Habitat for living in community

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Title: Habitat for living in community
Tools for urban assessment and evaluation

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In the last decade, Catalan cities have received important waves of foreign immigrants heterogeneously distributed throughout the region. This trend has prompted intense social and physical changes in the configuration of Catalan cities.

The settlement of migrant populations has impacted the social landscape of cities, which have become diversified and more complex. This phenomenon brings about profound demographic and socio-economic changes: the formation of new social groups, the polarization of the socio-economic structure, and major changes in the population pyramid according to their distribution by gender, age and origin.

In addition, a complex social community emerges in the urban space: intensification of the use of social spaces, transgressions and the appropriations of public space, the proliferation of stores managed by immigrants, the diversification of experiences and needs in the urban space, ...

Immigrant communities may especially influence cities and neighborhoods that have concentrated a large number of newcomers in a short period of time. The development of immigrant communities brings about new urban challenges: the exponential increase of users of neighborhood facilities, great competition in the use of public spaces or the need to offer in community centers programs adapted to a society with increasingly more diverse cultural references.

The research project “Migration, social cohesion and living in community in the public space” \(^1\) emerges in this context, where social and urban vitality as well as social conflicts in the public space becomes a recurring topic in the mass media. The research seeks to analyze living in community in the public space between people from different origins, and to elaborate policy proposals.

\(^1\) Research Project with reference number 2010ARF1 00019 funded by AGAUR and developed from April 2011 to March 2012. Funded by the General Direction of Migration and the General Direction of Research from the Department of Economy and Knowledge of the Generalitat of Catalunya. The research is included in the area of Migration, Housing and City, directed by Dra. Arquitecta Pilar García Almirall, and developed by the Center of Land Policy and Assessment of the UPC (CPSV) as part of the research group “Urban quality of life and sustainability” (SGR2009-1233). This project summarizes in one document the results of previous competitive research projects (MEC, 2005-2008 and MICINN 2008-2011). A total of seven neighborhoods have been studied in different areas of the province of Barcelona.
The project has analyzed the socio-spatial integration of migrant population in their neighborhoods and their everyday environments. The project has revealed that integration is a multidimensional factor, as has been said elsewhere in various disciplines. The concept of integration used in this research refers to the condition of formal equality in society, rather than implying their assimilation.

The spatial dimension (in addition to the cultural, social, economic dimensions, etc.) is a key element to integrate migrant population in a society, since the neighborhood, understood as the everyday environment of relations, is the framework of people’s lives. The neighborhood is the place where one can bring about more balanced distribution of resources and opportunities as well as guarantee social cohesion.

The relation between living in community and public space has been examined through fieldwork in three neighborhoods of three municipalities in the province of Barcelona. This analysis has included the everyday use of public spaces, immigrant housing and the interaction between immigrants and natives in the physical space.

The goal of this publication is to disseminate the main research results and conclusions, including those pragmatic aspects that might be useful to mitigate conflicts in the public space, among staff of the public administration and organizations that work on housing, public space, facilities and services, migration, equality, youth, among others. The highlighted aspects that the research seeks to implement in order to improve living in community have to include social, cultural, economic and physical elements.
The concept of human habitat is used in human ecology and urban planning, as an analogy of the ecological notion of habitat. It is understood as the set of material and organic factors that influence the existence of a human population. In this project, the concept of habitat is understood as the space where people develop their everyday life.

Living in community implies that different people and collectives share the same space and activities. There is “life in community” in a neighborhood when people with different characteristics (origin, social class, gender, age) share spaces and times.

In that sense, “habitat for living in community” refers to public spaces and other spaces of socialization of everyday environments (facilities, stores, community spaces in housing buildings, etc.) where people can interact and establish various types of relationships. These spaces are vital for the knowledge, exchange and mutual support, especially for new members of a neighborhood.

The arrival to a new place (habitat) implies the need to establish social networks of support that help understand the codes of the host society. The neighborhood is the space of the everyday life where most of the agreements and disagreements of different cultures take place. The form of participation in this context determines the relationships of living in community and multiculturality, which needs to be analyzed from an inter-gender, inter-generational and intercultural perspective (Pérez, 2006) to understand complex use of urban space.

