collect stones from the river bed and use them to stabilize the river bank
4. Plant trees and grass
5. Create a walking path using stones from the river and red soil



"This was a dumpsite and hiding place for criminals. We, as reformists, decided to change and do something positive for our community. We came with the idea to make a mini park on the river bank and funded the transformation ourselves."

- CHRISTOPHER WAIRIMU



#### COURTYARD: MUSTARD SEED GARDENS BY MUSTARD SEED GROUP IN DANDORA

##### TRANSFORMATION IN A FEW STEPS:

1. Clean the area
2. Dig to renew the drainage
3. Level the ground
4. Plant trees and grass
5. Install litter bins
6. Create a playground for kids
7. Install sitting options
8. Paint walls

"Gathering the waste of this dumpsite lasted a whole month, then we started digging to find the old drainage. The residents did not understand what we were doing, but now they are very happy with the playground and the garden. We organize parties and events here regularly."

- CHARLES GACHANGA



## COURTYARD: BELIEVERS PARK BY BELIEVERS GROUP IN DANDORA

### TRANSFORMATION IN A FEW STEPS:

1. Clean the area and level the ground
2. Plant trees and grass
3. Install litter bins
4. Create a playground for kids
5. Paint walls
6. Decorate the site with various elements



"We wanted to transform this dumpsite into a community garden with a library. We collect a monthly contribution among residents for security and maintenance"

- EVANS OTIENO



BEFORE



AFTER

## PUBLIC PARK: DARAJANI LINDI IN KIBRA

"The space has become the major place to hold community meetings, the youths in charge of the maintenance can now earn income as a result of events held on the space and people taking photoshoots there. Different groups also perform their cultural activities on the site."

- NASHON PAMBO KITEGI



### TRANSFORMATION IN A FEW STEPS:

1. Remove the garbage
2. Level the ground
3. Paint the wall with the community
4. Set up a seating/playing area from tyres and paint them
5. Plant trees/flowers



BEFORE



AFTER

## POWER WAYLEAVE: DANDORA COMMUNITY PARK BY DTL IN DANDORA

### TRANSFORMATION IN A FEW STEPS:

1. Remove the garbage
2. Level the ground
3. Instal tyres for children to play with and adults to sit on
4. Paint the tyres
5. Use tyres and other waste material to decorate the space



"Everybody from the neighbourhood used to dump waste here. We decided to clean it and transform it into a place where children can play, adults rest and exercise. The space is part of a larger open space, a leaway under powerlines, that is neglected and that we are transforming step by step."

- CHARLES GACHANGA



BEFORE



AFTER

TRANSFORMATION IN A FEW STEPS:

1. Clean the space
2. Level the ground
3. Plant grass and flowers
4. Install seating options
5. Paint the benches and other other street equipment

COURTYARD: PORT MORE BY PORT MORE YOUTH IN DANDORA



"The transformation of the site had a real impact on the community living around the area since the place is now save for children to play, it is also a space for resting, exercising and women enjoy to do their bead work on the site."  
- EVANS OTIENO



"We aimed to change the community's perspective of the Canal from a space where they dump to a place where they relax, hold meetings, exercise and even do income-generating activities. Work inside the Canal has reduced the flooding as the water can now flow through easily. Furthermore, residents living close to the site reported less pests and a better sleep as a result of the clean-up."  
- SAMUEL OMARE



RIVER BANK: KAYOLE CANAL IN KAYOLE

TRANSFORMATION IN A FEW STEPS:

1. Clean the canal
2. Clean the riverbank
3. Paint the walls
4. Set up a seating/playing area from tyres and paint them



COURTYARD: NEWLIGHT CHILD-FRIENDLY SPACE IN KAYOLE

The community is happy to now have a safe space within their neighbourhood where their children can play closer to adults that can easily monitor them during their activities. Our goal has been to create a clean and safe space for children to enjoy and learn, while creating job opportunities for youths.  
- SAMUEL ODAMO



TRANSFORMATION IN A FEW STEPS:

1. Clean the space
2. Clean the walls
3. Paint the walls
4. Set up a seating/playing area from tyres and paint them
5. Set up a swing
6. Plant trees/plants with children



## AFRICA

### KIBEBE TSEHAY PLAYGROUND ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA



Kibebbe Tsehay Playground was constructed using abandoned objects found in the yard of a poor neighborhood in Addis Ababa. With the help of volunteers, a structure emerged thanks to the imagination of the workers. The playground includes seesaws and slides, all made using objects found in the streets, a technique which makes it easy to create shared public spaces in these specific contexts.

[pps.org](http://pps.org)

### MMOFRA PLACE ACCRA, GHANA



Mmfra Place is a community garden and park aimed at providing a safe playing space for children. The 2 acres spot was designed by the community with the help of international and local experts. It includes a community garden, performance space, library, and multiple green spaces where children can play but also adults are invited to relax.

[pps.org](http://pps.org)

## WORLD

### DOH EAIN YANGON - MYANMAR



The Alley Garden project aims at reclaiming backstreet alleys in the capital city Yangon. Usually used as dumpsites, some citizens decided to transform these neglected spaces into gardens and playgrounds accessible to everyone.

