

# **TRANSFORMATIVE LINES**

A mapping approach to explore urban imaginaries and opportunities for socially sustainable change in Beirut, Lebanon.

**Hosn Houssami**

## **CONTENTS:**

### **APPENDICES**

Appendix B - Transformative Lines Toolkit

Appendix C - The Workshop Diary

Appendix D - The Exhibition & Seminar Report

Appendix E - Situated Precedent Studies

Submitted to the School of Art, Architecture and Design of London Metropolitan University in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Doctor of Philosophy.

PhD by Practice

August 2025

Supervised by Dr Bo Tang and Dr Beatrice De Carli.



# TRANSFORMATIVE LINES

THE TOOLKIT

HOSN HOUSSAMI



# TRANSFORMATIVE LINES

THE TOOLKIT

HOSN HOUSSAMI

## Appendix B

**Transformative Lines** is a PhD-by-Project comprising of a 40,000 word **Thesis** and accompanying **Project Portfolio**, submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of London Metropolitan University in August 2025.

This document presents Appendix B of the **Transformative Lines - Project Portfolio**.



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The **Transformative Lines Toolkit** was developed through the collaborative efforts of over 120 child residents of Karantina and Sabra, Beirut, along with their parents or guardians, educators, volunteer organisations, and wider members of the local community.

This toolkit represents a key outcome of four years of doctoral research conducted in Beirut, Lebanon, for the thesis titled *Transformative Lines*. The research was supported by the Vice Chancellor's Scholarship from London Metropolitan University and benefited from the academic supervision of Dr. Bo Tang and Dr. Beatrice De Carli. Special recognition is extended to Professor Maurice Mitchell, Shamoon Patwari, and various staff and colleagues at London Metropolitan University for their valuable support.

## RESEARCH PROJECT FACILITATORS

**CatalyticAction**<sup>1</sup> is an architectural charitable organisation established by Joana Dabaj and Riccardo Luca Conti, grounded in the principles of child and community empowerment through architectural live-build and research initiatives. With a portfolio of over fifty-two design projects conducted internationally, co-production serves as a central methodological approach to fostering the development of equitable, inclusive, and sustainable communities.

The **Association of Islamic Charitable Projects (AICP)**<sup>2</sup> is a global Islamic charity working to spread the values of justice and knowledge among the different fractions of societies. Among its many endeavours, the AICP runs an educational collective, TIES (The Islamic Education Schools), in both America and Lebanon.

P.

**9 GLOSSARY**

**11 INTRODUCTION**

Participatory Research Practices in Architecture  
Co-Productive Urban Development  
Collaborative Design with Non-traditional Demographics  
Research Approaches in Volatile Contexts

**19 THE TRANSFORMATIVE LINES APPROACH**

What is the Transformative Lines Approach?  
Methodological Design  
Approach Overview

**27 STAGE 1: ARCHITECTURAL DATA COLLECTION**

Remote Desk Research  
Architectural Mapping  
Specialist Observation  
Fieldwork Diary  
Physical Line Identification

**37 STAGE 2: COLLABORATIVE DATA COLLECTION**

Partnership Building  
Community Initiatives  
Local Resident Engagement - Interviews  
Participatory Workshops  
Intangible Line Identification

**49 STAGE 3: TRANSFORMATIVE JUNCTIONS**

Intersection Between the Physical & Intangible  
Cross-comparative Analysis Techniques  
Transformative Junction Impacts  
    Shared Urban Imaginaries  
    Social Pattern Discovery  
    Site & Scale Choices

**59 STAGE 4: LINES-BASED URBAN DEVELOPMENT BRIEFS**

Lines to Junctions to Briefs  
Varied Scales of Development  
Transformative Lines Approach - Summary

**65 PRACTICAL APPLICATION - BEIRUT, LEBANON**

Context  
[Architectural Data Collection](#)  
[Collaborative Data Collection](#)  
[Transformative Junctions](#)  
[Lines-based Urban Development Brief](#)

**103 CONCLUSION**

**107 REFERENCES**

## **TRANSFORMATIVE LINES APPROACH**

A participatory research approach utilising Lines as a methodology to develop urban development briefs.

## **ADC**

Architectural Data Collection.

## **CDC**

Collaborative Data Collection.

## **LINES**

Identifiable features of an urban environment.

## **PHYSICAL LINES**

Topographical or structural features that define an urban environment.

## **INTANGIBLE LINES**

Sociocultural and personal features that influence the development of an urban environment.

## **TRANSFORMATIVE JUNCTIONS**

The intersect between physical and intangible lines.

## **PARTICIPATORY PRACTICES**

Approaches that engage individuals or groups - particularly those impacted by the subject of inquiry or intervention - in the process.

## **RESEARCHER POSITIONALITY**

The researcher's social, cultural, and political background, including their identities, perspectives, and experiences, and the ways in which these factors influence their research process and interpretations.

## **NON-TRADITIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS**

A subgroup within a specific research setting that is frequently underrepresented or excluded in standardised participatory processes.

## **VOLATILE LOCALITIES**

A region distinguished by political, social, or economic fluctuations, marked by instability and dynamic conditions.

## **SPECIALIST OBSERVATION**

Observations conducted by individuals with specialised expertise or perspective, with the purpose of collecting data relevant to their specific field of study.

## **SHARED URBAN IMAGINARIES**

refer to shared perceptions, representations, and aspirations that people have of their urban environments.

## **SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY**

Sustainability pertains to the development and preservation of healthy, equitable, and thriving communities for all individuals.

## **SABRA**

A urban settlement in southern Beirut, Lebanon, characterised by dense population and the Sabra Market.

## **KARANTINA**

A urban settlement in northern periphery of Beirut, Lebanon, characterised by large industrial structures and the Port of Beirut.

## **SHATILA**

The Shatila refugee camp is a settlement originally set up for Palestinian refugees in 1949 and is located in the southern Beirut neighbourhood of Sabra.





# **INTRODUCTION**



# TRANSFORMATIVE LINES APPROACH - INTRODUCTION

## THE CURATION OF THE 'TRANSFORMATIVE LINES' TOOLKIT

The **Transformative Lines Toolkit** was initially developed as a comprehensive document outlining the step-by-step approach employed in the *Transformative Lines* doctoral research project. It served as a means for the researcher to formalise and present the processes established throughout the study. As a key physical outcome of the thesis, this toolkit reflects and critically consolidates the research methodology developed for the study but also operates as an exploratory, context-specific prototype that may inform applications in other localities, identify and address lines-based urban development briefs.

This approach was developed over a three-year period as part of the aforementioned *Transformative Lines* doctoral research project. It was created concurrently with the broader study, which included integrated theoretical research, on-site data collection, and subsequent architectural analysis.

While the toolkit is presented as transferable, its development is grounded in the specific socio-spatial and ethical conditions of Beirut. As such, its application elsewhere requires careful contextual adaptation rather than direct replication.

Please note that the complete body of literature informing the development of this toolkit is documented in the *Transformative Lines* thesis by Hosn Houssami (2025).<sup>3</sup>

## WHO IS THIS TOOLKIT FOR?

This toolkit is intended for individuals interested in pursuing research-based urban development initiatives, with an emphasis on map-making as a primary data collection method.

Stakeholders from diverse backgrounds may find the steps outlined in the **Transformative Lines** approach useful for identifying and analysing various Physical or Intangible Lines, that can be mobilised analytically to inform the development of co-productive urban briefs.

While certain aspects of this study involve Architectural Data Collection (ADC), the term 'architectural' refers to the nature of the data, not the professional expertise required to gather it. This toolkit is designed to be accessible while still requiring critical judgement from the researcher, regardless of their professional background or architectural experience.

## HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT?

This toolkit consists of three main sections: the first provides an introduction to the theoretical framework underpinning the **Transformative Lines** approach ('Introduction' and 'The Transformative Lines Approach'); the second offers a comprehensive, step-by-step overview of the **Transformative Lines** approach (Stages 1-4); and the third presents a case study demonstrating the application of the **Transformative Lines** approach in Beirut, Lebanon (Practical Application).

The toolkit's step-by-step approach is a non-linear research technique, allowing various stages to be conducted in different sequences, or even simultaneously. This toolkit may be used to develop urban development briefs or a critically evaluate the success and limitations of existing briefs if stages are addressed in reverse.

It is the responsibility of the researcher applying the toolkit to manage these variations; however, an adaptive methodological framework is proposed to help establish when and where changes to the approach may be necessary in response to contextual conditions.

| INTRODUCTION /<br>TTLA                                                                                     | STAGE 1:<br>ARCHITECTURAL DATA<br>COLLECTION                                      | STAGE 2:<br>COLLABORATIVE DATA<br>COLLECTION                                      | STAGE 3:<br>TRANSFORMATIVE<br>JUCTIONS                            | STAGE 4: LINES-BASED<br>URBAN DEVELOPMENT<br>BRIEF                                                             | PRACTICAL<br>APPLICATION                                                                                                                |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Set up of Transformative Lines approach framework, its benefits, and the contexts in which it may be used. | Guide to pursuing Architectural Data Collection (ADC) through various techniques. | Guide to pursuing Collaborative Data Collection (CDC) through various techniques. | Guide to crosscomparative analysis of outcomes of Stages 1 and 2. | The cumulative output of Stage 1 to 3. How data derived from these may be used to for urban development ideas. | A case-study application of described stages to present greater clarity on the Transformative Lines approach and how it may be applied. |



# PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH PRACTICES IN ARCHITECTURE

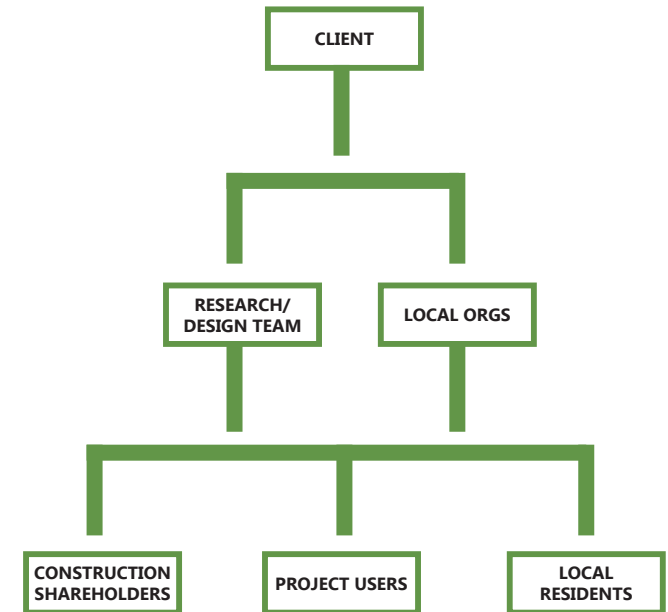
Participatory development and design are frequently perceived as strategies to foster a more equitable urban environment, as they move away from conventional architectural methods *'which involves the client to the extent they are approving each project phase, but the end-user is not actively involved [...]'* Participatory design is the active involvement of the end-user.' (Hurst, 2000:4)<sup>4</sup>.