The use of the public and everyday spaces by immigrants directly influences their quality of life, especially as it molds their relationship with the rest of the population in their environment. This use is influenced by the physical characteristics of the space. The relationship between physical configuration and social relations demonstrates that the concept of “integration” needs to include socio-spatial aspects.
An optimum configuration of the public space favors the creation of informal networks (of help and support) and formal networks (community organizing) among neighbors. The creation of networks is an essential element of social cohesion.

Several authors argue that the current social conditions should force us to rethink urban planning and redefine public space from a new perspective whereby the emerging concepts of sustainability, gender, everyday life, landscape and security become the key elements that define public space.

In order to favor all these conditions, the public space, as the stage of social relations, has to be social and physically suitable. The supply and quality of public spaces and facilities, the variety of local stores and the existence of pedestrian mobility networks that connect all the space, are important to generate opportunities for interaction between people of different origins.

The key to have cohesive neighborhoods is to make cities adapt to people; a greater use of the city by diverse people; and real participation processes in the urban decisions to create more livable and comfortable neighborhoods that respond to the human needs in every moment.
The case studies of these projects are three neighborhoods located in three municipalities of the province of Barcelona: La Torrassa in L’Hospitalet de Llobregat, l’Erm in Manlleu, and El Congost in Granollers. The three neighborhoods have developed improvement projects with funds from the Catalan Neighborhood Law (2/2004 of June 4. Catalan Autonomous Law).

All three areas have in above average immigrant populations within their municipality and greater than the Province of Barcelona (14.62%). In addition, the selected neighborhoods have different socio-demographic (origin, masculinity rate, total population...) and urban characteristics (building typology, urban configuration...) to understand the impact of these variables in the residential and urban conditions of the immigrant population.

The neighborhoods studied have experienced a remarkable increase of foreign population between 2001 and 2010, as shown in Figure 2. This reflects an unequal distribution of immigrants across Catalonia. As Figure 3 illustrates, there are particular neighborhoods with a higher concentration of foreign-born residents than the municipality as a whole. We need to consider that the capacity to accommodate immigrants is not the same in all neighborhoods, primarily because of the availability of housing.

The selected study areas have different urban fabrics: ensanche (new developments), a historic center and residential areas. But the three neighborhoods have low quality housing, which is closely related to the concentration of immigrants in these areas (García Almirall, et al, 2008). In addition, all of these neighborhoods hosted internal migrations from within Spain during the 1960s and 1970s.

We conducted fieldwork and analyzed statistical data in each neighborhood. Fieldwork consisted of participatory observation and in depth interviews.

In the next section we briefly describe each neighborhood.
This neighborhood is in the municipality of L’Hospitalet de Llobregat, located next to Barcelona, and the second largest city in Catalonia. The neighborhood has 25,811 inhabitants. The foreign population comprises 32.75% of the residents, of which 6.32% are from Ecuador, 6.19% from Bolivia and 3.10% from Morocco. Despite the arrival of young foreign population in the last decade, the population older than 65 continues having an important role in the neighborhood, since they represent 18.83% of the total population. Also it is remarkable that 31.84% of neighborhood residents were born in other parts of Spain.

The urban typology is a minor ensanche with an orthogonal street fabric, crossed diagonally by the train tracks, but in connected with the neighborhood of Collblanc, and the Barcelona neighborhood of Sants-Bordeta.

The building typology is diverse with heights of 2 and 5 floors. There is still corridor-type housing, which might be substandard housing. Some ground floor spaces that were originally used for commercial activity are now used as residences.

There are different public spaces that recently have been renovated (parks and squares) and the street is as a space of socialization. The Española Plaza is the social center of the neighborhood with a variety of shops at the ground level. The recent neighborhood improvements have reinforced the everyday network of spaces, facilities and local stores through pedestrian priority. The neighborhood has also the Park of La Torrassa, which is isolated from the neighborhood.

