



Neighbourhoods – public spaces for everybody

Report from Habitat Norway's event part of UN Urban October 2022

Oslo Architecture Triennale 2022

NEIGHBOURHOODS - public space for everybody

The former Edvard Munch museum
(Tøyengata 53, Oslo)

October 27 16:30 - 19:30



     

Foto: Eva B. Storrusten



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About the report

This report gathers insights from the Habitat Norway event in Oslo as part of Urban October 2022. The event was organised in partnership with the Oslo Architecture Triennale 2022 at 'Gamle Munch' and involved 15 presenters and panellists as part of the UN Habitat 40 days challenge for Safer Cities. The event was sponsored by Oslo City Municipality, the Norwegian housing and urban planning association and the District of Gamle Oslo.

The whole event was recorded and is available online:

[YouTube: OAT 2022: Neighbourhoods – public space for everybody](#) 3 hours.

The event was conducted in English with the exception of the panel discussion which was in Norwegian.

Habitat Norway thanks all those who made the event possible, and those who contributed their knowledge and participated in the event.

For more information about Habitat Norway, please visit our website <http://habitat-norge.org/>

Event organisers: Ellen de Vibe, Erik Berg, Laura Marano, Eva B. Storrusten, Milla Skjeklesæter, Vendula Hurnikova og Kjersti Grut.

Report by: Kjersti Grut and Laura Marano

Oslo January 2023

Background

Public urban spaces are where our shared lives unfold. These spaces are where we live our everyday life, exchange ideas, knowledge, goods, services and gather for events, celebrations and commemorations. We would like our public spaces to be for everyone, a meeting place for our diverse urban neighbourhoods. However, we experience that some parks, squares and streets are not in use, or are dominated by individual groups or are places where conflicts of interest arise. Safety determines if people want to use a public space. In over 130 countries there are laws preventing women from accessing public spaces but still stating they are safe spaces. Yet we know the presence of others creates a sense of security. To create public urban spaces that are accessible for everyone, we need new approaches to develop spaces for multiple use and for diverse users.

In the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)¹ public spaces are highlighted as playing a central role in the development of inclusive, safe, and sustainable cities. During Urban October Oslo 2022, Habitat Norway wanted to explore how public urban spaces can play a role in creating a city or a neighbourhood for everyone. Habitat Norway focused on the topic of safety for young people and women, as these are often defined as vulnerable groups in urban planning. Young people and women rarely have a say in decision-making processes and public meetings also as a result of barriers to their access of public urban spaces.

Habitat Norway is dedicated to the development and sharing of knowledge between the Global South and the Global North. Thus, the seminar combined political and theoretical perspective on the planning and development of urban spaces with concrete examples from Nairobi, Envigado, Stonetown and Oslo. Contributors to the presentations were from the UN, the civil society sector, academia, government and local authorities and youth representatives.

Political and theoretical planning perspectives on inclusiveness of public urban spaces

Board Member of Habitat Norway and previous leader of Urban Planning for the City of Oslo, Ellen de Vibe opened the event and gave an introduction to the central concepts of 'safety' and 'security'. While security is associated with various forms of fortifications to keep unwanted elements out, security is only one prerequisite for exploring our lives and possibilities. Gated communities are an example of this perspective of security. *"What is important is that mobilisation and design principles facilitate safe urban spaces,"* concluded Vibe.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bjørg Sandkjær, State Secretary to the Minister for Development, pointed out that rapid urbanisation driven by the climate and poverty crisis makes it particularly important to think and discuss how our cities and public areas are safe and sustainable for everyone. Norway's development policy addresses this challenge by prioritising climate finance and support for the Global South in climate adaptation of public urban spaces, in cooperation with financial development organisations and the UN. The Ministry is also committed to rights-based approaches and meaningful citizen involvement in urban planning which includes women in particular, and other vulnerable groups more generally.

