

Management of public spaces

Implications and recommendations for under-resourced contexts

Jose Chong

Lead, Global Public Space Programme

Planning, Finance and Economy Section

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)



Challenges to quality of public spaces



Uncollected garbage



Air and water pollution



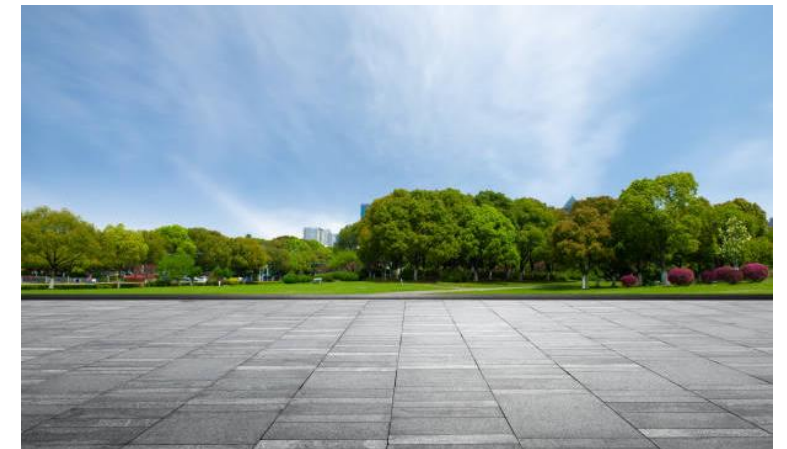
Vandalism



Encroachment



Safety and security



Lack of activities / abandonment

Challenges to Management of public spaces

Local governments struggle to implement public space management due to:

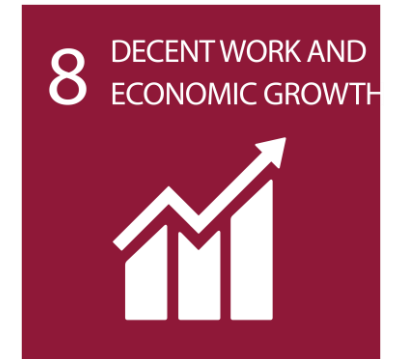
- **Knowledge** gap
- Lack of **political** interest
- Lack of **financial** resources
- Lack of technical **expertise**
- Lack of planning and **design**
- Unclear **responsibility** structure
- **Privatisation**



Public space management in the Global Agendas

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provides a **monitoring framework** for public space management.

Without management, governments risks a **slide back** from their progress towards the achievement of the SDGs.





UN-Habitat as Custodian Agency of SDG 11

1. Responsible for compiling and verifying country data and metadata, and for submitting the data, along with regional and global aggregates, to the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD).
2. May publish the country data in their own databases and use it for **thematic reporting**.
3. The country data need to be internationally comparable. To this end, the agencies are also responsible for **developing international standards and recommending methodologies for monitoring**
4. To strengthen national monitoring and reporting **capacity**.