The neighborhood has basic public facilities such as a school, a day care, a health center and an elderly center. The commercial activity is distributed relatively homogeneously in the ground level of housing buildings. This activity is diverse in its typology (everyday life, specialized, bars) and as for the public who serves (native, Latin American, Moroccan, Chinese...).

The neighborhood has a strong history of community organizing that dates to the 1960s.
This neighborhood is located in the municipality of Granollers, in the Barcelona Metropolitan Region, and the county of Vallés Oriental. The neighborhood has 4,309 inhabitants. 30.38% of the population was born outside the European Union. 8.80% of this population comes from Morocco, 5.64% from Senegal and 5.27% from Bolivia. The masculinity index is quite high: 112.17 (112.27 men per 100 women). This index reflects that most of the African migrants are men who came to work without their families. In the street, one can perceive a higher number of men gathered in specific points of the neighborhood.

The train tracks and the river are the neighborhood borders and isolate the neighborhood from the rest of the municipality. On the other hand, the border with the neighboring municipality of Canovellas has a physical continuity with El Congost neighboring district of Barriada Nova.

The urban typology is an orthogonal street fabric with sections of residential areas. There is a variety of building typologies; housing buildings and houses coexist. The housing blocks have greatest deficit of residential conditions. There is also a large industrial zone.

There are different public spaces in the neighborhood: squares and spaces between housing blocks that have been recently renovated to improve visibility and accessibility. The most emblematic is Freedom Plaza, because it has become the main space that invigorates the social life of the neighborhood.

The neighborhood public facilities are a school, a day care, and a sports center. In addition, the neighborhood shares a health center and a youth center with Canovelles.

There is little commercial activity around the plazas (bars, bakeries...). The commercial axes between the two neighborhoods have greater vitality and they also generate social life. The type of commercial activity is diverse, in relation to the products and the public they serve.
The neighborhood is located in the municipality of Manlleu that belongs to the county of Osona and the Barcelona province. L’Erm has 6,202 inhabitants. 32.30% of the population has a non-EU origin. Most foreign population comes from Morocco, which represents 27.57% of the total neighborhood population. The remaining non-EU population is a small minority that represents only 1% of the total population (Colombia 0.48%; Rumania 0.48%). The population under 15 represents 21.78% of the total neighborhood population. This impacts the need of facilities and neighborhood activities, and the use of the public space.

The neighborhood is located in one end of the municipality and is surrounded by undeveloped areas. The border streets are avenues that represent real physical and social limits. The urban typology is an ensanche with orthogonal streets and parts of residential areas. The building typology is very diverse with housing blocks that contrast with single-family homes. There are precarious living conditions where the foreign population is concentrated.

There are several public spaces in the neighborhood, recently improved to favor pedestrian connectivity, although vitality is not observed on them. Sometimes, men are the largest group in the public space, while in other moments it is children. The neighborhood has some public facilities of proximity such as the school Puig i Agut, where most neighborhood life is concentrated or the Civic Center Frederica Montseny, a new dynamic space.

The distribution of commercial activity within the neighborhood is heterogeneous, because most housing units do not have commercial use on the ground floor. The neighborhood has three different commercial areas: the municipal market, which mostly supplies the native community throughout the municipality; the stores located in the Plaza of Sant Antoni de Padua, in the housing buildings of Can Mateu, which mostly supply Moroccan population; and the Supermarket Mercadona that serves population of all origins.
To understand the relationship between communities and their social-spatial characteristics of the neighborhood, we developed various tools that are easy to apply to facilitate our understanding of urban problems. These tools can be used in a diagnostic phase, for evaluation and also can serve as a guide to draft proposals.

A combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques has been developed to collect and analyze information.

A gender perspective has been incorporated with an intersectionality focus.

The first methodological contribution is the collection of primary data from the application of qualitative methods, such as participatory observation and spontaneous and in depth interviews. The analysis of statistical data through quantitative techniques has been added to the qualitative information generated. A second methodological contribution is the development of a series of graphic tools that incorporate the spatial dimension and facilitate the analysis of information. These tools have also been designed as material to be used in trainings with technical staff and in participatory processes with organizations.

