



INCLUSIVE, SAFE AND
ACCESSIBLE PUBLIC SPACE
BOOKLET

INCLUSIVE, SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE PUBLIC SPACE BOOKLET



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INTRODUCTION



Inclusive, Safe and Accessible Public Space Booklet is a brief and concise set of tips for designing safe and accessible public spaces through an inclusive process, with a focus on women and girls. The booklet builds on the lessons learnt from the design process of the "City Park" in Pristina, implemented by the UN-Habitat and UN Women joint project "Enhanced Right to City for All in Pristina and Skopje" in close cooperation with the Municipality of Pristina, Kosovo Police and Faculty of Civil Engineering and Architecture/ University of Pristina.

The growing attention to public space is reflected in the 2016-2030 Sustainable Development Agenda notably within the Goal 11 'Build cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.' One of the proposed targets set out (11.7) is "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". The booklet addresses particularly the second indicator (11.7.2) "proportion of women subjected to physical or sexual harassment by perpetrator and place of occurrence (last 12 months)". Access to safe public spaces is a basic human right, however women and girls are often exposed to harassment and other forms of violence, which inhibit their right to public spaces.

The aim of the booklet is to mainstream gender sensitive design in the current practice of public space development. It aims to support various stakeholders, including municipal officials, professional community, civil society organizations and the community in the public space design process. The booklet proposes the *Women's Safety Audit* as a participatory tool to tackle safety and accessibility in public spaces. This booklet addresses five main aspects, including three rather technical fields such as mobility and accessibility, activities and urban furniture; maintenance and an outline of the Safety Audit process, that can help further meeting the 11.7 target.



PRISTINA CITY PARK

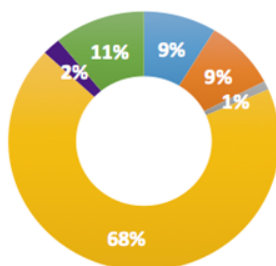
PRISTINA CITY PARK

City park is amongst the few green open public spaces located in the city center. It has an area of 71845 m2, with a dense and diverse greenery.

The City Park was listed among the three most sensitive security hotspots in the city of Pristina in a multi stakeholder workshop. The hotspot identification in the city of Pristina was done through a comprehensive view on the most reported emergencies/ criminal offences/ incivilities in public space, outlined through heat maps and statistics for the year 2017 and beyond by the Municipality of Pristina, Kosovo Police and the local NGO Girls Coding Kosova. The outstanding parameters that supported the hotspot identification were physical quality of roads and pedestrian network, public lighting, stray dogs, noise pollution (presented by the Municipality of Pristina); traffic accidents, but also threats, harassment and attacks in public space (presented by the Kosovo Police); sexual harassment in public space (presented by the NGO Girls Coding Kosova).

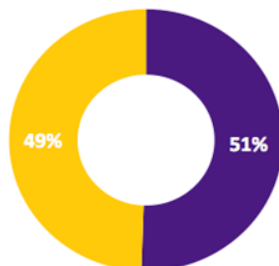
The site selection and project development process included 95 participants. The identification of needs and priorities, and design proposal was developed in three consecutive phases including Women's Safety Audit (43 p), Minecraft Charrette (58) and Concept Design (15).

Institutional representation



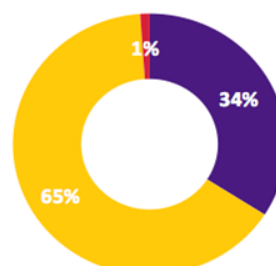
■ Municipality of Pristina
■ Kosovo Police
■ Local Community Unit
■ Civil society
■ UN Women
■ UN Habitat

Gender



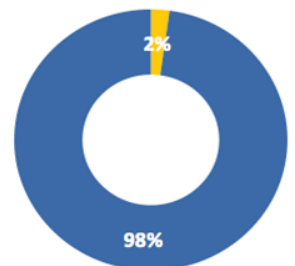
■ Female
■ Male

Age



■ 0-14
■ 15-64
■ 65+

Persons with disabilities



■ Persons with disabilities
■ Others



PRISTINA CITY PARK

Some of the key safety issues that were identified and addressed in the project were:

- Lack of public lighting in the largest part of the park and the surrounding streets. The existing infrastructure was characterized as inadequate lighting, uneven and hampered by trees, walls and other objects;
- Hampered sightlines due to numerous types of barriers and snake roads, abandoned houses, entrapment places, lack of visual access from the surrounding areas, feeling of isolation;
- Lack of adequate signage, small number of entrances and in relatively large distances, difficult evacuation;
- Small number of activities, concentrated activities in two poles, lack of diversity, uninviting park perimeter, underutilized park spaces.

PRINCIPLES FOR INCLUSIVE, SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE PUBLIC SPACE



MOBILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY



Mobility is the ability and ease of moving people and goods around a city. It represents an essential prerequisite for the participation in social lives in urban environments. However, seamless mobility and traveling is based on dwellers' perception of a high personal safety at different urban locations. Accessibility refers to the quality of that travel, including options, costs and risks. Access is dependent on gender, physical ability, socio-economic status, and age.

Our observations showed a number of repetitive informal doings in different public spaces such as destroyed fences to create informal access points, improvised ramps, informal paths enabling direct connection to access points and different parts of the public space, etc. which indicate that people seek direct and easy access to public spaces. However sightlines, feeling of isolation and the ability to interact with different parts of the park from the surrounding environment and within the space are factors that affect the feeling of safety, therefore accessibility to public space. The following sections provide a set of considerations to improve accessibility for all community groups.

Access points

Number

Provide more than one access point to the public space.

While larger number of access points is more difficult to manage for surveillance purposes, it makes the escape route of potential victims (but also perpetrators) less predictable in case of an attack within the public space.

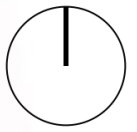
Location

Identify pedestrian routes leading to the public space, and provide the access in the meeting point between the route and the place. Such positioning of entrance provides a straightforward access for the users and presents an opportunity for the place to attract a larger number of people .

¹ Safety and Privacy Perceptions in Public Spaces: An Empirical Study on User Requirements for City Mobility, Julia Offermann-van Heek, Martina Ziefle, Katrin Arning (2014)

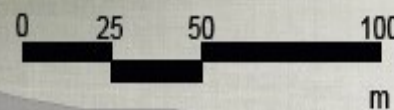
THE CITY PARK

Configuration and Entrances



Main entrances to the park located close to the main crossroads, with an elevated floor to prioritize pedestrian movement.

Secondary entrances located in the meeting point between the pedestrian routes and the park



Appearance

Make the access points appealing, visible and easy to identify. The first encounter has a considerable role in the overall perception that we create for one place and to what extent people frequent them. Also, they constitute an important element for orientation in the neighborhood.

Size

Provide adequate width for daily users, and also emergency vehicles. Selected access points should have an adequate width to enable easy movement of emergency vehicles such as fire-truck, ambulance, etc. These access points shall be defined based on the distribution of the pedestrian network with the adequate width. At least one of the entrances should have easy access to the main streets.

Slope/Leveling

Provide ramps with adequate width and slope, and materials for people physically and visually impaired. In cases when the access points are elevated, ramps (10.00 m/width; 6%/slope; 0.70-0.75 m/railing height) should be provided. It is also important that the routes to the bus stop/s and/or dedicated parking space are integrated elements of the public space design. In all cases, the access points and the routes leading to them should also include tactile paving, to improve accessibility for visually impaired people.


Movement

Network

Develop a consolidated, well-distributed network of pathways that provides alternative routes and enables access to all parts of the space. Such network would create an opportunity to enjoy the space at its full potential and encourage presence of people to avoid empty pockets, which contributes to an improved perception of safety. Also, the network should provide adequate access for emergency vehicles in case of fire or any other emergency.