When examining this at the scale of city development, it is challenging to regard a process as equitable if entire demographics of residents are excluded. This toolkit is explicitly structured to enable the inclusion of various demographics, regardless of age, gender, or ability.

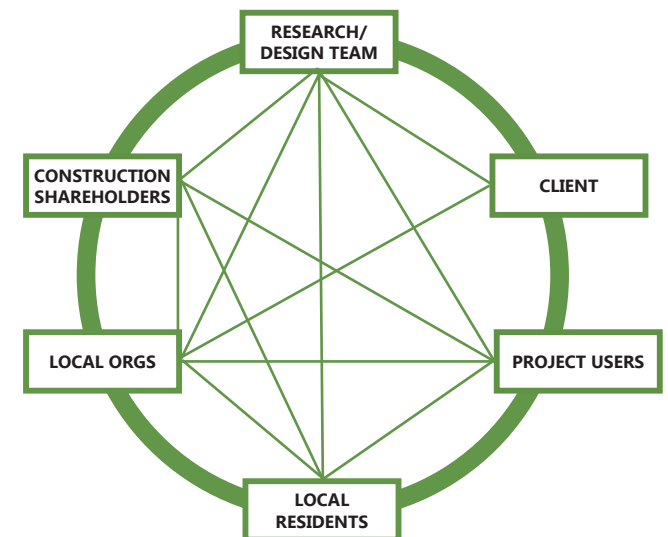
This toolkit is founded on the principles of inclusive architectural practice, within which participation operates as both a methodological and ethical imperative. Participatory research practices in architecture are far from a new research strategy and have been successfully implemented across the globe to develop projects that accurately address the needs of their users.

It is the responsibility of the researcher - often viewed as an 'outsider' - to frame inquiries in a manner that facilitates opportunities for locals to contribute. Local participants must be actively engaged in the development process, as it is insufficient for residents to merely endorse an interventionist proposal.

The people, their rituals, and customs must be involved within the whole process to establish a genuinely participatory framework. This engagement should begin with an invitation to participate: *'invitation and imaginary are fundamentally about belonging and inclusion'*, and it is the *'urban designers [whom] shape the invitations to use'* (Berney, 2023:470)<sup>5</sup>.



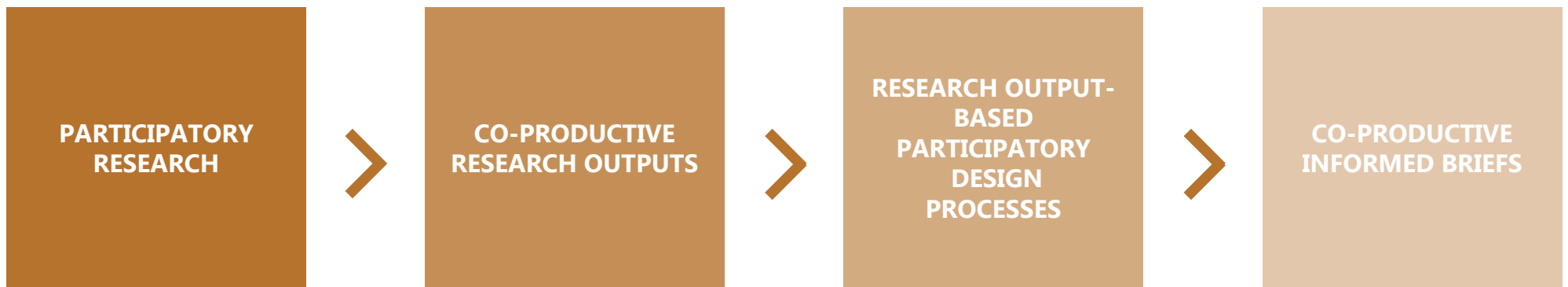
## TOP-DOWN VS PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH



# Co-PRODUCTIVE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

While traditional architectural 'briefs' often refer to the development of a physical built structure, this toolkit has been designed to accommodate a variety of intentions and outputs.

The core principle is that urban development briefs - whether related to structural or cultural projects - are inherently co-productive and emerge through participatory processes. In some contexts, co-production activities themselves can form briefs which operate as mechanisms to foster social change and support non-physical urban development.



# COLLABORATIVE DESIGN WITH NON-TRADITIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

## ‘A TRULY FUNCTIONAL CITY SERVES ALL’

As previously noted, inclusivity was a primary consideration in the methodological design of both the precursor thesis and this subsequent toolkit. A city not designed for all its inhabitants is inherently limited in its potential for sustainable development; a truly functional city must actively engage all members of its community.

It is important to recognise that, in traditional city planning processes, it is uncommon for government entities to facilitate collaborative design initiatives, especially those that intentionally include ‘non-traditional’ demographic groups. This absence is not only procedural but structural, reflecting broader exclusions embedded within urban governance frameworks. The toolkit therefore positions collaborative design as an intervention into these exclusions, rather than a supplementary method.

## WHAT IS MEANT BY ‘NON-TRADITIONAL’ DEMOGRAPHICS?

For the purposes of this toolkit, ‘non-traditional’ demographics refer to groups that are often marginalised within urban development contexts. This includes children, older adults, individuals with diverse physical and mental abilities, and those from minority ethnic, religious, or social backgrounds.

The term ‘non-traditional’ does not imply marginality as an inherent condition but rather highlights the ways in which planning systems have historically excluded these groups from decision-making processes. As such, their inclusion within this toolkit is framed as analytically and methodologically necessary, rather than representational.

## EXEMPLAR - CHILDREN AS A NON-TRADITIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC

While the discourse on children’s participation is longstanding, it is increasingly recognised within contemporary participatory design literature and practice. The practical application of this toolkit emphasised children as a representative group of non-traditional demographics in the specific context of urban development initiatives in Beirut, Lebanon.

Research focusing on youth participation in Beirut has identified particular challenges. Specifically, researchers have noted that ‘*in communities that are patriarchal, cultural norms may prevent youth from speaking vocally in front of adults especially when they disagree.*’ (Afifi, Makhoul, El Hajj & Nakkash, 2011:515).<sup>6</sup>

Involving children in decisions that affect them extends beyond normative aspirations; it is an international obligation. According to ‘Article 12 – Right to be Heard; Convention on the Rights of the Child’, it details that that ‘*The views expressed by children [...] should be considered in decision-making [...] these processes are usually called participation [...] the concept of participation emphasizes that including children should not only be a momentary act, but the starting point for an intense exchange between children and adults on the development of policies, programmes and measures in all relevant contexts of children’s lives.*’ (United Nations, 2009)<sup>7</sup>. Beyond obligation, research demonstrates that children contribute unique spatial knowledge, alternative readings of urban environments, and critical insights often overlooked in adult-led processes. Their inclusion therefore strengthens—not weakens—the analytical and design outcomes of participatory urban research.

This toolkit aims to establish techniques which, through their successful use with child-based focus groups, can be cautiously adapted with other non-traditional demographics while acknowledging contextual limitations.

# RESEARCH APPROACHES IN VOLATILE CONTEXTS

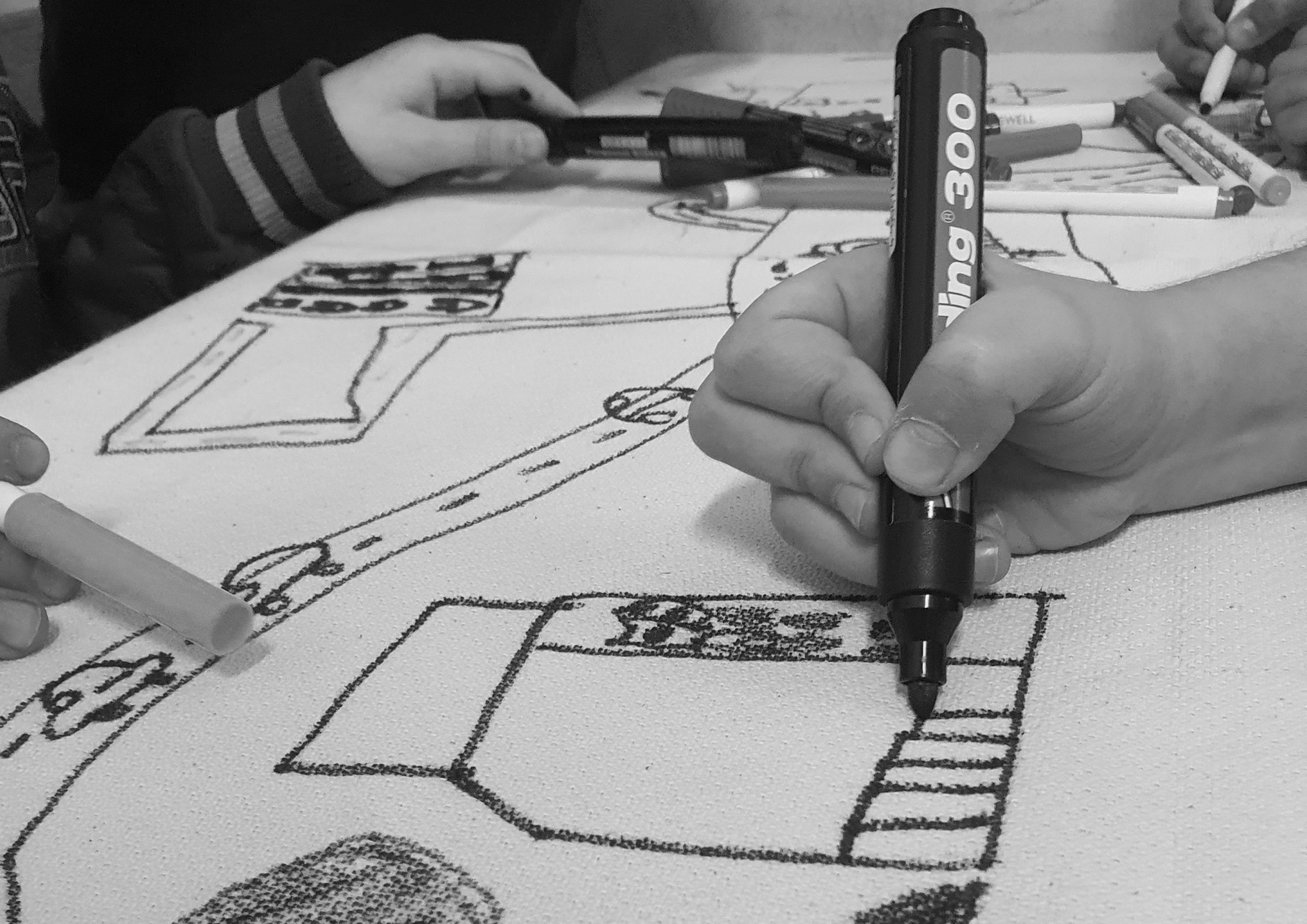
Research conducted within stable environments cannot always be guaranteed. In response to conditions of political instability, climate pressures, and localised tensions, a dynamic relationship between research design and data collection is essential. This toolkit was developed using an adaptive methodological approach, allowing for flexibility in response to unforeseen circumstances beyond the researcher's control.