The main characteristic of this project is that provides a graphic language (maps, pictures, diagrams) that facilitates the understanding of the relation between the physical configuration of spaces and the social use of them. This allows us to connect the different dimensions of the gathered information:

- Physical dimension:
  Configuration of the neighborhood – Public Space, streets, facilities and commercial space.

- Functional dimension:
  Elements of connectivity, nodes, routes and relations

- Social dimension:
  Profile of people who transit through the area, live there, and the activity and use of the space.

**Applied Graphic Tools**

**Qualitative**

Map 1: Graphic representation of the neighborhood as area of living in community.

Map 2: Graphic representation public spaces of social relations and its environment

Map 3: Graphic representation of public space and its use.

Map 4: Diagram of the dynamics and relationships between uses and functional characteristics of the public space.

**Quantitative**

Map 5. Distribution of the urban and demographic characteristics.

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Map 1: Areas of living in community

Map of the Neighborhood La Torrassa, L’Hospitalet de Llobregat, Barcelona (Map source: Google Earth)
Map 2: Spaces of social relations

Commercial street; axis that connects pedestrian area and vehicles with the neighborhood and the municipal market.

Neighborhood facility: Youth center

A publicly subsidized private school close to the plaza

Everyday public facilities: health center, public school, day care, and elderly day center

Commercial streets and spaces of socialization. Pedestrian connection with everyday facilities.

Radius of pedestrian proximity

Spaces of social relation
- Parks, plazas, alleyways
- Streets of intensive pedestrian use

Associations in the neighborhood
- Neighborhood scale
- City scale
- Province-national scale

Everyday facilities
- Neighborhood scale
- City scale
- Province-national scale

Commercial activity
- Concentrated
- Scattered
- Market

Topography and accessibility
- Steep
- Mild slope
- Steep slope
- Stairs
- Moving staircase
- Ramp
- Elevator
- Funicular

Location
- Limits
- Connection

Map and images of the Plaza Española and its environment, Neighborhood La Torrassa
**Map 3: Description of space**

- **Ground floor of the Can García housing buildings. Bars with tables in the sidewalk, in general used by men. The rest of stores are closed.**

- **Elements of urban equipment. Benches and basketball hoops that allow diverse games because it is not a closed court. Urban equipment composed of bench-table in the corner used in the playground.**

- **Access to the park from the neighborhood center. Corner with facilities: church and school theater. Area with pedestrian priority. Visibility from the rest of the neighborhood. Corner with benches used by Moroccan men.**

- **Center of the Park. Diagonal path crosses and links the neighborhood from the center area (school, market, Plaza of St. Antoni de Padua) to the housing buildings of Can García and the civic center. Playground and area with trees.**

- **Side street to access a group of housing buildings with an interior patio.**

- **Center of the park with benches in the sunny and shade areas. Space scarcely used.**

- **Street with residential housing units of one, two or three floors, and some with store space on the ground floor. Many people walk by from and to the markets (municipal and supermarket).**
Map of Park Erm, Neighborhood Erm, Manlleu

Map 4: Users

Users description

SEX
- Man
- Women

QUANTITY
- Alone
- Couple
- Grup or several people

ORIGIN
- Migrant
- Native

AGE
- nd Dependent child
- ni Independent child
- j Youth
- a Adults
- m3 Senior
- m4 Elderly (75+)

Use description

1. Playground
2. Meeting
3. Transitory
4. Rest area
5. People care
6. Access to facility
7. Access to store
8. Bus stop
9. Walk
10. Sport
11. Cleaning and maintenance
12. Entertainment
13. Living in the street
14. Waiting
15. ...
Map 5: Demographic characteristics

OTHER INFORMATION POSSIBLE ON THE MAP

- Masculinity index
- Aging rate
- Housing conditions
- Housing surface area
- Housing characteristics (services, accessibility)
- Tenure housing

Map of population distribution by origin, Neighborhood La Torrassa, L’Hospitalet de Llobregat (Map source: Google Earth)
Our research has shown a direct relationship between the physical configuration of public space and the ability to form community. The neighborhood is the physical support where people develop their lives; therefore a neighborhood has to provide the material means for forging a community. Spatial conditions that generate activity and foster diversity and interaction are essential to give residents the opportunity to know each other and make neighborhood relations.