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES
AND COMMUNITIES



Target 11.7

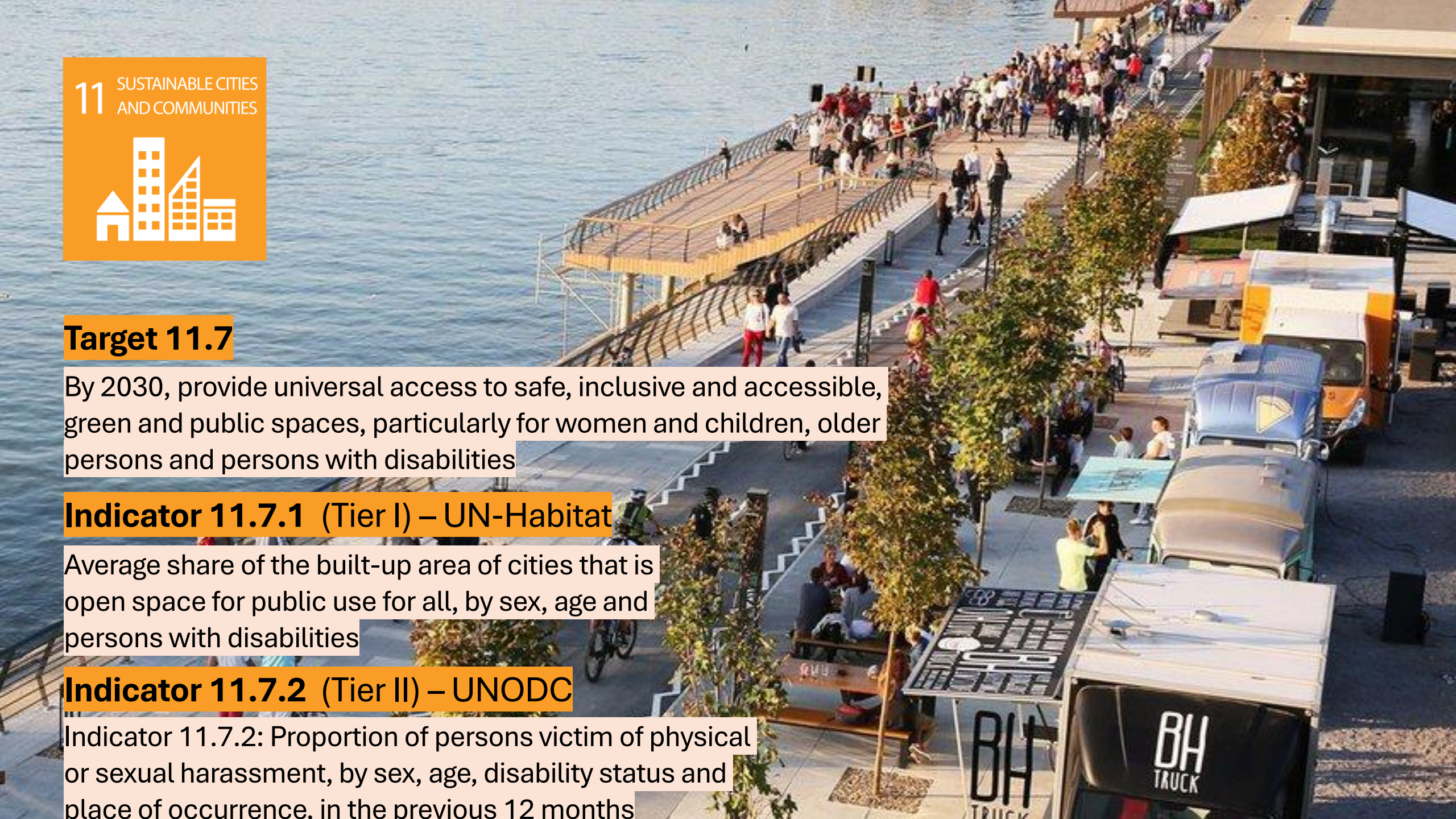
By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, particularly for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities

Indicator 11.7.1 (Tier I) – UN-Habitat

Average share of the built-up area of cities that is open space for public use for all, by sex, age and persons with disabilities

Indicator 11.7.2 (Tier II) – UNODC

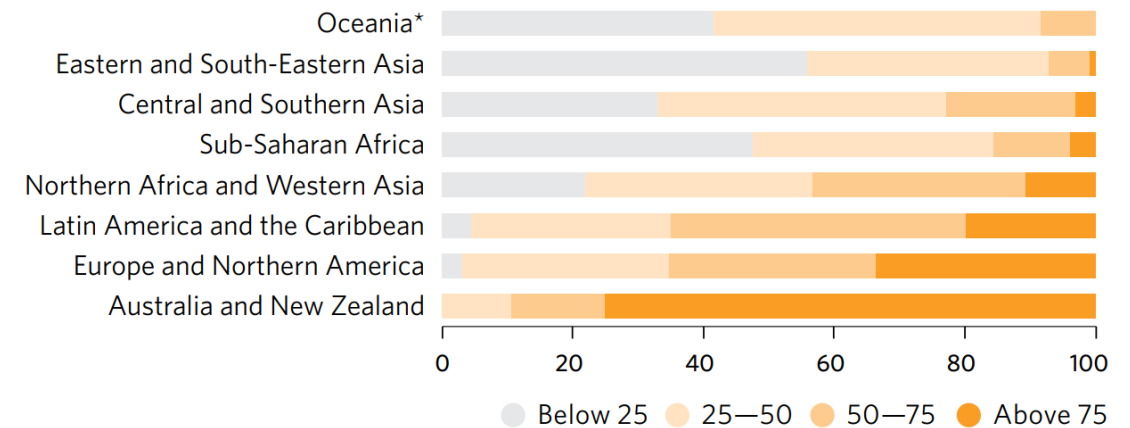
Indicator 11.7.2: Proportion of persons victim of physical or sexual harassment, by sex, age, disability status and place of occurrence, in the previous 12 months