By employing this adaptive approach, the toolkit seeks to reflect the realities of site-based research practice, where adjustments are often necessary for continuity rather than optimisation.

Conducting site-based research may present various challenges, such as disruptions to planned data collection. When designing research protocols and considering health and safety factors, it is important to embed adaptive contingencies within the methodological design to address these possibilities. Illustrative examples of these adaptive responses are provided in the upcoming 'Practical Application' section.

*'There are field conditions in which ethical field research is not possible. Even with research practices and protocols tailored to specific field conditions, inevitably field researchers rely on their judgment in interpreting those norms.'* (Wood, 2006)<sup>8</sup>

| PRE-FIELDWORK                                                                       | DURING FIELDWORK                                                                     | INCASE OF VOLATILE SITUATION                                                          | POST-FIELDWORK                                                                        |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |  |
| Produce extensive ethics and health and safety reports.                             | Discuss with on-site facilitator contingency plans.                                  | Cancel data collection tasks that may pose risk, including surveying and workshops.   | Consider the ethical implications of using outputs.                                   |
| Ensure organisation and home-government is aware of presence.                       | Constantly update self with local news and events.                                   | Contact home embassy to enquire about safety options.                                 | Retain contact with facilitators and participants.                                    |
| Form a contingency travel plan in case of volatile event.                           | Be adaptable for participant safety.                                                 | Update participants as to reason of cessation of activities.                          | Observe ethical practices in analysis of retained outputs.                            |





## **THE TRANSFORMATIVE LINES APPROACH**

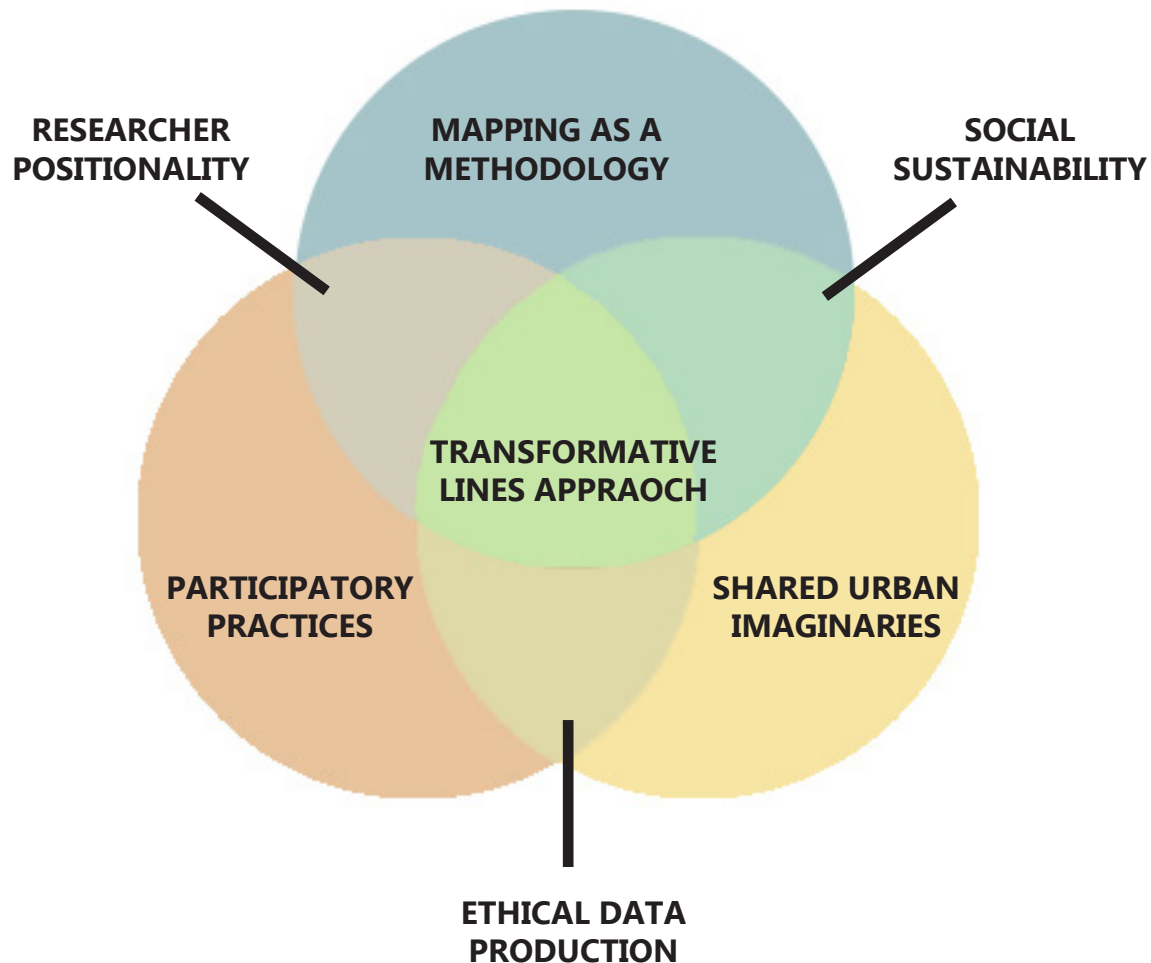
# WHAT IS THE TRANSFORMATIVE LINES APPROACH?

The **Transformative Lines** approach is a research and development framework that utilises the concept of 'lines' as analytical data categories, derived from both architectural and collaborative data collection techniques.

Within this framework, 'Lines' refer to the classification of various elements that constitute cities, both physical and intangible. When these elements are cross analysed, they are used to analyse relationships between urban imaginaries and inform urban development strategies.

The concept of the 'Urban Imaginary' is often associated with Kevin Lynch, who uses the term 'image-making' when discussing the elements which form the '*image of the city[:]* Paths, Edges, Districts, Nodes, and Landmarks' (Lynch, 1960)<sup>9</sup>. Lynch also employs the term 'Lines' to describe these elements collectively.

This concept is further developed through Tim Ingold's perspectives on 'Lines,' emphasising their pervasive presence in human activity. Ingold highlights '*that lines are everywhere. [...] [and that they] subsume all these aspects of everyday human activity and, in so doing, brings them together into a single field of inquiry*' (Ingold, 2016:1)<sup>10</sup>.



The Transformative Lines approach as a framework was developed to address three primary research areas:

**1) MAPPING AS A RESEARCH FRAMEWORK**

Mapping and map-making are positioned as a methodological framework through which both architectural researchers and local participants actively collaborate to uncover shared urban imaginaries, contributing to the formulation of socially sustainable development.

**2) PARTICIPATORY PRACTICES IN VOLATILE LOCALITIES**

Examining how participatory processes can be meaningfully facilitated with underrepresented (non-traditional) demographics in volatile and contextually constrained localities

**3) URBAN IMAGINARIES AND SOCIALLY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

The development of a framework that is adaptable to different participant groups, ensuring that the data produced critically reflects and analyses the shared urban imaginaries emerging through the research process.

# METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN

Mapping and map-making play key methodological roles within this toolkit. Firstly, they function as primary data collection techniques. Additionally, they serve as vehicles to represent various collected data derived from surveys, interviews, and participatory workshops.

Moreover, they act as analytical mechanisms, allowing for the visual identification of points of significant interest—defined within this research as Transformative Junctions, which operate as analytical devices rather than purely emergent observations.

This toolkit's framework emphasises the generating of qualitative data... which is not only descriptive but interpretive, enabling the analysis of spatial and social relationships embedded within the collected material.

## DUAL DATA COLLECTION STRATEGY

This Toolkit employs a dual strategy to data collection: Architectural Data Collection and Collaborative Data Collection.

Architectural Data Collection (ADC) involves methods such as architectural surveys, geographic line mapping, photography, and ethnographic observations.

In contrast, Collaborative Data Collection (CDC) encompasses interviews, participatory mapping, architecture-themed workshops, and, depending on the project or site, case studies.

## ARCHITECTURAL DATA COLLECTION (ADC)

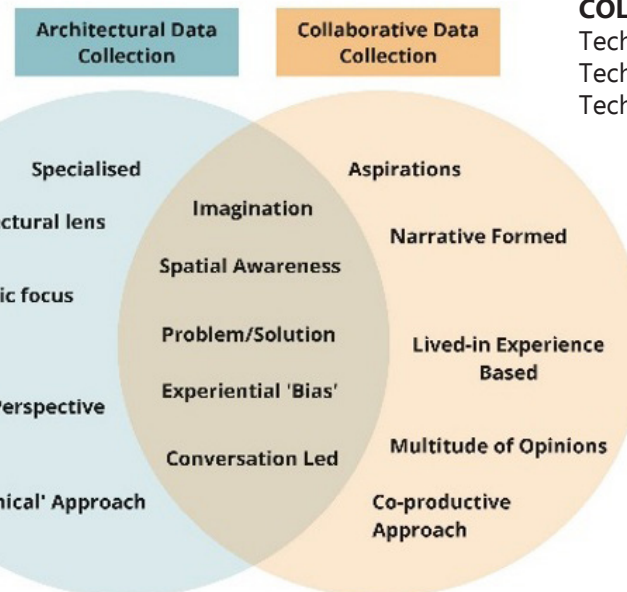
Architectural Data Collection refers to data obtained independently by the researcher, typically without direct input from research stakeholders. This data is primarily generated through observation, surveying, and analysis using traditional architectural practices, including techniques such as architectural surveys, geographic line mapping, photography, and ethnographic observation.

## COLLABORATIVE DATA COLLECTION (CDC)

Collaborative Data Collection encompasses two primary methods: interviews and workshops. As indicated by the category name, the workshops are designed to be participatory and collaborative, with a specific focus on engaging local communities. While interviews facilitate the verbal expression of community members' experiences, challenges, and aspirations, they do not inherently generate visual representations of these insights. The workshops are promoted to enable community members to explore these concepts through creative activities, producing visual data that can be analysed using different methodologies compared to verbal data.

### ARCHITECTURAL DATA COLLECTION:

Technique 1: Desk Research  
Technique 2: Mapping  
Technique 3: Observation



### COLLABORATIVE DATA COLLECTION:

Technique 1: Partnerships  
Technique 2: Interviews  
Technique 3: Participatory Workshops

The analytical strength of the **Transformative Lines** approach lies in the intersection of these two modes of data. Rather than operating independently, ADC. and CDC are brought into dialogue through cross-analysis, enabling the identification of Transformative Junctions as critical points of spatial and social significance.

# APPROACH OVERVIEW

The **Transformative Lines** approach, as detailed in this toolkit, when implemented through participatory practices, is intended to generate actionable briefs while remaining critically aware of the limitations of their implementation.

This toolkit should be understood as an analogous documentation of the research methodologies established within the *Transformative Lines* thesis, presented here as a prototype framework rather than a universally validated model. The **Transformative Lines** approach begins with literary desk research, proceeds through lines-based data collection, and culminates in the steps toward lines-based urban development briefs.