¹ SDG 11 Sustainable and inclusive cities. *"The cities of the future are about making cities and settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable."* 11.7: *"By 2030 provide for the public access to safe, inclusive and easily accessible green areas and public spaces, especially for women, children and the elderly as well as people with disabilities."*



FNs youth envoy Jayathma Wickramanayake participated digitally and promoted young people's involvement in urban development to guarantee their basic rights amidst rapid urbanisation. The UN calculated that 60 percent of the urban population will be under 18 by 2030, and many children and young people do not have access to health, clean water, a clean environment, education and protection against violence due to the lack of urban planning. For children over 8 years of age, 80 percent of public spaces are dominated by boys. It makes girls feel noticeably unsafe or excluded. Public urban spaces cannot be designed without the young people who live in the cities and who will be most affected, emphasised Wickramanayake.

Planning for a city for everyone – safety and security through participation

The UN Settlements Programme, UN Habitat, has developed a programme called “Safer Cities” to assist local decision makers. The programme provides guidance and support to address the negative effects of globalisation. Namely issues linked to rising crime and vulnerability of the poor, which is most evident in cities.

Research shows that one in three women worldwide do not feel safe in public spaces. Programme Coordinator Juma Assiango pointed out that Safer Cities, through pilot projects in a number of cities, has documented what characterises successful urban development strategies. Some of these characteristics are that strategies are city-wide, interdisciplinary, crime preventing and based on the co-production of safety and security between several actors. According to Assiango, the cities participating in Safer Cities succeeded because they address the fundamental causes of insecurity and because they manage to balance law enforcement with social prevention and take into account group interest and the inclusion of vulnerable groups in the urban development process.

Theory of Change – Place-making, relational wellbeing and safety

Youth are a vulnerable group, both because they are not always involved in urban planning processes and because their presence in public urban spaces can make others feel unsafe. The **foundation Global Infrastructure Basel (GIB)** collaborates on the **Safe and Sound City Programme (S2C)** with Foundation Botner - which is a leading organisation in youth programming and engagement – and with local partners in secondary cities in the Global South. Through a relational approach to place-making S2C aims to create cities that are safer and support the wellbeing of young people on a personal, societal and environmental level.

Presenter Kelly Donovan gave a brief introduction to the S2C theory of Change. A relational approach is the core concept to S2C, emphasising that wellbeing and safety are not only about an individual's mental health and behaviour but also the underlying processes that promote or prevent this. The term is defined as having enough to meet basic needs, having connections that are fair and empowering, and about how one feels about their life, experiences, and future prospects. S2C looks at personal, social, and environmental drivers for safety and well-being. For example, can young people's wellbeing and safety be influenced by how personal stories are included in a system, how one works with social differences and how to develop the physical environment in a public urban space?

The target group for S2C is the 15-24 age group. The key stakeholders are young people, local authorities, civil society organisations, the private sector and local community actors. S2C's approach to designing an intervention for public spaces with safety challenges is to develop a theory of change with key stakeholders. This aids an understanding of the complex interactions at the core of the safety challenges. From here young people and stakeholders build consensus on the necessary actions and activities needed to increase safety and wellbeing. An innovation incubator is then established for young people to explore their potential and find ways to create the desired change. Finally, S2C builds and shares knowledge of change making that can close the gaps in policy and practice in urban planning.

According to Donovan, S2C has documented that young people see themselves as agents of change through the place-making pilots in Envigado, Colombia and Bandung, Indonesia. Findings show that young people involved change the perception of themselves, how they participate in society and gain increased self-confidence to contribute. The interaction has also changed other stakeholders' perceptions of young people, challenging their preconception that young people are disruptive and not interested in participation. Together these changes have altered the power dynamic between young people and the public and private sector actors.