Report 2023 on SDG 11.7.1

1. **More than 3/4 have less than 20% dedicated** to open public spaces and streets
2. **Open public spaces accounted for a mere 3.2% of urban land**, about four times less than the share occupied by streets
3. **Cities in more developed regions have higher proportions** of land dedicated to streets and open spaces than those in developing regions
4. **Countries in developed regions also have higher shares** of the population with **convenient access to open public spaces.**

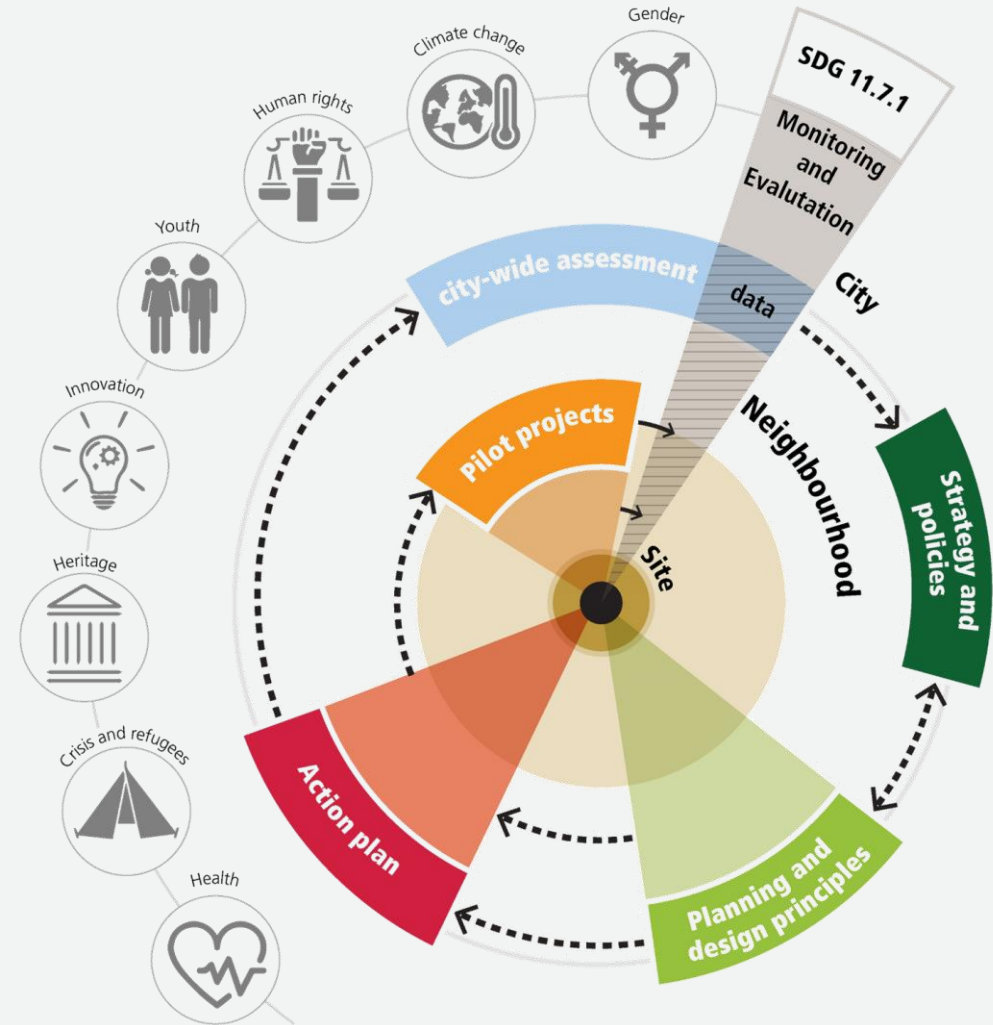
Proportion of cities in each region where the population has access to open public spaces, within a 400-metre walking distance, 2020 (percentage)



* Excluding Australia and New Zealand.