## THE TRANSFORMATIVE LINES APPROACH STAGES

There are four stages to the **Transformative Lines** approach:

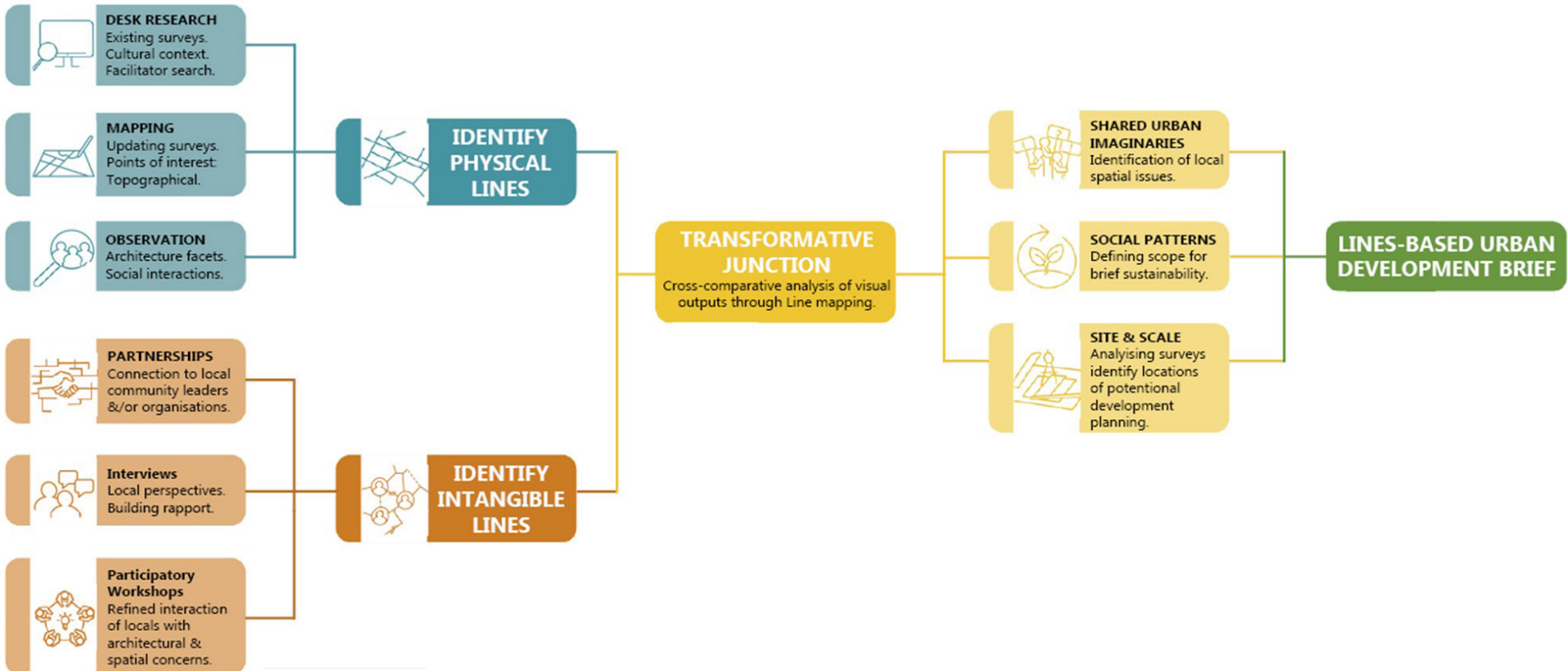
**STAGE 1: Architectural Data Collection, leading to the discovery of Physical Lines.**

**STAGE 2: Collaborative Data Collection, leading to the discovery of Intangible Lines.**

**STAGE 3: Transformative Junctions, a cross-comparative analysis of Stage 1 and 2 outputs, which analytically identifies key points of intersection between Physical and Intangible Lines.**

**STAGE 4: Lines-Based Urban Development Brief, designed through analysis derived from Stage 3.**

## ARCHITECTURAL DATA COLLECTION



## COLLABORATIVE DATA COLLECTION





## **STAGE 1: ARCHITECTURAL DATA COLLECTION**



# ARCHITECTURAL DATA COLLECTION

Architectural Data Collection, as outlined within this Toolkit, pertains to data obtained through established architectural methodologies, including observation, surveying, and analysis. This process yields deliverables such as architectural surveys, geographic line mapping, photography, and ethnographic observations.

## ARCHITECTURAL DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

**ADC TECHNIQUE 1: Remote Desk Research**

**ADC TECHNIQUE 2: Architectural Mapping**

**ADC TECHNIQUE 3: Specialist Observation**

**ADC TECHNIQUE 4: Fieldwork Diary**

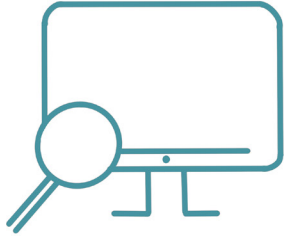
## PHYSICAL LINES IDENTIFICATION

The data collected during Stage 1 supports the identification of the Physical Lines that define a city. These lines may include naturally occurring topographical features such as coastlines, contours, forests, rivers, and deserts. However, it is important to recognise that natural and human-made features are often interconnected.

Effectively mapping the physical characteristics of a landscape involves considering both natural features and human modifications: *'A fundamental skill, central to an architect's job description, is the ability to fit design proposals to the dynamic physical and cultural context... characterized as a slowly changing topography'* (Mitchell & Tang, 2017:3)<sup>11</sup>.

Consequently, the data generated through this stage also facilitates identifying human-made lines, such as routes, structures, and boundaries, offering a comprehensive understanding of both natural and built environment conditions.

### ADC TECHNIQUE 1: REMOTE DESK RESEARCH

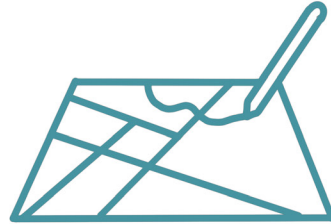


**METHOD:**  
Digital or analogue research:  
context, theme, partners.

**TIME-LINE:**  
Pre-Fieldwork

**OBJECTIVE:**  
To establish a fundamental  
understanding of contextual  
factors, thereby enabling a  
more nuanced and ethically  
informed approach to  
research.

### ADC TECHNIQUE 2: ARCHITECTURAL MAPPING



**METHOD:**  
Digital or hand-drawn  
mapping.

**TIME-LINE:**  
During Fieldwork

**OBJECTIVE:**  
To create an updated set of  
architectural maps to aid  
in the discovery of Physical  
Lines.

### ADC TECHNIQUE 3: SPECIALIST OBSERVATION



**METHOD:**  
Note taking, sketching,  
mapping.

**TIME-LINE:**  
During Fieldwork

**OBJECTIVE:**  
To identify context specific  
interactions with the natural  
or built environment.

### ADC TECHNIQUE 4: FIELDWORK DIARY



**METHOD:**  
Digital or analogue  
journaling.

**TIME-LINE:**  
During Fieldwork

**OBJECTIVE:**  
To continuously review  
positionality and reflect on  
ethical considerations.



### ADC RESULT: PHYSICAL LINES IDENTIFICATION

**NATURAL  
PHYSICAL LINES**

**HUMAN-MADE  
PHYSICAL LINES**

# REMOTE DESK RESEARCH

## WHAT IS REMOTE DESK RESEARCH?

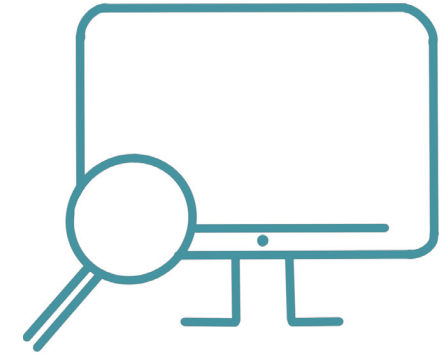
Remote desk research refers to the process of gathering data prior to and throughout active fieldwork, often achieved through online or literary research. This is especially important when working in localities where the researcher has limited prior familiarity.

It is highly recommended that this process includes architectural, social, and contextual data to help acquaint the researcher with a new place of study.

It is also recommended that researchers seek literature produced by local theorists and practitioners. Furthermore, establishing partnerships with local facilitators may help the researcher to integrate more effectively within the community.

### FORMS OF REMOTE DESK RESEARCH DATA:

- Existing Maps
- Historical Timelines
- Key Demographic Information
- Significant Architectural or Cultural Literature
- List of Potential Organisations or Key Stakeholders on Site
- Emergency Processes when Considering Volatile Contexts



### STEP 1 COLLECT ARCHITECTURAL DATA:

Compile of existing maps, known changes to topography and the architectural landscape, local architectural regulations, and local construction techniques.

### STEP 2 COLLECT SOCIO-CULTURAL DATA:

Compile of local history, known socially significant issues (assess local news channels while acknowledging potential biases), and a focus on locally produced literature.

### STEP 3 BUILD A NETWORK:

Identify and establish connections with local researchers, practitioners, organisations, and local governments.

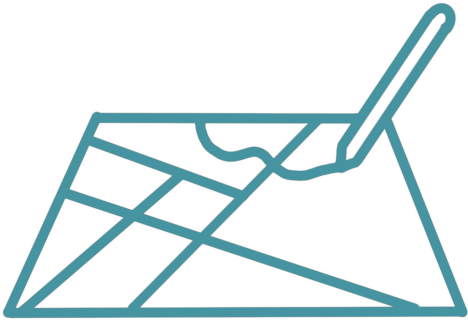
### STEP 4 FORM AN ADAPTABLE FIELDWORK PLAN:

Consider realistic timelines, the duration required for data collection, and contingencies for unexpected events.

### STEP 5 FOR VOLATILE CONTEXTS:

Check home-government rulings on travel. Prepare a comprehensive health and safety report detailing emergency contact details. Review literature on ethical practices in such locations.

# ARCHITECTURAL MAPPING

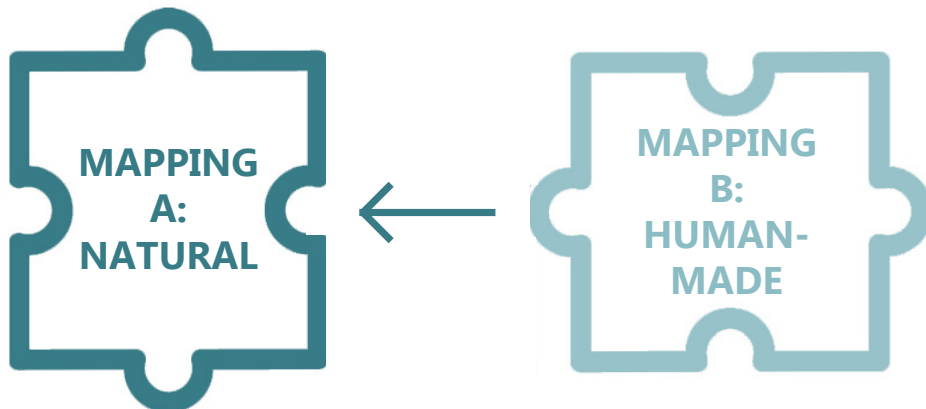


## WHAT IS ARCHITECTURAL MAPPING?

Architectural mapping encompasses the integration of both cartographic and structural elements within a geographic context. Importantly, this form of mapping is not restricted to professionally trained architects, aligning with the toolkit's participatory approach.