Creativity and conflict in planning – young people's participation and capacity building

Over several years, **OsloMet** has designed and tested several participation methods to develop places, communities and neighbourhoods. At the moment OsloMet is leading on the EU-funded project YouCount. Ingar Brattbakk, one of the researchers and author behind the book "Youth Participation" (OsloMet, 2021) shared insights on what is important for successful youth participation. Firstly, it is important to recognise that young people are experts in their own lives and communities, while also needed to learn how planning systems and subject areas work. It is necessary to find methods that ensure young people can participate in a meaningful way. Those who benefit from the results of participation need to understand what they are and how to use them. Building trust and relationships with young people is crucial to success. It takes time, and you often have to go through people the young people already have established relationships with and meet them in arenas where they already feel safe. It's important to meet young people at the same level, balance the power dynamic and ensure participation. This may mean that young people are part of defining what their role as a researcher will be, deciding what questions will be asked, and deciding how best to ensure participation in the project. Finally, it must be interesting for young people to participate. Either by having fun together, seeing a desired result happen or by being remunerated for their active commitment and contribution over time.

This learning is now developed further through **YouCount**, an EU funded project part of the research and education programme Horizon 2020. OsloMet is a part of this project and works in partnership with local actors in Grønland and Tøyen including Tøyen Unlimited and the youth researchers Sumaya Ali Isse and Elias Mokhlis.

Inclusive public urban spaces in practice – action and activities for change

Based on the political and theoretical perspectives on planning and development of public urban space, five examples of how these work in practice will be presented from Nairobi in Kenya, Envigado in Colombia, Stonetown in Zanzibar Tanzania, and from Grønland and Tøyen in Oslo. Med utgangspunkt i de politiske og teoretiske perspektivene på planlegging og utvikling av offentlige byrom, ble det presentert fem eksemppler på hvordan dette utøves i praksis i Nairobi i Kenya, Envigado i Colombia, Stonetown i Zanzibar i Tanzania og på Grønland og Tøyen i Oslo.

Youth creating safe public urban spaces in Envigado, Colombia

Estiven Cano and Mateo Madrid Salazar are two young founders of *Flows&Bars* a street training project by and for young people, practicing parkour in public spaces in Envigado Colombia. They presented their project in a pre-recorded video for the event. The aim of Flows&Bars is to take ownership of the public urban spaces and share sporting skills. The project is part of the S2C programme, where young people collaborate with local authorities, private business and schools. The idea for Flows&Bars came about because neighbours assumed the young people were using drugs and vandalising the park when they were in fact just practicing the alternative sport of parkour. By participating in training with Flows&Bars young people get to practice soft skills such as

sommunication, leadership and participation whilst also improving their physical and mental health. *“We try to get young people to invest their time in habits that are good for their health”*, said Estiven Cano. There are also wider benefits. Neighbours and others use the part not to say and watch as young people train. The young people have established a relationship of trust with local authorities which means they are listened to when they contribute in other contexts as well. The most important thing about Flow&Bars has been meeting so many young people who are equally interested in leadership and in creating positive change in Envidagdo, Cano concluded.

Bottom up social inclusion: youth as neighbourhood mobilisers for the Mukuru Special Planning Area

In 2022 Laura Genet Marano won the award for best masters’ thesis on the topic of sustainability at the University of Oslo. Her thesis explores inclusive development in practice, through a case study of the government led upgrading of the informal settlement of Mukuru with basic infrastructure and services by designating the area a Special Planning Area (SPA).

According to Marano what is particularly interesting is the process to how the area was declared a special planning area and the commitment to “in-situ” upgrading guaranteeing that no current residents will be displaced from the infrastructure upgrade. Although the Mukuru SPA is led by the government it is rooted in years of advocacy, community mobilisation and action research by the social movement Muungano wa wanavijiji. Inclusive development is understood as a process of social and political empowerment to improve the safety, wellbeing and capabilities of those who are most marginalised. Young residents from Mukuru played a crucial role in creating awareness of the SPA, mobilising residents, collecting data, communicating and documenting the entire planning and implementation process.

Marano introduced Kamila Abdirahman Gojobe a youth neighbourhood mobiliser and member of the Muungano wa Wanavijiji. Gojobe’s pre-recorded presentation discussed her involvement in Know Your City TV (KYCTV), a platform for young people to create and share narratives of life in informal settlements and the changes they want to see in their local community. Gojobe and other young people used video, photos, articles, blogs and reports to document the SPA process in Mukuru. She described how residents actively participated in discussions about the plans for Mukuru with different actors about challenges and opportunities related to drainage systems, sanitation, roads, health services and public spaces. Gojobe stated that the Mukuru SPA has led to many improvements such as two new hospitals, tarmacked roads and pavements and a water supply and sewerage system.