UN-Habitat's Global Public Space Programme

The Programme supports cities in developing green and quality public spaces, acting as an enabler for social justice, prosperity, and environmental change



UN-Habitat's Global Public Space Programme

30,000+

people actively engaged

610+

Engagement activities

359

Minecraft workshops

95+

conducted trainings

4550+

trained urban actors

144

upgraded public spaces

36

city-wide public space assessments

100

cities

55

countries

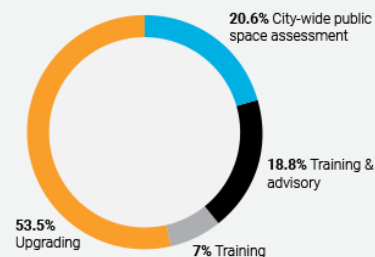


Digital engagement, climate actions, gender equality, child-friendly solutions, governance, migration and refugees, crisis response, capacity building, universal accessibility and placemaking.

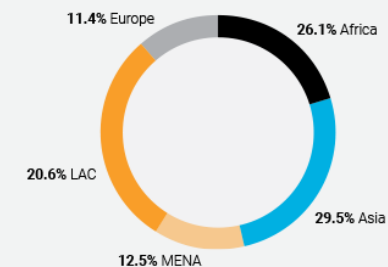
THEMATIC AREAS



TYPE OF INITIATIVE



REGIONAL COVERAGE



Global Public Space Programme / UN-Habitat



Public Space assessments



Strategies, policy and governance



Participation and digital engagement



HerCity toolbox



Placemaking & upgrading



Design guidelines



Urban Health



SDG 11.7



Capacity strengthening



ONU-HABITAT

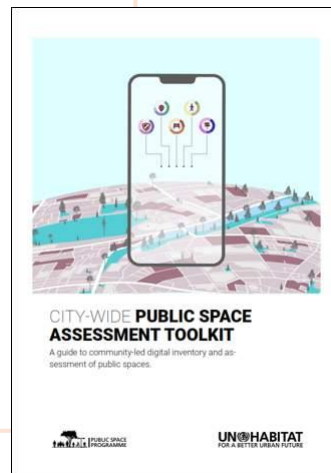
<https://data.unhabitat.org/pages/gpsp>

Management of public spaces

Management of public space refers to the coordination and operational practices to **sustain the quality of public spaces in the long-term, both at the:**

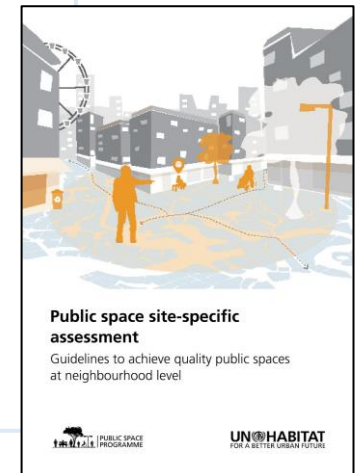
City level / network

- Quantity
- Accessibility
- Distribution
- Network
- Quality



Site level

- Use and users
- Accessibility
- Amenities and furniture
- Comfort and safety
- Green environment



The dimensions of public space management

1



Regulatory
framework

3



Coordination

5



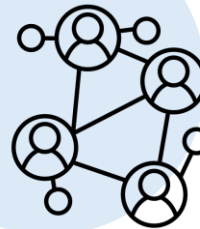
Urban
design

2



Financial
mechanisms

4



Governance &
participation

6



Maintenance

Recommendations for public space management

1



Regulatory framework

- Anchor public space in **statutory planning**
- Endorse a **definition** of public space
- Set up **standards** for public space quality
- Regulate **enforcement** mechanisms to avoid corruption

2



Financial mechanisms

- Secure **public funding**
- Boost **Own Sourced Revenue**, also through Land-based Finance
- Consider **informal sector** in local taxation
- Promote **awareness of donors** and sponsors
- Leverage **corporate social responsibility**
- Ensure **day-to-day maintenance** as a cost-saving strategy

Recommendations for public space management

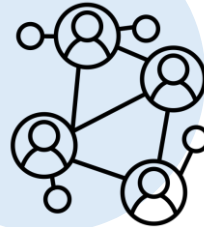
3



Coordination

- Develop **Management Plans**
- Include **emergency scenarios** in management plans
- Promote PS **assessment and monitoring**
- Secure essential **equipment** (internet, laptops)
- Promote **digitalisation** of protocols

4

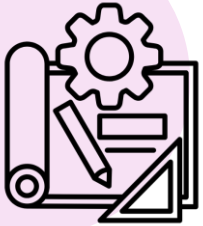


Governance & participation

- Promote **mix governance** (public + private + civil society)
- Establish **long-term partnerships** with service providers
- Regulate **business-led** arrangements (e.g. BID)
- Institutionalise and compensate **community-led** arrangements (e.g. “friends of...”)