Such maps can be created in various formats, including hand-drawn, digital, or sketch maps. There is no prescribed visual style, allowing for flexibility and accessibility across diverse skill levels.

The primary consideration is the consistent documentation of both natural and human-made elements. These may be mapped separately or in combination. It is these 'features' that will become known as the Physical Lines.



### **MAPPING A** NATURAL LANDSCAPE FEATURES/LINES:

Mapping of cartographic features, including contours, rivers, coastlines, trees, grasslands, desert terrain, marshes, rock formations, flora, and lakes or ponds.

### **MAPPING B** HUMAN-MADE LANDSCAPE FEATURES/LINES:

Mapping of built and structural features, including roads, pavements, houses, buildings, physical barriers, staircases and ramps, street furniture (e.g., lighting, electrical boxes, and signage), urban amenities, and infrastructure.

# SPECIALIST OBSERVATION

## WHAT IS SPECIALIST OBSERVATION?

As with 'architectural mapping', which is not limited to professional expertise, 'specialist observations' pertain to the nature of the observation itself rather than the observer.

Specialist observation involves the ethnographic study of how people interact with their urban environments, with an emphasis on the specific analytical objectives of the research.

### EXAMPLES:

- a) Observing where and how children play in order to inform the development of a play-space design brief.
- b) Assessing the ease with which individuals can navigate pedestrian routes, including pavements, crossings, stairs, and ramps, for a project focused on pedestrian-friendly urban redesign.

## ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF SPECIALIST OBSERVATION

Observation can serve as a valuable supplementary data source, providing additional context that strengthens analytical interpretation.

Maps produced and notes derived from specialist observations can complement each other during analysis, with each informing the interpretation of the other. Observation notes may offer further insights into interpreting the mappings, while the mappings aid in spatially organising the observation notes.

It is important to consider the ethical considerations associated with observation. Often, observations are conducted without direct interaction and may be non-intrusive, but they can also be conducted without explicit consent. While observing individuals in public spaces is generally justifiable, recording information obtained through such observations may raise ethical concerns.

**TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICAL STANDARDS, THE FOLLOWING PRECAUTIONS SHOULD BE OBSERVED WHEN COLLECTING OBSERVATIONAL DATA WITHOUT EXPLICIT CONSENT:**

- A)** Anonymisation: Ensuring the privacy of individuals by removing personally identifiable information.
- B)** Generalisation: Limiting specific details to prevent the promotion of false biases and the identification of sensitive characteristics.
- C)** Research Justification: Clearly establishing a clear relationship between observations and the research objectives (e.g., observing shop owners to study local economic activity).



***“OBSERVATIONS ARE USEFUL TO RESEARCHERS WHO WISH TO UNDERSTAND MORE ABOUT THE SITUATION UNDER STUDY. THE FIELD NOTES THAT SUMMARIZE OBSERVATIONS CAN PROVIDE RICH DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF THE SITUATION OBSERVED AND HELP THE RESEARCHER TO LATER REMEMBER SPECIFICS ABOUT WHAT WAS OBSERVED” (KAWULICH, 2012).<sup>12</sup>***



# FIELDWORK DIARY

## WHAT IS A FIELDWORK DIARY?

A fieldwork diary is a valuable tool used to document observations, experiences, and reflections. While not always intended for publication, they serve as an important resource for assessing the researcher's positionality, throughout the course of fieldwork.

*'Utilising diary entries, proves to be a valuable tool for qualitative researchers to comprehend and address the challenges they might encounter', which gives the opportunity to reflect on personal practices, and allowed for ease in 'reflecting on experiences and addressing potential emotional, methodological, and ethical challenges that may arise' (Mishra & Gupta, 2024:1295)<sup>13</sup>.*

This may be utilised daily on workdays, with summaries provided at various stages, or as needed on a sporadic basis.

### TYPES OF FIELDWORK DIARY ENTRIES

| A)                                                                          | B)                                                                                           | C)                                                            | D)                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| DAY-TO-DAY OCCURRENCES<br>AND THOUGHT.<br><br>QUICK PERSONAL<br>REFLECTIONS | DETAILED PROGRAMME<br>DESCRIPTIONS:<br>TIME, DATE, ACTIVITY,<br>SETTING AND<br>OBSERVATIONS. | NON-WRITTEN DESCRIPTIVE<br>ELEMENTS: SKETCHES AND<br>DIAGRAMS | ARTICULATE FIELDWORK<br>SUMMARIES: REFLECTING<br>ON METHODOLOGY, ETHICS,<br>PROGRAMME. |



# PHYSICAL LINE IDENTIFICATION

## HOW DO THESE ARCHITECTURAL DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES RESULT IN PHYSICAL LINE IDENTIFICATION?

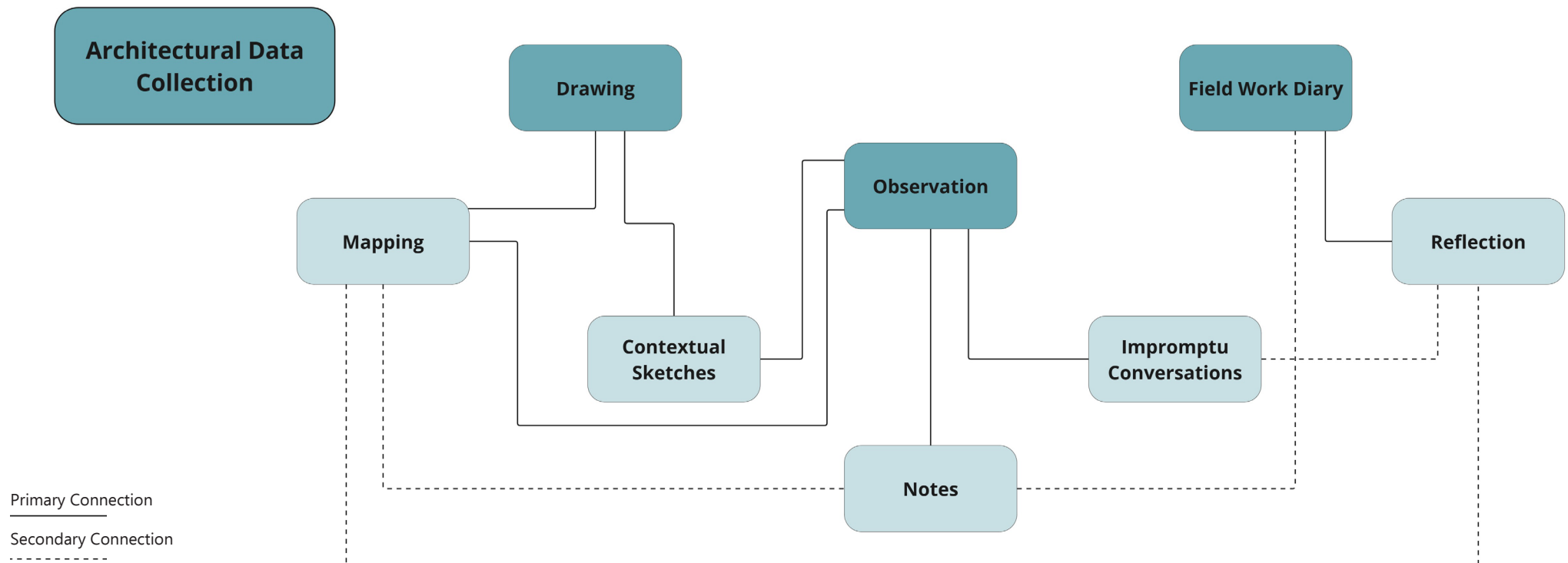
When synthesised, the data collected through various ADC techniques, reveals 'Lines' within a specific location.

Importantly, these are not strictly linear, rather, the term 'line' functions as an analytical category representing elements within urban composition.

Different lines may be labelled according to the elements they represent, with the naming conventions left to the discretion of the researcher. It is recommended, however, that line names be simple and easily understandable by the majority.

### EXAMPLES:

- Mapping all green spaces within a location may be designated as a 'Green Line'.
- Mapping areas where people gather socially may be designated as a 'Social Space Line'.



## Architectural Data Collection - Map-Making

### Outcome

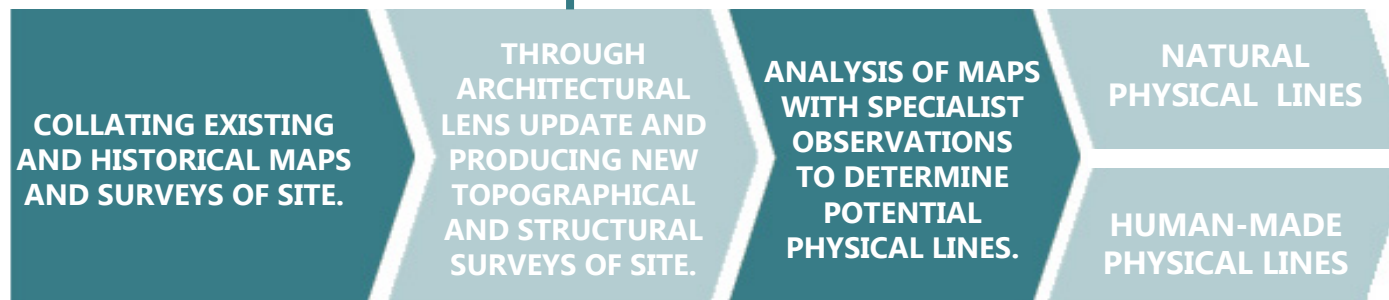
- To produce a collection of architectural surveys and maps defined by different themes, at multiple scales.
- To assess the points of importance as viewed by external researcher/designer.
- To test various mapping methodologies
- To refine list of mapping styles to those which prove more viable for location when compared to the Participatory Mapping

### Potential Surveys to Produce (type)

- Physical
- Topographical
- Road/Lines
- Climate
- Thematic
- Economic/Social
- Time Zone
- Alternative scale maps
- Symbolic maps
- Data flow maps- Physical
- Topographical
- Road/Lines
- Climate

### Potential Map production methods:

- Traditional hand drawn surveys
- Digital CAD 2d/3d OS
- Satellite location reading
- Narrative recording
- Illustrative representations
- Photography/Filmography
- Physical models





## **STAGE 2: COLLABORATIVE DATA COLLECTION**

# COLLABORATIVE DATA COLLECTION

Stage 2 of the **Transformative Lines** approach constitutes the Collaborative Data Collection (CDC) phase. Whereas Architectural Data Collection (ADC) employs methods such as mapping, drawings, and observation, CDC primarily involves participatory methods, namely interviews and workshops.