With the exception of a large open field used for sports and cultural or political gatherings, there are next to no public spaces in the densely populated villages of Mukuru. Gojobe explained how young people take initiative and actively work to create and maintain public urban spaces. MuYiHub (the Mukuru Youth Initiative Hub) is an example of such places. It is a meeting place for creative young people and youth groups from Mukuru. Here they can develop their art, music and social enterprises in a safe and supportive environment. At the start of this event attendees were welcomed by a live streaming of music performances from MuYiHub in Mukuru. This gave all attendees a glimpse into what public spaces in Mukuru look like and how they are used. Gojobe explained there was another meeting place in Mukuru which functioned as a rights and justice centre and where a local waste management company was based. This center was demolished in the violent and illegal clearing of structures in November 2021. Some material and equipment was recovered from the site and work is being done to build up a new centre, according to Gojobe.

Marano elaborated on this incident, explaining that private interests had taken advantage of a planned access road construction to illegally destroy structures laying 20 meters from the

designated area. This resulted in 13,276 households being destroyed in two hours leaving residents with no alternative accommodation. It is a testament to the local communities ability to collect data and map their local area that they were able to account for the damages and impact on local residents. While the social movement negotiates and co-produces with local government but also organises resistance to evictions due to the continued lack of secure tenure. The Mukuru SPA demonstrates that co-production is a very good tool for improving access to data and information that is often not available to researchers and local authorities. Co-production can become a catalyst for inclusive urban development however, there is no guarantee this will happen. The threat of eviction and displacement is still there, Marano explained.

Marano warned about focusing too much on methodology and the categories of what constitutes coproduction as this misses the key point. It is important to understand how to effect change and challenge the political and power structures at play in urban settings. Therefore, an important factor in coproduction is the key role of individuals as facilitators and agents of change. Innovations in solutions to complex societal problems are dependent on the capacity of ‘experts’ to show patience and flexibility to negotiate, self-reflect and demonstrate humility to change, to practice active listening and have a willingness to challenge their positionality and status. According to Marano, this resonates with Abdoumalig Simone’s (2004) concept of ‘people as infrastructure’. Simone extends the conventional definition of infrastructure to include the collaborative economic activities among residents who appear to be marginalised. People are infrastructure because each collaboration experience extends and opens up a willingness to interact in other ways. The agency is on individuals and their ability to change behaviours and develop new solutions, concluded Marano.

Reclaiming space for women – inclusive architecture and differentiated public space

Eva B. Storrusten, architect at MNAL, presented on the basis of her masters’ thesis, a solution to how women in Zanzibar can reclaim public spaces in Old Stonetown. Starting from a feminist perspective – “Public urban spaces for all, often become public urban spaces for men. Whilst public urban spaces for women, become public urban spaces for all.” Storrusten interviewed local women about their everyday lives and with women’s organisation asked about women’s lost access to public urban spaces in and around Old Stonetown. Together with local stakeholders an outdoor cinema evening was organised in Hurumzi square. This square is usually dominated by men consuming alcohol and marijuana. During the outdoor cinema event the public urban space changed from being dominated by men to being filled with children and their parents. The event demonstrated the potential for the public urban space to become a place for film and cultural exchange. Storrusten applied the gained insight to develop a programme for the public space, focusing on cultural activities for women and the local community.

Exploring the possibilities for creating privacy and shielding in the public spaces, she sketched a project for creating a meeting place in Hurumzi square that is open to everyone but where parts of the space can be closed for events and workshops particularly for women and young people. For each floor of the structure or building the shielding of meeting places increases gradually. The 2nd floor is an open meeting place on the grounds of women feeling safe; the 3rd floor is a semi-private space for women and young people; and the 4th floor is only for women. In a report on the Urtebage public space for the urban regeneration programme in Grønland and Tøyen in Oslo, Storrusten proposed that inclusive architecture and principles of differentiated shielding of public urban spaces can also be applied to a Norwegian context, to allow for more women to use the park.