Recommendations for public space management

5



Urban design

- Use durable and resistant **materials**
- Use local **techniques** to correct instalment (lack of skilled labour with imported items)
- Design for **informality**
- Design **versatile public spaces** for future upgrading
- **Aesthetic value** to promote care from community

6



Maintenance

- **Budget** for day-to-day maintenance and long-term upgrading
- Adopt **tailored** procedures
- Set up **skills development training** for maintenance
- Promote a **caring culture** through awareness and education

Case study | Dandora - district level



Case study | Dandora - district level



Case study | Sao Paulo - city level

ÁGUA PODRE - YPUERA



AUGUSTA



CÓRREGO DO BISPO



BÚFALOS



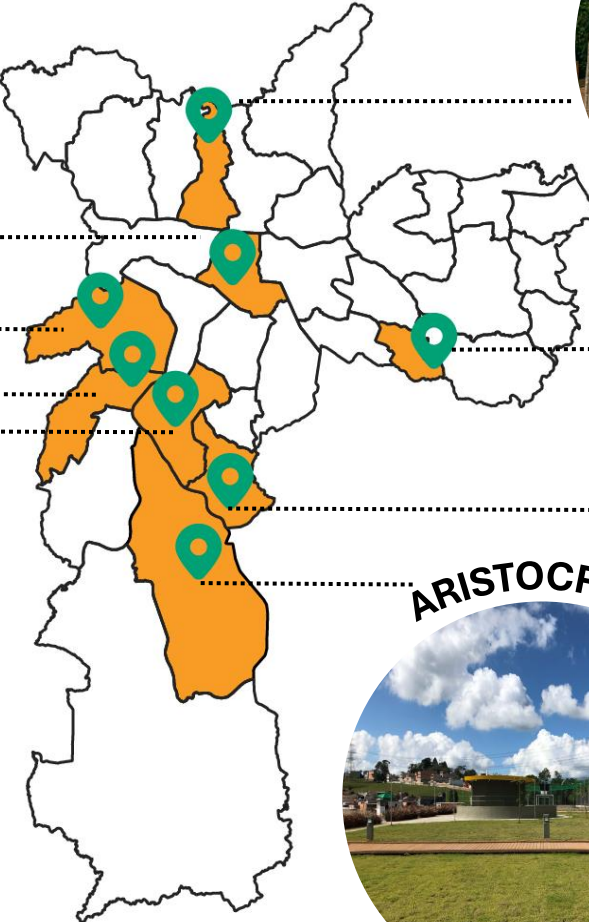
ARISTOCRATA



ALTO DA BOA VISTA



PARAISÓPOLIS



Case study | Sao Paulo - city level

INTRODUCTORY TOPICS

1. Introduction	
2. Context	Municipal parks
	Management plans
	Social participation
3. Legislation	
4. General information	Localisation
	Datasheet

STUDIES AND GUIDELINES

5. Urban setting	Environmental services
	Accessibility
	Land occupation and use
	Public facilities
	Sociodemographic profile
	Action Plan for the surroundings
6. Characterisation	Vulnerabilised groups
	Identified or foreseen uses
	Ground composition
	Water
	Climate
	Flora
	Fauna
7. Setorisation	
8. Action Plan for the park	

MANAGEMENT INFORMATIONS

9. Management	Operational team
	Revenue and investments
10. Partnerships	Public institutions and organizations
	Academic and research institutions
	Civil society organizations
	Private entities
	Programmed activities
11. Implementation strategies	Monitoring
	Frequency of reviews
12. Future wishes	
13. Plans, programmes and specific projects	