Additionally, two preparatory techniques are recommended prior to conducting interviews and workshops. The first involves establishing partnerships with local organisations to serve as facilitators, supporting access to communities, contextual understanding, and local knowledge exchange. The second entails engaging in local initiatives led by these partner organisations to facilitate more meaningful and context-sensitive integration within the community. Participation in such activities may also support the development of trust, enhance understanding of local dynamics, and inform the design of participatory activities appropriate to the research context.

## COLLABORATIVE DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

**CDC TECHNIQUE 1: Partnership Building**

**CDC TECHNIQUE 2: Community Initiatives**

**CDC TECHNIQUE 3: Local Resident Engagement - Interviews**

**CDC TECHNIQUE 4: Participatory Workshops**

## INTANGIBLE LINES IDENTIFICATION

The data collected during Stage 2 enables the identification of Intangible Lines that characterise a city.

### What are Intangible Lines?

Unlike Physical Lines, which relate to the material environment, Intangible Lines pertain to the socio-cultural dimensions of a community. Their identification depends on lived experience and situated knowledge, reinforcing the importance of participatory engagement. The CDC process is essential in this regard, as engaging with local residents at various levels enables the gathering of valuable data related to these lived experiences.

There are two categories of Intangible Lines: explicit and implicit. Explicit Intangible Lines refer to socio-cultural dimensions of community composition that can be identified as spatially and socially significant concerns through architectural observation; however, they still require participatory input to fully understand the nuances shaping their meaning, experience, and impact. In contrast, implicit Intangible Lines are those that depend entirely on participatory engagement with local communities to identify both their existence and significance, as they are not readily observable through architectural analysis alone.

**CDC TECHNIQUE 1:  
PARTNERSHIP BUILDING**



**METHOD:**  
Remote and Face-to-Face  
communication.

**TIME-LINE:**  
Pre and During Fieldwork

**OBJECTIVE:**  
To create mutually beneficial  
partnerships with local  
organisations. Sharing of  
information; context vs skill.  
Facilitation opportunities.

**CDC TECHNIQUE 2:  
COMMUNITY INITIATIVES**



**METHOD:**  
Researcher Participation.

**TIME-LINE:**  
During Fieldwork

**OBJECTIVE:**  
To gain a better  
understanding of locals  
and existing sources of  
concern as addressed by  
the initiative. Create trust  
between the researcher and  
locals.

**CDC TECHNIQUE 3:  
LOCAL RESIDENT  
ENGAGEMENT -  
INTERVIEWS**



**METHOD:**  
Face-to-Face communication.

**TIME-LINE:**  
During Fieldwork

**OBJECTIVE:**  
To gain direct perspectives  
from locals helping to define  
Intangible Lines.

**CDC TECHNIQUE 4:  
PARTICIPATORY  
WORKSHOPS**



**METHOD:**  
Face-to-Face facilitation.

**TIME-LINE:**  
During Fieldwork

**OBJECTIVE:**  
To promote architecture-  
forward activities with locals  
to help identify shared urban  
imaginaries. Additional offer  
opportunity for participatory  
design.



**CDC RESULT: INTANGIBLE LINES IDENTIFICATION**

**EXPLICIT  
INTANGIBLE LINES**

**IMPLICIT  
INTANGIBLE LINES**

# PARTNERSHIP BUILDING

## WHAT IS PARTNERSHIP BUILDING?

Partnership building is a key component of the CDC process, building upon the results obtained from the initial ADC stage, particularly remote desk research. This stage involves identifying prospective project stakeholders, including organisations, researchers, local government entities, or other relevant parties who may facilitate access to the community and contribute local knowledge, contextual understanding, or logistical support.

While it is possible to implement other CDC techniques without a formal partnership or facilitator, it is recommended that researchers establish at least an informal network, particularly when working in unfamiliar contexts. Such networks may support information exchange, enhance contextual understanding, and provide support should ethical, logistical, or contextual challenges emerge during fieldwork.



## PARTNERSHIP BUILDING METHOD

- STEP 1** Prepare a brief outlining why this specific body would be an ideal partner for the project, including how their expertise, local knowledge, or community relationships align with the research objectives.
- STEP 2** Reach out to the potential partner to present and discuss the partnership opportunity, clearly outlining the proposed aims, expectations, and potential contributions of the collaboration.
- STEP 3** Develop a clear understanding of the potential partner's areas of interest, and capabilities, limitations, and existing community relationships.
- STEP 4** Discuss possible roles and responsibilities, allowing flexibility for negotiation and adjustments to ensure the partnership remains contextually appropriate and mutually beneficial.
- STEP 5** Establish and agree upon the facilitation roles to be undertaken by the partner, including any responsibilities relating to participant access, safeguarding, logistics, or translation where relevant.
- STEP 6** Implement the agreed roles collaboratively, while maintaining ongoing communication and adaptability throughout the project.





# COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

## WHAT ARE COMMUNITY INITIATIVES?

Community initiatives are programs, activities, or schemes designed to promote community participation, collaboration, and capacity building. While some community initiatives may focus on architectural or planning aspects, this is not a requirement. Central to effective community initiatives is an emphasis on capacity building and the empowerment of local residents. These initiatives may be established by organisations, local government agencies, or initiated directly by community members themselves. Importantly, engagement in such initiatives may provide researchers with valuable insights into local priorities, existing forms of participation, and community dynamics.

### **TYPES OF COMMUNITY INITIATIVES INCLUDE:**

- Volunteering
- Community Building and Engagement
- Economic Development
- Arts and architecture projects
- Re-wilding projects
- Education Programs
- Collaborative Workshops

## **PARTICIPATING IN COMMUNITY INITIATIVES**

It is recommended that researchers and project team members consider participating in local initiatives whenever opportunities arise. Often, project partners may have access to such initiatives. Engagement in these activities can support more meaningful integration within the community, while also providing valuable insights into local forms of participation, priorities, and responses to collective activities. Such engagement may also inform the design of contextually appropriate participatory activities relevant to the research objectives.

# LOCAL RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT - INTERVIEWS

## WHAT IS LOCAL RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT? HOW DO INTERVIEWS ACHIEVE THIS?

There are various methods for engaging the local population, with interviews being a widely used and effective approach. According to Costa Hofisi, Miriam Hofisi, and Stephen Mago, *'interviewing is one of the most common data collection methods employed in qualitative research'* (Hofisi, Hofisi & Mago, 2014:64)<sup>14</sup>. Consequently, interviews constitute a valuable component of this toolkit's Collaborative Data Collection approach (CDC) process, supporting the identification of lived experiences, local perspectives, and socio-cultural dynamics that may not be observable through architectural analysis alone.

Interviews can take multiple formats, including informal, on-the-spot conversations; pre-arranged focus group discussions with community members; and structured one-on-one interviews. While each format may facilitate meaningful dialogue, it is essential to prepare clear and accessible participant information and consent documents prior to conducting any interviews. This ensures that all interviews, including spontaneous ones, adhere appropriate ethical standards and informed consent procedures. Where relevant, researchers should also consider issues of language accessibility, cultural sensitivity, and participant safeguarding throughout the interview process.

Conducting interviews is an effective approach to fostering local engagement, as conversations are fundamental to establishing connections. Engaging with community members, understanding their perspectives on relevant topics, and clearly communicating the objectives and scope of the project can help build trust and support more meaningful integration of the researcher within the local context. Interviews may also provide valuable insights into lived experiences, socio-cultural dynamics, and locally situated knowledge that may not be identifiable through architectural observation alone.



- A)** Develop clear project documentation and participant consent forms, including provisions for verbal consent where applicable, ensuring accessibility and clarity for participants from diverse backgrounds.
- B-1)** Create a structured interview question guide for formal interviews to facilitate focused, consistent, and ethically informed dialogue.
- B-2)** Coordinate interview logistics, including scheduling, location, and estimated duration. Invite potential participants to take part in the interviews and provide sufficient information regarding expectations and participation requirements.
- B-3)** Provide a clear explanation of the interview process, how the gathered data will be collected, stored, and used, and obtain informed consent.
- B-4)** Ensure language accessibility by considering the use of qualified interpreters when necessary; inform participants and obtain their consent for translation services, while remaining sensitive to cultural and contextual considerations that may influence participation.
- C-1)** For informal interviews, prepare a set of flexible questions that can be adapted as needed, allowing for responsive and context-sensitive discussion.
- C-2)** Ask individuals if they are willing to participate in an informal interview.
- C-3)** Clearly communicate the purpose of the informal interview, how the information will be used, and request their consent.
- C-4)** As informal interviews are typically unscheduled, specific details such as time and location are not required, but be mindful of interview length to respect participants' time and comfort.

# PARTICIPATORY WORKSHOPS

## WHAT ARE PARTICIPATORY WORKSHOPS?

The most prominent method employed in Stage 2 – CDC, is the utilisation of participatory workshops. These workshops inherently emphasise collaboration, idea sharing, and collective knowledge production and the co-development of ideas.

In the article *Workshops as a Research Methodology*, Rikke Ørngreen and Karin Tweddell Levinsen summarise workshops as a *'focus on the study of domain-related cases using the workshop format [and that] in these studies, the workshop is, on one hand, authentic, as it aims to fulfil participants' expectations to achieve something related to their own interests. On the other hand, the workshop is specifically designed to fulfil a research purpose: to produce reliable and valid data about the domain in question'* (Ørngreen & Levinsen, 2017:72)<sup>15</sup>.

While there are various types of participatory workshops, the **Transformative Lines** approach recommends focusing on an architectural or urban planning theme. This approach aims to explore the perspectives, lived experiences, and aspirations of local communities in relation to their neighbourhoods, ultimately facilitating the identification of Intangible Lines and, where relevant, informing the identification of Transformative Junctions that may support the development of contextually grounded urban interventions.

Importantly, participatory workshops should be designed with sensitivity to local contexts, participant needs, and accessibility considerations, ensuring opportunities for meaningful engagement across different groups within the community.