YouCount in Oslo – youth employment and data collection

Sumaya Ali Isse and Elias Mokhlis, two young researchers presented the work of YouCount. The project with 9 participating cities is bringing together young people and relevant stakeholders to address the most complex social challenges in Europe. The challenge addressed is how to increase

the social inclusion of young people in Norway. Ali Isse and Mokhlis gave examples of how youth employment and social entrepreneurship contributes to social inclusion in Oslo. YouCount will collate and share knowledge about the positive drivers for social inclusion, in particular about the innovation of participation, belonging and citizenship.

Ali Isse joined because YouCount needed young people. Young people know more about their lives, and their hopes and dreams than anyone else. She says “we are young researchers and we work with professional researchers to find solutions to local challenges to create positive change for young people and their local environment.” At the beginning of February 2022 participants received two-days of training on how to be a young researcher, learning how to go about research, interview techniques and reporting. YouCount has established LivingLabs to conduct interviews, create dialogues and organise local and national events and workshops. The research started to investigate why young people are socially excluded from their communities. Ali Isse herself grew up in Grønland and Tøyen and conducted several research project but does not necessarily recognise herself in the results.

It is Ali Isse explained that it is important to ask simple questions that everyone can answer. They started their interviews with the question:

What makes you feel socially included? You personally, not you as a group, not you as being of a specific religion, nor you of a specific skin colour. In YouCount the young people were both the researchers and the researched in the study. *The young people involved were not being studied by outsiders but were studying themselves. The professional researchers were standing alongside the young people, they followed them on the journey. The professional researchers didn't force their way, invade the privacy of the young people or insist on filling in questionnaires. Instead the research was done on their terms, which why the project is so cool,* said Ali Isse.

In the YouCount project young researchers started from the premise of what it means to feel socially excluded. This change of the focus of the research question gave them new insights. They discovered that eye contact, a smile and a short hello are as basic as they are revolutionary. Social inclusion is an experiences of being seen, heard, feeling comfortable, calm and safe and have common interest with those around you, a sense of belonging and a sense of community. The young researchers met and spoke to youth, adults and others to find out what the possibilities for change are based on the ideas raised by young people. They have met with key people from the local community and started to test the app YouCount to map the places where people feel socially included. Mokhlis explained the way forward, YouCount will investigate possible solutions that give young people better chances of getting a job, in collaboration with local employers or as social entrepreneurs, to ensure better social inclusion of young people in the area.

In addition to the local benefits young researched believe that YouCount also contributes to making science more accessible because of the method of how people are included in the design and delivery of the study.

Co-Production in the urban regeneration programme Grønland and Tøyen in the local District of Gamle Oslo

Ida Ufoma Helgheim Ijeabuonwu, programme coordinator at the District of Gamle Oslo (BGO), presented the strategy for, and examples of, how the district works with the urban regeneration programme to develop safer public spaces in Grønland and Tøyen.

The urban regeneration programme Grønland and Tøyen has 24,000 residents and many live in small apartments with large families. This makes the need for public spaces much higher than in other neighbourhoods. The public spaces become an extension of home. The programme's main target

group is children and young people with the aim of making the neighbourhood more inclusive and safe. The aim is that everyone living in Grønland and Tøyen feel the area is more safe and inclusive and that residents are engaged in making their local environment better. We want the area to be a desirable place to live and where people can continue to stay in the area. Ijeabuwu emphasised that the strategy for the development of safer public urban space involves a combination of physical, social and structural components. The plans are knowledge-based, informed by academic research and insights from the participation of residents in the area. Physical rehabilitation and renovation of parks and public spaces is important but not sufficient. It's important that staff from the district are present and visible to contribute to making the area safer. It's necessary to collaborate with local stakeholders, such as voluntary organisations, residents, and local businesses. She added that youth employment has a positive effect, not only for the young people involved, but also as a means of creating a sense of ownership to their neighbourhood and what happens in public spaces.