Slope

Provide a network of trails at the adequate slope that enables vulnerable groups equal opportunities to enjoy the public space. Although this widely depends on the topography of the place, in places with an elevated terrain possibilities should be explored to develop a continuous network of trails to enable the movement of persons with disabilities without any assistance.



Metal fence and bushes alongside the park hamper visual access during all times of the day, increasing the feeling of isolation and refusal.

Parked cars and hanging electrical wires alongside the perimeter, trash bins next to one of the park entrances, contribute to poor perception and makes the park less inviting.

THE CITY PARK

Obstruction factors at the main entrance

Materials

Adequate construction materials that encourage use, are easy to maintain and replace, with minimum impact to the environment. The pavement materials should be non-slippery, create flat surfaces that enable easy movement for more vulnerable user groups ex. children, a parent with a stroller, wheelchair users, elderly. Also, tactile tails should be used to support the mobility of visually impaired people.

Sightlines

Visual access from the surrounding areas

Create visual connection between the public space and the surrounding areas through attractive and inviting views. Clear visual access from the surrounding area contributes to promoting the qualities of the public space, improve the perception of safety and potentially increase the number of users.

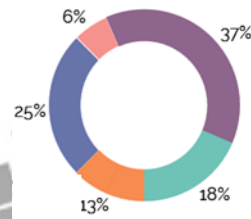
View ahead/ Entrapment places

Enable clear view ahead and around the walking pathways. The composition of urban elements should contribute to legible movement network. Ability to see, be aware of the surrounding and identify what comes next as one walks around the space enables the user to take timely decisions in case of feeling unsafe.

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Proposals for enhanced walking paths network, May 2018

Access percentage of different community categories



	37%	18%	6%	13%	25%
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A well distributed network of trails that enables safe access and movement for all community groups, and adequate access for emergency vehicles



ACTIVITIES



The primary goal of a public space is usage by residents of the city, community or neighborhood in which the space is located. Attractive public spaces offer opportunities for diverse social activities and generate dynamics during different times of the day, different seasons and are inviting to all categories of the society regardless of the gender, age, level of ability or socio-economic status.

(Gender, Age, Level of ability)

Diversify activities that cater for a range of users, including different genders, age groups and level of ability. Provide amenities that encourage different uses and experiences, social interaction and are inviting to unconventional users (challenge cultural barriers). Be aware of the targeted user and the level of comfort provided from the included amenities. Crosscheck by asking yourself who would use the provided amenities: men, women, toddlers, teenagers, adults, elderly, people with disabilities- what disabilities? How comfortable would each of these groups feel?

Daytime/ Night time

Provide activities and undertake the necessary measures to enable use during the different times of the day and night for a range of users. Providing activities that attract the presence of diverse group of people at different times of the day, especially during the evening hours, contributes to an improved feeling of safety.

Season

Provide amenities and spaces that enhance comfort and are adaptable to activities for different seasons. Such opportunities increase the number of users at different seasons, contribute to more self-sustained public spaces and reduce the chances of abandonment.



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Proposals for enhanced functions as per
Minecraft Charrette, May 2018



ACTIVITIES

Permanent/ Temporary

Offer multifunctional spaces that can foster diverse temporary activities. This will contribute to increased opportunities for cultural and economic activities, more dynamic public space, outreach and promotion of its qualities to unconventional users.

Free

Create opportunities for enjoyment for free. Public space is often referred to as 'the poor man's living room', which hints at its particular importance for marginalized groups, but also its ability to foster integration between different socio-economic groups. Improving access to good public spaces for the most vulnerable residents is a powerful tool to improve equity, promote inclusion and combat discrimination.²

² <http://www.urbanoctober.org/downloads/UrbanOctoberBackgroundPaper.pdf>



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Main alley and facilities



URBAN FURNITURE



Urban (street) furniture is a very important elements of all public spaces, which define extensively the level of comfort and use of public spaces. This section provides a set of considerations with regards to selected types of street furniture that contribute to an improved feeling of safety in public spaces.