[doheain.com](http://doheain.com)

### THE UGLY INDIAN BANGALORE, INDIA



This is an initiative aiming to a cleaner city. The participants use cheap and easy techniques to make the streets, footpaths, squares greener and more welcoming.

[theuglyindian.com](http://theuglyindian.com)

# PUBLIC SPACE IMPACT ASSESSMENT TOOL

## - GUIDE

To enable placemakers to demonstrate the impact of their public space transformations on quality of life of users of transformed spaces, we have developed a simple-to-use data collection tool, that allows to assess the impact of a transformation in the area of safety, health, environment, child development and business development.

### THE TOOL CONSISTS OF:

1. **Observation checklist:** to assess the current state of the site
2. **Adult respondent survey:** for users of the space above 15 years old
3. **Child respondent survey:** for users of the space between 5 to 14 years old

To ensure the measured impact is related to the transformation, run the survey **BEFORE** and **AFTER** the transformation of the site, as well as on a paired control site that has similar characteristics as the first site but that does not undergo any transformation during the measured period. Then compare the differences in the collected data between the two sites and before and after transformation.

### NUMBER OF SURVEYS TO BE COLLECTED FROM SITES:

| SURVEY                | TRANSFORMED SITE - BEFORE | CONTROL SITE - BEFORE | TRANSFORMED SITE - AFTER | CONTROL SITE - AFTER |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| OBSERVATION CHECKLIST | At least 1                | At least 1            | At least 1               | At least 1           |
| ADULT SURVEY          | At least 15               | At least 15           | At least 15              | At least 15          |
| CHILD SURVEY          | At least 15               | At least 15           | At least 15              | At least 15          |

The data collection tool is available in two formats:

#### 1. PAPER SURVEYS

The data collector can collect the data filling paper surveys. The results then need to be manually entered into a spreadsheet for data analysis.

The paper surveys are available to download at [www.publicspacenet.org](http://www.publicspacenet.org).

#### 2. MOBILE APPLICATION

To accelerate the data collection process, we have developed a user-friendly mobile application based on the Telegram BOT platform. Using the BOT, the data collector asks the respondent the same questions as in paper survey and the data are automatically uploaded to a database.

### WHO COLLECTS THE DATA?

The data shall be collected by selected data collectors that undergo a quick training. We recommend identifying individuals that are not involved in the space transformation process to ensure their neutrality and prevent them from influencing the answers of respondents.

### TRAIN THE DATA COLLECTORS

1. Explain the differences between surveys and brief them on the number of surveys they shall collect from each site
2. Take them through all survey questions and make sure they understand their meaning
3. Explain the data collection guidelines below

### GENERAL GUIDANCE

1. The data collector fills the survey, not the respondent, to avoid any misunderstanding of questions
2. The data collector ensures that the respondent understands the questions correctly
3. We recommend to run the survey at different times of the day as well as both during a weekday and weekend to capture different types of users
4. Data collectors can collect the data individually or in pairs to monitor each other
5. For paper surveys: print sufficient number and make sure to indicate the name of the site on each of them

### OBSERVATION

1. The data collector assesses the current state of the space following the checklist.
2. To be filled at least once, although we recommend to assess the space at different times in a day to capture possible differences in activities happening on the space throughout the day/week.
3. The data collector takes at least 5 photos from different angles of the space. When assessing the space AFTER the transformation, take the photos from the same angles as BEFORE the transformation to capture the scope of the transformation.

### ADULT SURVEY

1. Interview people passing through the space or using the space that are above 15 years old
2. Make sure to survey a diversity of respondents:
  - Both genders
  - Different age groups
  - Different types: passersby, regular users, business owners (depending on the site)

### CHILD SURVEY

1. Interview children passing through or using the space that are between 5 and 14 years old.
2. Make sure to survey both genders



Use the respondent survey to raise awareness about the importance of quality public spaces, the benefits they have on the quality of life of their users and what can we do to improve them.

## HOW TO USE THE MOBILE APPLICATION?

### DATA COLLECTOR

1. Each data collector downloads the Telegram Messenger to their smartphone and creates an account
2. Look for PSIA\_Bot (Public Space Impact Assessment)
3. A description of the objective of the BOT appears, click on the Start at the bottom of the screen.
4. Select the survey you want to complete among Adult / Child / Observation.
5. Answer the questions that appear on the screen, selecting yes/no, an option, inserting a number or typing a response.
6. After finalizing one survey, type /start to proceed to another survey

### ADMINISTRATOR

1. You can access the collected data through the backend.
2. Contact us so that we can create an administrator account for you/your organization.

Quality public spaces have a tremendous impact on the quality of urban life. They benefit the environment, social cohesion, safety, public health as well as economy. However, facing challenges of rapid urbanization while having limited resources, many African cities struggle to place public space maintenance among their priorities. This toolkit provides guidance to anybody - in and outside Africa - who is determined to change the status quo and change their neighbourhood into a clean, green and safe place, through community efforts and with limited resources.

PUBLIC SPACE NETWORK, NOVEMBER 2019



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