## EXAMPLES OF ARCHITECTURAL AND URBAN PLANNING PARTICIPATORY WORKSHOPS INCLUDE:

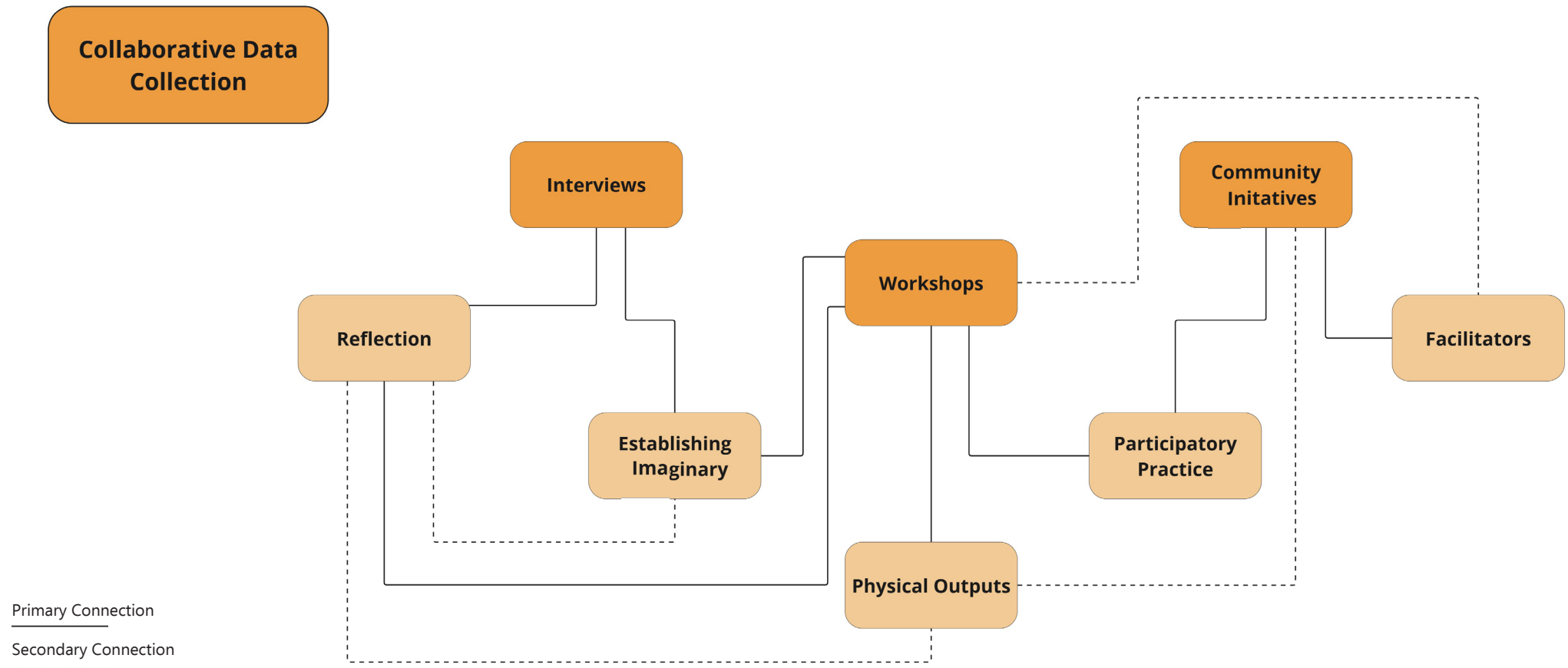
- Community Mapping
- Spatial Interaction Mapping
- Building Design Workshops
- Infrastructure Analysis
- Construction Skills Exchange

- STEP 1** IDENTIFY THE SPECIFIC TYPES OF DATA REQUIRED TO ACHIEVE PROJECT OBJECTIVES. DESIGN A WORKSHOP FRAMEWORK THAT IS APPROPRIATE TO THE RESEARCH CONTEXT AND CAPABLE OF EFFECTIVELY GATHERING THE NECESSARY DATA.
- STEP 2** SELECT AN APPROPRIATE FOCUS GROUP; IF COLLABORATING WITH FACILITATORS, WORK WITH THEM TO IDENTIFY PARTICIPANTS AND SUPPORT ORGANISATIONAL LOGISTICS IN A CONTEXTUALLY APPROPRIATE MANNER.
- STEP 3** WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF FACILITATORS OR LOCAL PARTNERS, DETERMINE SUITABLE TIMEFRAMES, LOCATIONS, AND DURATIONS FOR THE WORKSHOP, WHILE CONSIDERING PARTICIPANT ACCESSIBILITY, SAFEGUARDING, AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS.
- STEP 4** SEND INVITATIONS TO POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS, OUTLINING THE WORKSHOP STRUCTURE AND OBJECTIVES, AND REQUESTING CONSENT FOR THE USE OF DATA GENERATED DURING THE SESSION. WHERE APPROPRIATE, PROVIDE ACCESSIBLE PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND OPPORTUNITIES TO ASK QUESTIONS PRIOR TO PARTICIPATION.
- STEP 5** IMPLEMENT THE WORKSHOPS, REMAINING RESPONSIVE TO PARTICIPANT NEEDS, CONTEXTUAL FACTORS, AND EMERGING DISCUSSIONS THAT MAY INFORM THE IDENTIFICATION OF INTANGIBLE LINES.

# INTANGIBLE LINE IDENTIFICATION

## HOW DO THESE COLLABORATIVE DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES RESULT IN INTANGIBLE LINE IDENTIFICATION?

The data gathered through various CDC techniques, when systematically organised and analysed, supports the identification of Intangible Lines within the socio-cultural fabric of a community. Similar to Physical Lines, these may represent spatially and socially significant relationships, experiences, or conceptual dimensions of community composition. As previously noted, Intangible Lines are those that require situated knowledge and lived experience to identify and interpret. Through engagement in various collaborative processes, these connections can be identified, analysed, and better understood, contributing to the recognition of patterns that may inform the identification of Transformative Junctions.



## Collaborative Data Collection - Map-Making

### Outcome

- To test participatory mapping techniques with set local population to identify points of importance.
- To assess the success/failure of different mapping techniques in a participatory forum.
- To be used as a basis for comparison to the researcher produced maps.
- To open discourse relating to town development and hoped for improvements.

### Potential Maps to Produce (scale)

- City
- Town
- Street
- Home/individual point of interest

### Materials/Tools

- Paper
- Pencils
- Pens
- Post-it Notes
- Modelling material
- Photography







## **STAGE 3: TRANSFORMATIVE JUNCTIONS**

# INTERSECTION BETWEEN THE PHYSICAL AND INTANGIBLE - TRANSFORMATIVE JUNCTIONS

Stage 3 is concerned with the identification and analysis of the intersections between Physical and Intangible Lines, which provide valuable insights into the socio-spatial dynamics of a place. While Physical Lines can identify material, spatial, or infrastructural conditions, Intangible Lines offer an understanding of residents' perceptions, lived experiences, and relationships within their communities. The combined analysis of these dimensions supports a more contextually grounded approach to development that balances architectural and social considerations.

These intersections within the **Transformative Lines** approach are referred to as Transformative Junctions: points where Physical and Intangible Lines cross analytical hinge points where Physical and Intangible Lines intersect, offering opportunities for urban development guided by residents' perspectives interpreting socio-spatial conditions and informing context-sensitive urban intervention through residents' perspectives and lived experiences.

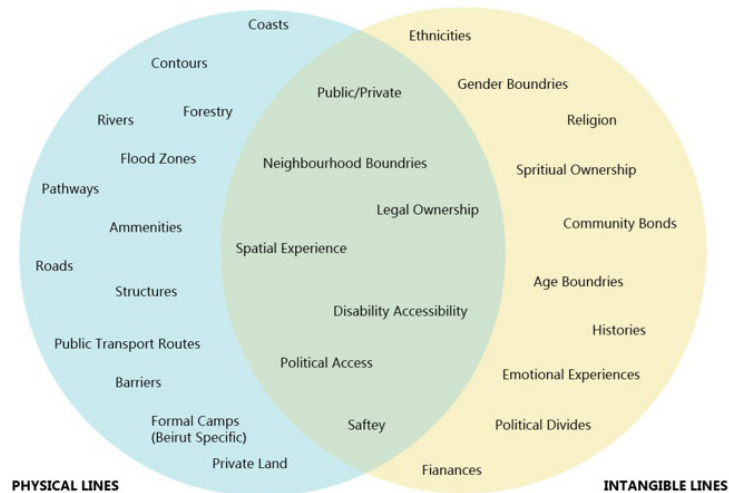
## TRANSFORMATIVE JUNCTIONS CAN ENCOMPASS MULTIPLE IDENTITIES, INCLUDING:

- A)** The architectural, spatial, or social aspirations and priorities of a community.
- B)** The infrastructural requirements or spatial conditions of a city, as identified through the intersection of Physical and Intangible Lines.
- C)** Physical or socio-cultural sites of change that may be analysed to inform future spatial interventions or development considerations.

These Transformative Junctions are not exclusively forward-looking; they may also represent the residual impacts of previous transformations, interventions, or development processes. As analytical devices, the examination of Transformative Junctions may support critical reflection on the outcomes, limitations, or unintended consequences of past spatial interventions and design initiatives.

# CROSS-COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES

There are various methods for analysing and interpreting maps, quotes, and workshop outputs. Rather than restricting the toolkit to a specific set of techniques, it is recommended that analysis be undertaken through a comparative framework. Each output related to specific lines should be thoroughly examined to ensure a robust understanding of the identified lines and their interrelationships across different forms of data. This comparative process supports the interpretation of both Physical and Intangible Lines and contributes to the identification of Transformative Junctions as analytical points of intersection.



*Cross-comparative analysis may begin with an Intangible Line at Step 1, subsequently introducing a Physical Line at Step 6. This flexibility allows researchers to adapt the analytical process according to the nature of the data available and the objectives of the study.*