Lighting

Lighting as key factor to the perception of safety. Lighting should enable clear sightlines for the users during the evening hours; it should be continuous and even.

Barriers

Introduce urban elements that secure the public space. This includes safeguarding pedestrianized areas from appropriation for commercial use, motorized mobility or potential attacks, but also increase safety for public spaces dedicated to small children. While it may be argued that by introducing such barriers results in public spaces “secured from the public rather than for it”, strengthen the feeling of isolation and reduce accessibility physically and mentally, it is important that public space design provide the necessary security for the users without hampering accessibility for different community groups. Some of the urban elements that may serve as barriers whilst also being aesthetically pleasing can be street furniture, trees, planter, flowerpots, and water feature.

Storage

Provide storage space. Such space should serve for storing movable amenities that are dedicated for special uses, seasons, activities etc.

Surveillance

Introduce adequate form of surveillance to increase safety and feeling of safety in public spaces. CCTV cameras and other digitized forms of surveillance may not be adequate for all types of public space or cultural contexts. Other forms of surveillance such as orientation of primary residential spaces towards public spaces, gatekeepers from the café bars or other commercial uses in the area, security guards, organized community members, etc. should be provided in close coordination with the community.

PROPOSALS FOR LIGHTING

LEGEND

DIRECT LIGHTING
BUILDING
ROAD
BORDER



URBAN FURNITURE

Signage

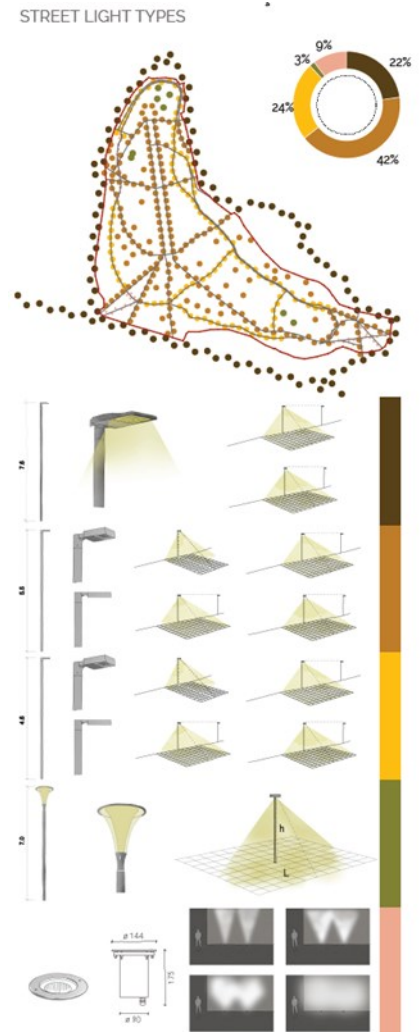
Provide informative and direction signs. that enable the visitor to identify their location, exits, landmarks, emergency points, information office, access ramps for people with disabilities, toilet.

Seating

Seating furniture that foster different kind of uses and experiences. Also, include in the design movable chairs/furniture, which enlarges the choices for the users and increases the opportunities for enjoyment.

Other urban furniture

Also bins, toilets and water taps. Presence of such amenities increases the level of comfort in public spaces



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Proposals for urban furniture, concept design



MAINTENANCE



Maintenance and cleanliness forms one of the main factors that impact the perception of comfort and safety in public spaces, and consequently the level of use. Some of the aspects that impact negatively the perception of a place are vandalism expressed through destruction of amenities, sexist, racial or other discriminatory slogans, uncollected garbage but also abandoned or unfinished construction. Some of the measures and tools that could contribute to more self-sustained public spaces are:


Affordable and easy maintenance. Public space design should include materials and amenities that can be easily maintained and/ or replaced partially or completely.

Strengthened feeling of ownership. Participatory design contributes to strengthened feeling of ownership, raises awareness and responsibility towards the common good.

Partnership. Identify stakeholders and explore possible partnerships during the public space design process that will facilitate smooth project implementation and better public space maintenance.