Case study | Sao Paulo - city level



Parque Aristocrata

13/04/2024



Parque Água Podre - Ypuera

13/04/2024



Parque Fazenda da Juta

14/04/2024



Parque de Paraisópolis

21/04/2024



Parque dos Búfalos

27/04/2024



Parque Alto da Boa Vista

27/04/2024



Parque Córrego do Bispo

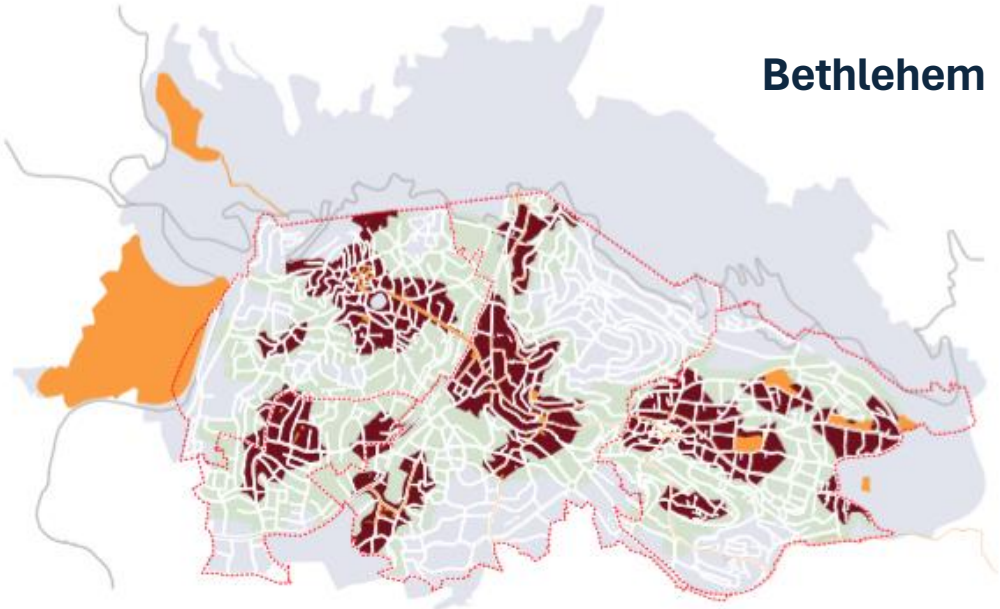
28/04/2024



Parque Augusta

28/04/2024

Case study | Palestine - national level



Walking distance to public spaces

- Public spaces
- 5 minutes walk from public spaces
- 10 minutes walk from public spaces



Share of land within 5 minutes walk



Share of land within 10 minutes walk

Case study | Palestine - national level

Annex (A) Template for environmental and social management plan matrix

Component	Objective	Indicator	Measurement Method	Frequency	Responsible Party	Comments
Water Quality	Ensure water quality meets WHO standards for drinking water.	Water quality index (WQI)	Water sampling and testing	Quarterly	Water Utility Company	Ensure regular testing and reporting.
Soil Quality and Capacity	Maintain soil health and fertility for agricultural and landscaping purposes.	Soil pH, Nitrogen, Phosphorus, Potassium (NPK) levels	Soil sampling and analysis	Annually	Environmental Agency	Implement soil conservation practices.
Cultural Heritage	Preserve and promote cultural heritage sites and practices.	Number of heritage sites, Cultural activities	Site visits, Surveys, Interviews	Bi-annually	Cultural Ministry	Develop heritage management plans.

Annex (B) Operation and maintenance plan template

Covering the:

First: Human resources needs

Code	Position	Number of staff	Health	Salary	Responsibilities	Comments
1	Project Manager	1			Overall project management	Senior position
2	Site Supervisor	1			On-site supervision	Field experience
3	Assistant Site Supervisor	1			Assist in site supervision	Field experience

Second: The needs of material and supplies

Code	Material	Quantity	Health	Salary	Responsibilities	Comments
1	Construction Materials	As per bill of materials			Material procurement	Quality control
2	Tools and Equipment	As per list of equipment			Equipment maintenance	Regular inspection
3	Transportation	As per project schedule			Logistics management	Efficient routing
4	Communication	As per project requirements			Communication management	Regular updates
5	Other	As per project requirements			Other project needs	Flexibility

Third: The needs of energy, water and other resources

Code	Resource	Quantity	Health	Salary	Responsibilities	Comments
1	Electricity	As per project requirements			Energy management	Energy efficiency
2	Water	As per project requirements			Water management	Water conservation
3	Other	As per project requirements			Other resource management	Resource optimization



Join our Global Public Space Network !

- Join the **Global Public Space Network** – a network of urban actors working on public space matters
- Create a **PS Management Global Network**
- Send feedback to our **Policy Brief on Management of Public Space**
- **Develop guidelines** for public space management for the Global South
- Develop **capacity building packages** for cities
- Promote inclusion of Global south **academia**
- **WUF 12** in Cairo, Egypt, in November 2024



Scan the QR Code
and join
our [Network!](#)

Tack / Thank you!

Jose Chong

Lead, Global Public Space Programme

Planning, Finance and Economy Section

UN-Habitat