Through fieldwork, the research has defined the main conflicts and community problems in the public space and that are connected to the physical space:
- Inadequate or lack of spaces and facilities, which results in competition for their use.
- Spaces that generate the perception of insecurity and are underused or used by a dominant group because of their location or configuration.
- Deteriorated or poorly maintained and cleaned spaces that generate a feeling of social degradation.

On the other hand, analyzing the repeated problems and how they are reduced with adequate physical characteristics, this research has classified what physical elements contribute to community living:
- Diversity of activities and uses in the public space. In order to respond to the heterogeneity of people’s experiences, meeting spaces (parks, squares) are needed to develop different activities simultaneously (rest, play, care, exercise, socialize, read...). Also, streets are the neighborhood’s backbones and give life to the area; therefore it is important to recover the function of the streets as meeting points, and not only as traffic spaces.
- Buildings with multiple uses in the ground floor. Including services and commercial activities in the ground floor of residential buildings give vitality to the neighborhoods and improve the feeling of safety, which fosters a better sense of community. In addition, more space for commercial activities often means higher commercial diversity. Stores are likely to foster relationships among neighbors and provide opportunities to meet other cultures.

- Urban elements that help social and everyday life. Different elements foster the development of different activities in the public space (benches, playgrounds, vegetation that provides shade, fountains, public toilets…). Urban elements have to be diverse and satisfactory to avoid people’s competition for their use, and provide a material support that supports the development of diverse experiences.

- The spatial configuration to improve the perception of safety. Transparent spaces without steep slopes or high vegetation that does not obstruct visibility; well-lighted streets and signage to facilitate orientation. The perception of safety influences people’s use of public space; when a space is perceived as unsafe it ceases to be used or is only used by a specific group. Guaranteeing material conditions for improving safety perceptions will increase the use of spaces by different people. This increases the possibilities of interaction.

- Pedestrian routes. Generate networks of everyday-life spaces (public spaces, facilities and services) connected through pedestrian routes. Fostering pedestrian mobility in the neighborhood gives vitality to the streets and favors people’s interaction and informal relations.

“The other day I met a woman who walked around the periphery of the neighborhood, because she had fear of crossing the neighborhood to take her children to the youth center”
(Migrant male neighbor and member of neighborhood association)

“It is important to have relationships with the people who lives in your building because they can help you and you can help them too”
(Migrant male neighbor)

“In the public spaces of the neighborhood, women pass by, they do not stay as men do. Women go out of the neighborhood and to specific activities”
(Two neighborhood’s staff members)
To become a cohesive neighborhood is essential to guarantee its vitality through the physical configuration. The different spaces of the neighborhood have to be attractive enough and be well located to appeal people. At the same time, these spaces need to have enough everyday life infrastructure and enough diversity of services for the whole population.

The analysis of the physical configuration defines certain characteristics that public spaces and facilities must have to facilitate people’s interaction:

Proximity: to achieve closeness in physical distance, pedestrian mobility must be prioritized since it increases meeting opportunities with other people. Proximity is also generated through the feeling spaces produce; inclusive and friendly spaces invite people to use them.

Connected: pedestrian connections between different spaces and facilities

Safe: well lighted, guaranteeing people’s visibility, good signage

Maintained: clean, with non-deteriorated urban equipment

Diverse: allow the simultaneous development of diverse activities based on the different people’s needs.

Sufficient: to avoid competition in the use of public spaces and facilities.