THE PROCESS



Participatory planning is an essential tool to make urban governance responsive, transparent and accountable. Public participation empowers communities, enables adequate identification of needs and priorities, and contributes to more adaptable and creative public space design.

Women's Safety Audit is a participatory tool that allows women and girls to assess their urban environment and facilitates an informed project development process with safety and well-being for women and girls at the center.

The activity outline of Women's Safety Audit is:

Mapping stakeholders and potential members of the Safety Audit Team. The first step of the Women's Safety Audit (WSA) is to map the possible organizations, institutions and respective representatives that could be members of the Women's Safety Audit Team (referred to here as "the Audit Team"). The mapping will result in a set of representatives from stakeholders, such as the municipality, the police, NGOs in the field of women's rights, sexual harassment, gender-based violence and hate crime, the news media, universities (in particular sociology, architecture and gender departments), digital platforms dedicated to monitoring and reporting harassment and safety issues in the urban landscape, as well as the project team and site-related stakeholders such as employees from educational facilities like schools or daycare centers.

Selecting a site for the WSA walk. As the Audit Team is being established, the site selection – deciding on the area where the WSA walk will be conducted – will take place simultaneously. The site will be selected by examining information and data on urban security issues, safety, occurrence of crime and gender-based violence in public space. The data and information will be retrieved from digital platforms dedicated to monitoring and reporting on harassment and safety issues, provided by the police and other relevant authorities/law enforcement bodies, as well as through input from the municipal public space profile. The site selection process will focus on examining where the information and data provided intersect, in order to determine hot spots where safety and gender equality issues in public space become manifest in the urban environment.

4 UN-Habitat (2008). Women's Safety Audits: What Works and Where?

Women in Cities International, WICI (2011).

Tools for Gathering Information about Women's Safety and Inclusion in Cities: Experiences from the Gender Inclusive Cities Programme.

Umeå Municipality, Safety Audit Walk Manual.

① Humri /
rastave

Number of cases

Trowëria:
HEKURUDHA

Train Station

* Lokacioni
alternativ

Alternative locations

Pikat
në mëthinë

Neighborhood key points

LEGEND

High Risk Area
Safe Area

THE CITY PARK
Safety and perception of safety in Public Spaces

Community Invitation for the
Safety Walk, City Park, April 2018



THE PROCESS

Establishing the audit team and preparing for the audit team meeting. There will be meetings between the Project Team and potential audit team members before the audit team meeting. The establishment of the Audit Team will be conducted while preparations ahead of the first audit team meeting (entire group) take place. Some of the preparatory work includes preparing a presentation on the project itself, the WSA methodology, aim and expected results of the exercise as a whole. Additionally, maps of the site indicating who manages the property/space and, as outlined below in more detail, communications material will also have to be prepared ahead of the audit team meeting.

Outreach activities and communications materials. Communications material will be produced for this purpose and disseminated through the audit team members' respective communications channels (both social media and traditional outlets). The idea is to produce communications material which may be distributed across all channels without further adaptation, for instance, a social media kit promoting the WSA walk which is ready to be implemented by all audit team member organizations. Additional outreach activities involve posters in the area to be audited, inviting the news media to participate in the WSA walk, meetings with key stakeholders (ex. school directors) and to promote the WSA through other media opportunities that audit team member organizations may have, attend and/or organize.