Ijeabuwu presented three examples. Sørli playground in Tøyen was upgraded in 2018 based on insights from engagement with local residents collected by landscape architects, presented in the report Parkløft Tøyen. The physical upgrading divided the park into several zones, installed better playground equipment, created more seating areas, improved street lighting, and planted more trees to open up the park more. Before the upgrade the park was only used during the day as people felt unsafe to be there in the evening. Today, Sørli park is well used at all times with a greater presence of parents and adults. A key factor in the increased use of the playground is that it sits just outside Tøyen Primary School, which uses the park as an extension of the school backyard for the youngest pupils. In addition, the park is next to the community centre Aktivitetshuset K1 which offers an additional sense of security as the centre is open seven days a week till 21.30. The centre also offers a youth club with adult presence. Yet there are still some challenges as neighbours have raised issues of noise in the evenings when the young people continue to hangout after the youth club closes.

Urtegata and Urtehagen in Grønland is another project with the aim of making the neighbourhood safer and more inclusive. It is a public park with a private kindergarten in it and a mosque across the street. It is surrounded by social housing where a lot of children and young people live. In Urtegata, which leads up to Urtehagen (the park), the Salvation Army runs a centre offering services to people with drug and alcohol addition issues. The service users tend to hangout in the park after the centre closes. The challenges here are complex, there are conflicting uses of the space with an open drug scene and a space for children to play. The district has gathered insights on how to make the park safer for women and children, through observations of how the space is used, and a qualitative survey with service users of the Salvation Army's Centre. Based on these findings, strategies have been drawn up to make the area safer. One intervention is the physical upgrade of the park, particularly around the kindergarten to shield it from the street and improve the playground equipment. In partnership with the Salvation army a neighbourhood group has been launched to increase dialogue and come up with solutions to reduce the conflict between residents and service users. Finally, to increase public presence in the area the district launched a neighbourhood outreach project (Nabolagskontakt). Employees of the project visit the area daily to observe, talk to residents, gain trust and get to know the people using the park. In addition, voluntary community events are organised such as the Christmas tree party and outdoor cinema screenings.

The final example is the Borggata- area of Tøyen. This is a smaller recreation area which has a football pitch and a small playground which is popular amongst children and young people especially in the summer months. There is a challenge with noise and disturbance for those living around the park. In order to resolve this, the district established a neighbourhood parliament with board representatives from housing associations and housing cooperatives to get to know each other and improve the dialogue with the district and the young people who use the park. The district employed

some young people, an equal mixture of boys and girls, to make suggestions of how to make the park better. Among other things the young people organised neighbourhood parties to increase opportunities to get to know each other better and understand each other's perspectives. Through Ung Bybønder (young urban farmers) young people continue to make public urban spaces greener, more pleasant spaces and safer.

Panel discussion on safe and inclusive public urban spaces

A panel was invited to reflect on how to create public urban spaces fit for a diverse users and interests, and what this means for policy and practice. The panel included: Merete Agerbak-Jensen, the former city councillor for urban development in Oslo and deputy leader of the Oslo Conservative Party. Elias Mokhlis and Sumaya Ali Isse young researchers from the YouCount project in Grønland and Tøyen. Margrete Bjørge Kantanasho, head of the National Association for Children and Youth Organisations (LNU)

In her opening question to the panel Ellen S. de Vibe summarised the common thread from the event so far: that physical surroundings can promote or hinder wellbeing and liveability and participatory methods are of great importance to improving experiences of safety and improved wellbeing in public urban spaces. *How can urban developers and civil society and especially vulnerable groups best collaborate on the design of and the decision-making process for our public urban spaces?*

Margrete Bjørge Kantanasho (LNU) highlighted the important learning from the over 100 voluntary organisations LNU represents. LNU's participatory work is based on the SKRIK principles, which stand for Independence, Competence, Representation, Information and Continuity. It's important that children and young people have access to information that is appropriate and comprehensible to the age group participation, and that they are recognised as competent actors. Kantanasho pointed out that children and young people are often only involved to participate in "children's and youth matters" but they should be involved as experts in urban planning and social development more widely.