“The building structure of the (adults) school is cold, it has not been designed for community living; there are no common spaces”
(Native female neighbor)

“If I could, I would move out of the neighborhood... 200 or 300 meters away... I think of my son and I would like more possibilities for him to have relations with other people too... more than here”
(Migrant male neighbor)
These recommendations must be adapted to the characteristics of each place and their inhabitants. Generating social cohesion is gradual and takes time. The existence of suitable physical elements is a first step to promote people’s relationships and gatherings in the same space. Improvements in the physical space need to be accompanied by social and economic policies that guarantee equal opportunities in order to have a neighborhood with good social climate. But people also need time to generate trust. Enable meetings is essential to establish basic relationships that could generate deeper relationships.

“Benches were used only by guys smoking joints, now they are used by different people. In each space of the square there is a particular group: Spanish, grandmothers, youth...”
(Migrant female neighbor, shopkeeper)

“Local stores become a social center, they are a pulse, a forum of the neighborhood...”
(Native female neighbor, member of the neighborhood association)

“Local people think: they have to be like me. But we have to build something in common, to make it possible... There is a lack of more common spaces using the existing ones”
(Native male neighbor, member of the neighborhood association)
This research has described the urban reality and the conditions of community living in everyday life spaces. We have collected considerable primary material through extensive fieldwork, and this material has been analyzed and contrasted with key informants. Based on our research, we derive several general conclusions.

The physical configuration of space has an important role for living in community; especially in the way people perceive, understand and use public space. Environments that offer diverse activities, streets with local stores and services in the ground floor of buildings and urban elements that support life management foster the diversity of uses and therefore, people’s diversity.

The neighborhood is constructed by everyday activities in spaces where people interact and establish neighborhood relations. Sharing public spaces enables contact, interaction and community living among people of different origins. The diversity of physical spaces allows and fosters social complexity in contrast to uniform spaces that attract homogenous groups. A physical morphology that responds to the evolution of the population integrates diversity of needs and experiences, increases bonds between space and neighborhood, and helps create a sense of belonging that significantly improves notably the neighborhood’s life in community.

Strengthening social cohesion is progressive and there are different levels of social cohesion: segregation, coexistence, interaction, and living in community.

Segregation: people are isolated; there is no presence of different groups in the same space, and concentration of homogenous collectives in some spaces. Segregation has been noticed almost exclusively in men’s groups that dominate particular spaces such as corners, bars or some squares with characteristics of spatial segregation.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Plaza Sant Antoni, Erm. Conditions for segregation

Plaza dels Vidres, La Torrassa. Conditions for coexistence
Coexistence: different groups or persons use the same space, whether at the same time or not, but without having any relationship. This situation has been observed more frequently in spaces that allow multiple activities without conflicts related with the competition of space.

Interaction: different groups or people share the same space with some kind of reciprocity (salutation, conversation) among them. This has been observed in common spaces of housing buildings such as the stairways.

Living in community: different groups or persons share the same space and also develop activities in companionship. This is the most difficult level to achieve, but in the observation of different social groups, young groups (children and adolescents) and women are the most willing to establish intercultural relations and live in community.

To improve social cohesion in a neighborhood is important to have adequate physical and social conditions. The results of the research indicate that there are four main pillars that favor living in community:

- A physical configuration of the neighborhood that does not favor social segregation; with spaces that accommodate several functions and that can be freely grasped by all persons; and with a large diversity of housing typologies.

- A diverse environment to communicate, walk, meet, play and socialize that propitiates social complexity; physical space inclusive with a society increasingly heterogeneous; mixed uses and diversity of activities in the street to establish an everyday life network close to housing buildings.

- A plural and ingrained social network with a variety of social organizations that support people in their different realities.

- Activities and social programs planned from different neighborhood spaces (social organizations, public facilities, sport corporation...) that generate meeting spaces and foster mutual knowledge.
The best urban planning practices seek to identify common aspects in neighborhoods with similar characteristics. They give a comprehensive focus to the case studies, not only as a good intervention, but also as a group of actions whose conditions favor living in community. Each case has been synthetically described to understand previous deficiencies, pursued objectives, the type of interventions developed, and the effect produced in the intervention’s context to favor living in community.