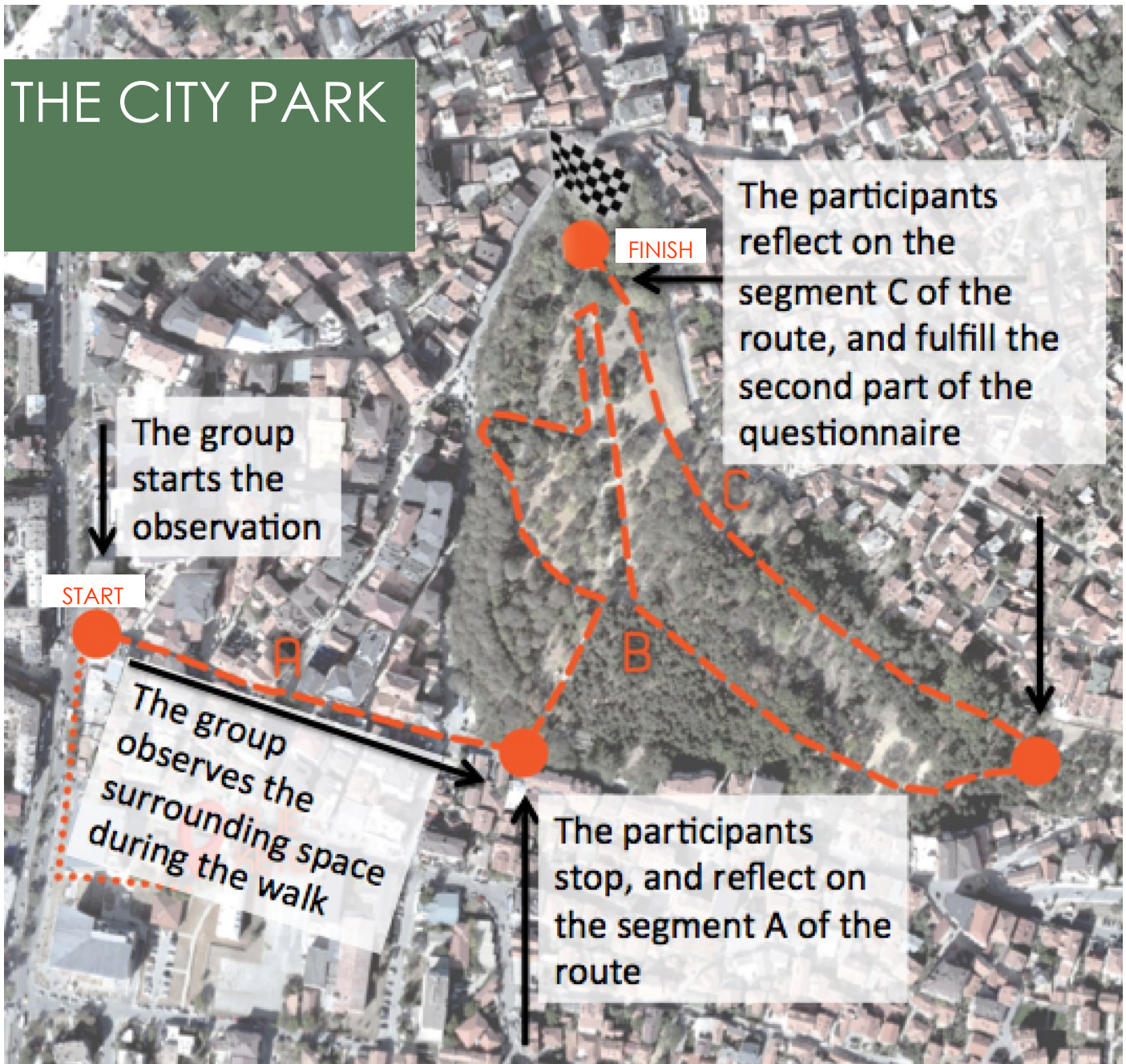
Audit Team Meeting. The aim of the audit team meeting is for the audit team members to become familiar with the project itself, the activity timeline, as well as the WSA concept and how the methodology will be applied within the scope of the present project. Additionally, the aim of this meeting is to define the roles and responsibilities that the audit team members will undertake during the WSA process, including the subsequent outreach and communications activities. During this meeting, the initial list of participants will be drafted, the checklist/questionnaires prepared and the time for the walk(s) decided. Also, the audit team roles and responsibilities to be undertaken during the actual walk will be defined (note-taking, facilitating the discussion etc). In the meeting, the audit team members will receive communication materials with the aim of promoting the WSA activity through their respective communications outlets.