Merete Agerbak-Jensen emphasised that it is important to create good urban spaces where children and young people also feel included. At the same time, it is challenging to get young people and children to participate even if the Planning and Building Act guarantees them the right to be involved. In order to have meaningful impact on local projects, and avoid the risk of "youth-washing" projects, Agerbak-Jensen believes it is necessary to provide outreach and be present where children and young people area. She believes the urban regeneration programme in Grønland and Tøyen offers examples to follow.

Sumaya Ali Isse referred to the findings of the YouCount research that used the 5xWhy method to investigate the root causes of why girls do not use outdoor public spaces as much as boys. They found that this was often a result of personal preference of where and what activities young people prefer to do in their free time. Most girls preferred being inside doing crafts or homework or just socialising. Ali Isse problematised the term "vulnerable groups" and warned against using this type of label too widely as this influences our assumptions of certain groups.

Compared to many other cities in the world, Oslo has a much beter starting point with more quality air, greenery , space and basic infrastructure, Angerbak-Jensen pointed out. She believes that it is much more difficult to improve existing areas than the new areas that are being developed. In urban development, it is important to democratise the social spaces between public and private spaces. This means making urban spaces more open for use, thinking about multiple uses, and not

privatising public spaces, so that all groups can access them. This is the case in areas around shopping centers, private housing associations as well as in Bjørvika and Fjordbyen. Agerbak-Jensen believes the latter are examples of areas that have been successful in opening the public urban space to everyone.

Ali Isse on the theme of infrastructure believed the examples from cities in Africa show how young people are making better use of available infrastructure than in Norway. She gave the example of Aktivitetshuset K1 in Tøyen which could be used in more ways and reach a wider range of people. Elias Mokhlis believes that to make spaces safe it's important to develop ownership through participation. He emphasised that people living in the area should both be asked how they use it, what makes them feel safe and how it can be improved, as well as having the opportunity to participate in the design of the space.

The second part of the panel discussion Vibe asked questions about how we can include everyone when different groups have different needs and sometimes conflicting interests in the use of public spaces.

Ali Isse used Tøyen as an example of the need to change an undesirable situation. Meeting places for young people are absolutely necessary but not sufficient for improving safety. To reduce complaints about how spaces are used then it's important to get to know the people behind the perceived problem, said Ali Isse.

Kantanosho pointed out that the voluntary sector has an important role to play in ensuring that more people get to participate in leisure activities, and in organisations in their spare time. One suggestion she has is to organise around their various interests and meet in democratic communities to talk about the disagreements. In the long term it can be conflict-reducing and perhaps find solutions together. Youth who want to hangout also in the evening can find platforms where they can be supported to organise themselves around issues that are important to them. She called for easy access to premises in order to gather.

Agerbak-Jensen believes that for improving a sense of safety is often achieved by improving lighting in all open environments. She explained that it is time to shift the focus in urban development from large, important buildings to the maintenance and better care of what we have already.

The conversation moved to the conflict of interest between children playing and the open drug use in the park. The Urtehagen park in Grønland is near where Ali Isse grew up and she attended the Kindergarten in the park. For her the presence of drug users was normalised and it wasn't till she attended school in another area that her perception changed. For her it was important to remember that drug users and alcoholics are ordinary people who are struggling and they need access to basic needs a safe place with a bed and food.

Kantanasho compared conflict in urban planning with co-production. When interests are in conflict with each other it's important to get feedback about the reasoning behind why one's needs cannot be met. She believes that we can change this by being honest and transparent about how the assessment and decision making process.

Agerbak-Jensen agreed that communication is particularly important in the urban development sector. Conflict resolution is about finding out what everyone can contribute to and what must be treated separately.



Mokhlis highlighted once again that participation is important to present the perspectives of everyone in the local community. Results must be followed up carefully and evaluated so that people are heard and together can contribute to a good result.