There are three areas of intervention: public spaces, facilities and social programs. All interventions are included in comprehensive projects and represent only some aspects of each neighborhood.

The selection of cases responds to the following criteria:

- They integrate urban, spatial and social aspects through interdisciplinary management.
- They favor living in community and social, intercultural, intergenerational and intergender relations to influence changes in the social structure.
- They address different and singular physical realities at a local scale needed for living in community and social cohesion.
- They reflect the different territorial realities of Barcelona: Metropolitan Area, Metropolitan Region and Province of Barcelona.
Area of intervention: Public Space
Name of the intervention: Plaza Española

**Identification**
- Neighborhood: La Torrassa
- Municipality: L'Hospitalet de Llobregat
- Area: Metropolitan Area of Barcelona

**Background**
- Neighborhood’s historical and central space. It is always very vital and crowded. Surrounded by housing buildings and stores in the ground floor, and connected with facilities and walkable areas.

**Effects achieved**
- The square has become a focal space, a space for community living, expanding the possibilities of staying and playing
- The commercial and everyday life activity has become consolidated in the surrounding area of the square which facilitates socialization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context-Deficiency</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</table>
| - It is one of the few public spaces in the neighborhood with trees  
- Intensive use by all neighborhood residents, especially families with children and elderly  
- Benches and playgrounds are insufficient | - Increase the offerings of the public space  
- Consolidate the square as a meeting point and as part of the neighborhood identity  
- Improve the relationship between the public space and network of the everyday facilities and stores | - New playground area and space to stay with benches  
- Location of the neighborhood association center in the ground floor with support activities for people  
- Pedestrian priority in the surrounding area that fosters the connectivity and the commercial activity |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context-Deficiency</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Effects achieved</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Massive arrival of young immigrant families to the neighborhood</td>
<td>- Adapt its structure and performance to respond to the increasing demand</td>
<td>- Space managed by the organization</td>
<td>- Children have a space where they are cared and stimulated and interact with peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Problems of work-family balance</td>
<td>- Foster cultural diversity as a symbol of the neighborhood</td>
<td>- Main activity: Project “Clau” (4.30-7.30 pm) After school program</td>
<td>- Focal space for immigrant women with children under 3 years old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Young people with low preparation, lack of motivation and high unemployment</td>
<td>- Create a space for living in community</td>
<td>- Children’s pick-up service, school support and recreational activities</td>
<td>- Youth groups have a meeting space and receive orientation beyond the public space</td>
</tr>
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### Identification
- Neighborhood: La Torrassa
- Municipality: L’Hospitalet de Llobregat
- Area: Metropolitan Area of Barcelona

### Background
- Education organization that develops different projects in the neighborhood: “Clau” (Key), Open Center, Center for children and youth, Family space

### Area of intervention
- Facility + Social Program
- Name of the intervention:
  - Education organization ITACA
Area of intervention: Facility + Public Space + Social Program
Name of the intervention: Public School Puig i Agut

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood: El Erm</td>
<td>Meeting and relation point of families with children, especially neighborhood mothers, where mostly migrant children gather</td>
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<tr>
<td>Municipality: Manlleu</td>
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<tr>
<td>Area: Province of Barcelona</td>
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Effects achieved
- Meeting space for children and youth of the neighborhood
- Improvement of the mutual respect that contribute to living in community
- The area surrounding the school permits social relations, and is one of the few spaces where Moroccan women meet freely, even though they are the majority in the neighborhood

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>- High segregation of migrant families within the neighborhood</td>
<td>- Improve the perception and feeling of living in community in the public space by working with children and youth</td>
<td>- Opening of the school to the neighborhood, with a building reform and a social program: opening of the playground for children and youth after school hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Conflict in the public space because of the presence of children without supervision in the street</td>
<td>- Offer a playground and learning space outside the street and fostering the civic use of spaces</td>
<td>- Replacement of the closed edge wall by a see-through fence</td>
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<td>- Lack of spaces with good conditions for children to play</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Improvement of the accessibility and pedestrian priority mostly in the school surrounding area and the municipal market</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Predominance of the car in the street, making it difficult to use the space as meeting point</td>
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### Context-Deficiency
- Concentration in these buildings of new migrant families mostly from Morocco
- Difficulty to involve people in the neighborhood community
- Problems to manage the neighborhood community of a building, which can result in problems of living in community