Preparatory meeting with WSA walk participants. The preparatory meeting with the WSA walk participants is intended to provide the participants with the knowledge necessary to conduct the walk and to define the WSA route(s). Ahead of this meeting, a variety of materials will have to be prepared, such as a presentation on the project itself, the WSA aim and methodology, the concept of safety and how safety in public space is related to gender equality. Also, easily understandable maps of the site should be ready ahead of this meeting. In the meeting, the aim and methodology of the WSA, the expected results, and a brief introduction to the concept of safety, security and gender will be given. This presentation will also address how safety may be perceived differently by different social groups (by age, identity and gender etc). There will be an introduction to the site, including on the history of the area.

First, the exercise is done individually and participants receive handouts where they state their answers. As an example, individuals might be prompted to answer the question "Do you feel safe when using public transport?" and rate their answer on the following scale: never, rarely, sometimes, often, or always. Subsequently, the participants share their answers on a large "star" by adding sticky dots. This allows for the participants to see how their answers compare to others and also creates a holistic picture of the group's perception of issues related to safety and use of public space. The results of the latter part of the exercise may then serve as guidance when drafting the route(s). The topics will be arranged and discussed depending on how the responses are clustered. For instance, if public transportation was rated as one of the most burning issues, then looking at any bus stops in the area may be prioritized in the route drafting process. The participants will then familiarize themselves with the site map and decide jointly on the final WSA route(s) and stops to be made during the walk. The facilitators will steer the drafting process to ensure that the route remains within the estimated timeframe for the walk.

Finally, logistical information will be provided, such as group division of participants, time and date for the WSA walk, contact person in audit team, meeting points and so on.

THE CITY PARK





THE PROCESS

Safety Audit Walk. For the WSA walk, several materials will have to be prepared: a questionnaire/individual report card to be filled out during the debriefing; a group checklist to be filled out during the walk; and the WSA evaluation form. The map of the site should be the same as the one introduced during the preparatory meeting. Other materials needed are a camera, clipboards and pens. If the walk is done after dark, it's advisable to bring a flashlight.

The duration of the walk will be approximately two (2) hours. The WSA walk will begin with a meet-up where a brief presentation of the participants and a short introduction to the activity will take place. The WSA checklists will be distributed and the participants will be divided into their groups. Each group will have at least one group checklist to fill out. The group members (both audit team members and WSA participants) will have different roles during the walk, such as photographing, taking notes and reading the questions in the checklist aloud. During the walk, the group members will take notes on the group checklists and photograph relevant positive and negative aspects of the urban environment as pointed out by the participants. Facilitators will also take notes on the participants' opinions and recommendations for improvements to ensure that everything is recorded.

The walk will be followed by a debriefing session with the WSA participants where the findings are discussed and recorded, as well as the notes and checklists gathered. During the debriefing, the WSA participants will fill out an individual report card on their perceptions of the different aspects of the site audited. Finally, there will be an evaluation of the WSA walk that the participants fill out at the end of this activity.

WSA follow-up meeting and report. After the WSA walk, the Audit Team will assemble the information gathered during the WSA exercise (quantitative and qualitative data) and prepare a report on the findings and recommendations from the WSA walk. The information may be assembled by using a report template which has been harmonized with both the group checklist and individual report card. A presentation of the findings and recommendations should be prepared ahead of this meeting. Then, the results are presented to the participants in the WSA follow-up meeting. The aim of the meeting is to share the results, including both findings and recommendations, of the walk with the WSA participants. There will be a presentation and an open discussion with the participants regarding the results. The aim of this meeting is also to collect any additional opinions and discussion points that the participants may have, and which then may be included in the final WSA report. The final report will take into account the WSA methodology, aim, findings, recommendations and discussion topics from the follow-up meeting with the audit team members and WSA participants. This meeting may be open to the public and in particular to the neighborhood as a whole.

⁵ See the Plan International Because I'm a Girl Safety Audit toolkit for an example of what this document may look like.



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