### Objectives
- Generate dynamics of participation and foster involvement in the community spaces and through neighborhood improvement
- Agree on norms of community living and on conflict resolution
- Facilitate the mediation of conflicts that have an impact in the community

### Description
- Training-action work
- Support to build community organizing in the areas of: financial management, organization, living in community, participation, and maintenance and cleaning of common space
- Draft of a plan through consensus
- Later, elaboration of a diagnosis

### Effects achieved
- Training of a group of neighbors with the capacity to self-manage the community
- After the training it was possible to address more complex issues such as the rise of unpaid bills and evicted families, as well as the lack of building rehabilitation. These effects influence directly living in community in the building community

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identification</th>
<th>Background</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Neighborhood: El Erm  
Municipality: Manlleu  
Area: Province of Barcelona | Housing buildings built in the 1960s, with 5 floors without elevator and 338 apartments in total |
### Area of intervention: Public Space + Social Program

**Name of the intervention:** Square of Freedom

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identification</th>
<th>Background</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood: El Congost-Barriada Nova &lt;br&gt;Municipality: Granollers-Canovelles &lt;br&gt;Area: Metropolitan Region of Barcelona</td>
<td>Open space between housing buildings of the 1960s. Some ground floors have commercial activities. Near the public school.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Effects achieved

- Contribution of women experiences in the neighborhood (100 women)
- Design of the space that includes visibility and accessibility
- Installing children playgrounds for three different age groups and benches for caregivers that allow the coexistence in the same space

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### Context-Deficiency

- Male appropriation of the space<br>Activities in the square related with drug dealing<br>Women in the neighborhood had perception of insecurity, which limited an equal use of the space<br>The design of the space supports these situations

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### Objectives

- Change the situation of the neighborhood regarding the monopolization of spaces by some collectives<br>Promote a diverse use in the square, mostly by children and caregivers<br>Include the experience of women in the neighborhood interventions

---

### Description

- Gender diagnosis to learn about the neighborhood’s population<br>Creation of the Women’s Multicultural Commission of the neighborhood El Congost<br>Participatory workshop to identify gender criteria in the improvement of neighborhood spaces
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identification</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood: El Congost-Barriada Nova</td>
<td>Located in a building very visible and well placed in the neighborhood, in front of the Square of the Youth, Barriada Nova de Canovelles, next to the neighborhood of El Congost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipality: Granollers-Canovelles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area: Metropolitan Region of Barcelona</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Area of intervention:** Facility + Social Program

**Name of the intervention:** “El Local”. Municipal Center of Youth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context-Deficiency</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| - Diversity of youth in the neighborhood and negative perception about some groups of immigrant youth | - Obtain space where different collectives can develop diverse initiatives  
- Support young women’s activities and other groups that did not previously participate  
- Extend the space’s opening schedule to have activities in the weekend  
- Foster living in community through the commitment and mutual respect | - Expansion of the facility by rehabilitating an old existing building close to the previous one  
- Participatory process with young women and men to organize the new space  
- Opening of a bar in the ground floor managed by a group of young people that allows to increase the opening hours from 4 to 8 pm everyday of the week |
| - Facility with limited space to develop activities                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| - Lack of participation of young women in the activities, in part because of the lack of space for young women’s own   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| - Need of space to study and get support, especially for migrant youth            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

**Effects achieved**

- Higher space availability (3 floors) and youth participation
- Higher participation of women as participants and organizers of different activities
- The concentration of activities in the same space promotes the knowledge and mutual support among groups
For more information about the project, publication, articles, references, team, etc., visit our webpage

www-cpsv.upc.es/HabitatConvivencia