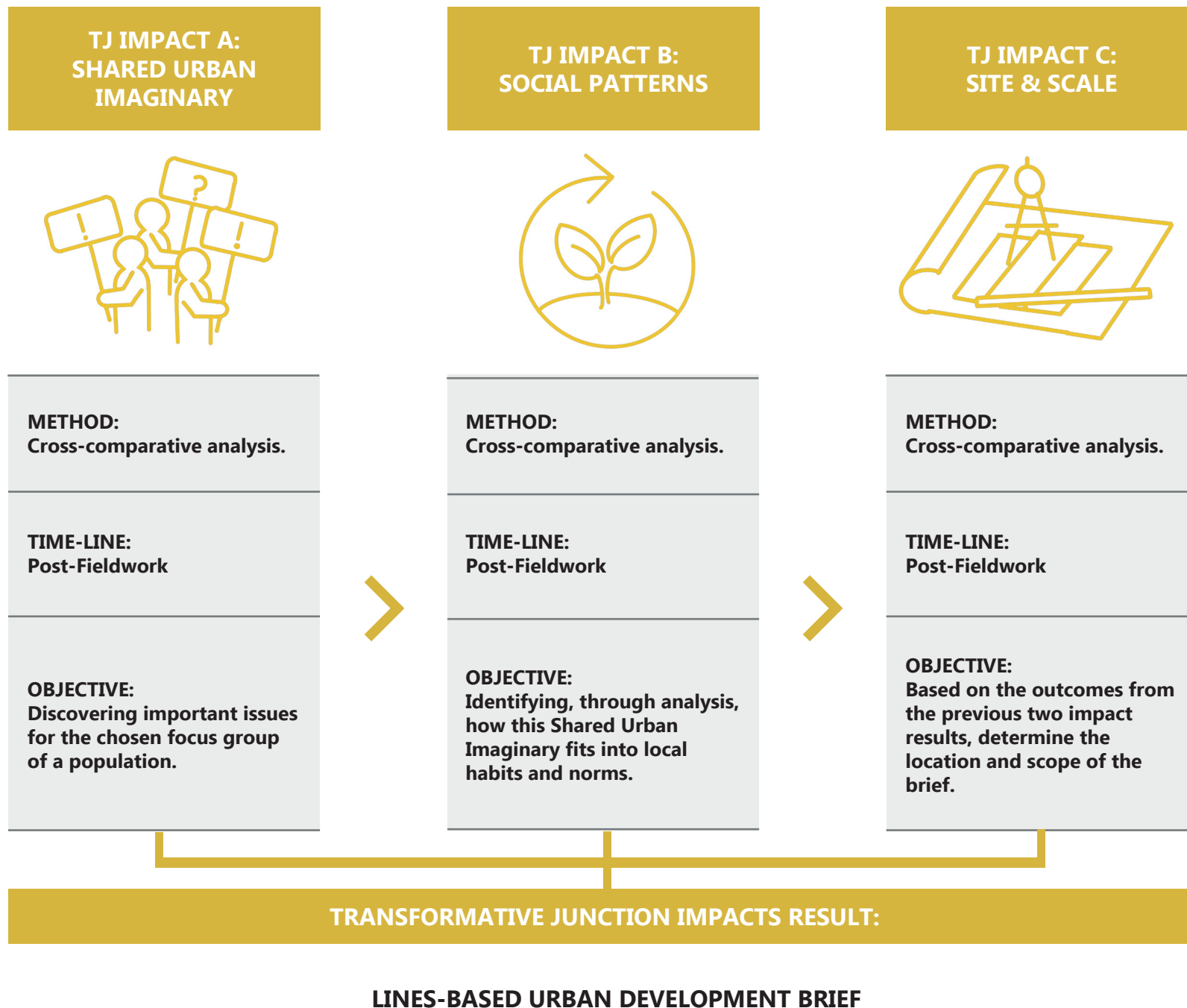
- STEP 1** IDENTIFY A SPECIFIC PHYSICAL LINE OF INTEREST; E.G., A RIVER LINE.
- STEP 2** GATHER ALL RELEVANT MAPS PERTAINING TO THE CHOSEN LINE; E.G., HISTORICAL MAPS OF RIVER TRANSFORMATIONS, SOCIAL USE OF RIVER MAPPING, AND FLOOD RISK MAPS.
- STEP 3** COLLECT ALL QUOTATIONS REFERENCING THE CHOSEN LINE, REFLECTING ITS PAST, PRESENT, AND DESIRED FUTURE; E.G., LOCAL NARRATIVES ABOUT PAST RECREATIONAL USE OF THE RIVER.
- STEP 4** REVIEW WORKSHOP OUTCOMES TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE FEATURE WAS MENTIONED; E.G., PARTICIPANTS MAPPING FREQUENTLY VISITED SITES ALONG THE RIVER OR IDENTIFYING ITS SOCIAL, CULTURAL, OR FUNCTIONAL SIGNIFICANCE.
- STEP 5** ANALYSE AND COMPARE THESE DATA SOURCES; ASSESS WHETHER QUOTES ABOUT MEMORIES CAN BE SPATIALLY REPRESENTED ON MAPS, WHETHER WORKSHOP OUTPUTS OR QUOTATIONS RELATE MORE TO ASPIRATIONS RATHER THAN CURRENT CONDITIONS AND HOW THESE PERSPECTIVES MAY REVEAL SOCIO-SPATIAL DYNAMICS ASSOCIATED WITH THE CHOSEN LINE. CONSIDER HOW THESE FINDINGS MAY INFORM CONTEXT-SENSITIVE DEVELOPMENT RESPONSES OR FUTURE INTERVENTIONS.
- STEP 6** IDENTIFY AN INTANGIBLE LINE ASSOCIATED WITH THE FEATURE; E.G., THE MEMORY LINE.
- STEP 7** REPEAT STEPS 2 THROUGH 5 FOR A SECOND SELECTED LINE.
- STEP 8** SUPERIMPOSE THE MAPPING DATA FOR BOTH FEATURES; THE INTERSECTIONS, OVERLAPS, AND RELATIONSHIPS IDENTIFIED THROUGH THIS PROCESS MAY SUPPORT THE ANALYSIS AND IDENTIFICATION OF TRANSFORMATIVE JUNCTIONS.

# TRANSFORMATIVE JUNCTION IMPACTS

Once a Transformative Junction has been identified through the aforementioned steps, it can be further examined to inform the development of a targeted urban development brief centred around this key junction. As an analytical device, the Transformative Junction supports the interpretation of socio-spatial relationships and may assist in identifying contextually grounded opportunities for intervention.

## THREE KEY IMPACTS OF IDENTIFYING A TRANSFORMATIVE JUNCTION

- A)** The social narrative and its prevalence should be assessed to determine whether the Transformative Junction is part of the broader local **SHARED URBAN IMAGINARY**. If multiple individuals have highlighted this point of interest, it suggests collective socio-spatial significance rather than an isolated perspective or individual concern.
- B)** A comparative analysis of the maps and accompanying quotes should be conducted to identify **SOCIAL PATTERNS** and recurring themes related to this Transformative Junction. Mapping the geographic distribution of these junctions may help define the scope of the issue, while analysing maps of individual lines can reveal localised socio-spatial dynamics and recurring conditions.
- C)** The examination of physical maps should be used to identify specific **SITES** and determine the appropriate **SCALE** for development. The physical locations of the Transformative Junctions should be considered as potential sites for context-sensitive intervention, while recognising that not all junctions will necessarily result in physical development proposals.



# SHARED URBAN IMAGINARIES

## WHAT ARE SHARED URBAN IMAGINARIES?

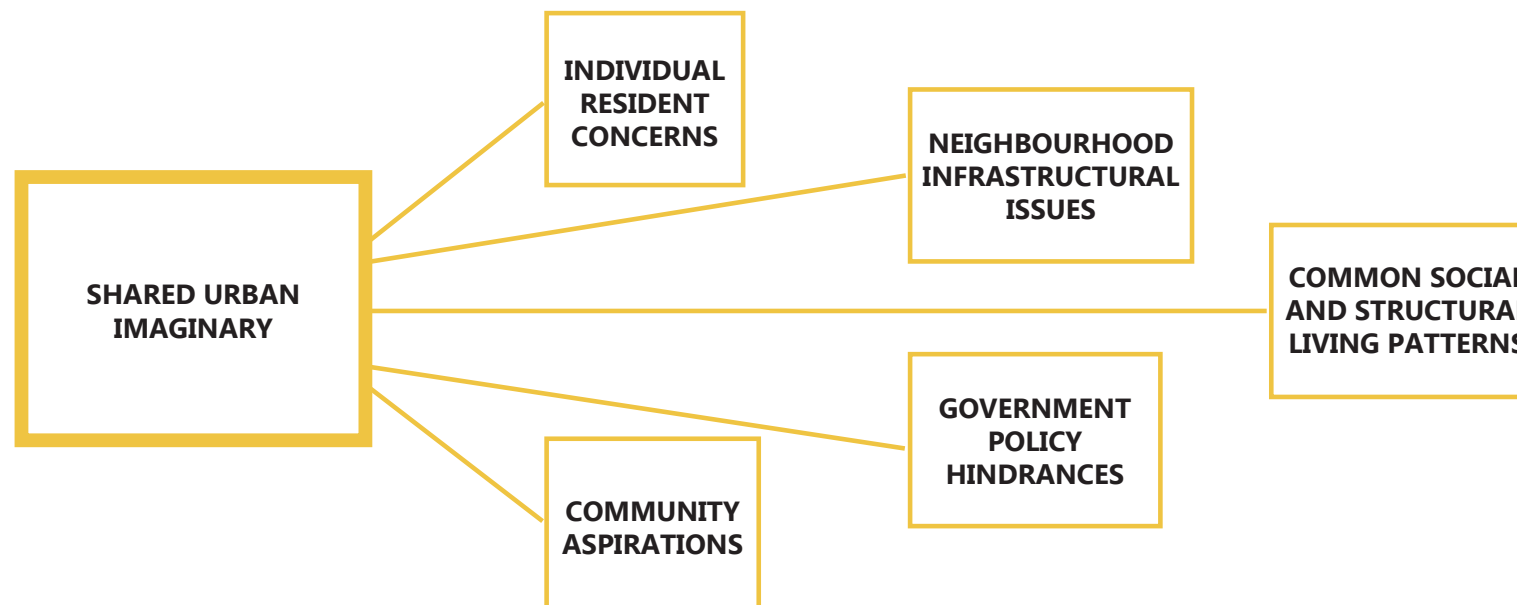
The concept of the 'Urban Imaginary' is often associated with Kevin Lynch, who used the term 'image-making' to describe the elements that shape the "image of the city[:] Paths, Edges, Districts, Nodes, and Landmarks" (Lynch, 1960)<sup>9</sup>. Lynch emphasises the importance of incorporating residents' perspectives when defining urban spaces in relation to these elements.

Contemporary discussions surrounding urban imaginaries are closely connected to community aspirations, lived experiences, and shared perceptions of place. It is essential for researchers to frame their inquiries in a manner that encourages active participation from local residents, particularly when seeking to understand collective aspirations and experiences within urban environments. This idea is further explored by Arjun Appadurai in his 2004 publication, *The Capacity to Aspire: Culture and Terms of Recognition*. Appadurai argues that those 'concerned with helping the poor' must take deliberate steps to ensure that 'words like participation, empowerment, and grass roots ... [to] be rescued from the tyranny of cliché.' (Appadurai, 2004:82)<sup>16</sup>.

In the **Transformative Lines** approach, shared urban imaginaries refer to collectively held aspirations, concerns, and understandings of place expressed through participatory engagement and reflected across multiple forms of data. Their identification may help researchers understand which issues or opportunities hold broader socio-spatial significance within a community.



***WITHIN THIS TOOLKIT, SHARED URBAN IMAGINARIES CAN BE UNDERSTOOD AS THE COLLECTIVE ASPIRATIONS OF A COMMUNITY FOR THEIR NEIGHBOURHOODS.***







# SOCIAL PATTERN DISCOVERY

## WHAT CAN BE DEFINED AS A SOCIAL PATTERN?

A social pattern can be understood in both physical and intangible terms. Physically, it may refer to locations that are frequently used for specific activities or to recurring issues encountered by residents within particular structures or infrastructural systems. Intangibly, it may pertain to social norms, customs, or recurring behaviours prevalent within a community.

According to the **Transformative Lines** approach, a social pattern is defined as a shared experience among a collective group within a community. These experiences are often recurrent rather than isolated, emerging repeatedly over time and across different lived experiences. The identification of social patterns may support the analysis of Transformative Junctions by highlighting recurring socio-spatial conditions, concerns, or aspirations within a community.

## WHY IS THE IDENTIFICATION OF SOCIAL PATTERNS IMPORTANT?

In the context of environmentally sustainable urban development, social sustainability should be a key consideration. Regardless of how well-crafted a development brief may be, it can become ineffective if it fails to account for local customs, norms, and lived experiences. While development briefs may aim to influence or modify social patterns, a clear understanding of these patterns — including their significance within the community and their impact on both social and architectural conditions — is essential for developing contextually appropriate and socially responsive interventions.

According to the **Transformative Lines** approach, identifying social patterns enables researchers to better understand how communities experience, navigate, and assign meaning to particular spaces. This understanding may support the identification of Transformative Junctions and help ensure that urban development responses remain grounded in local priorities and shared experiences.

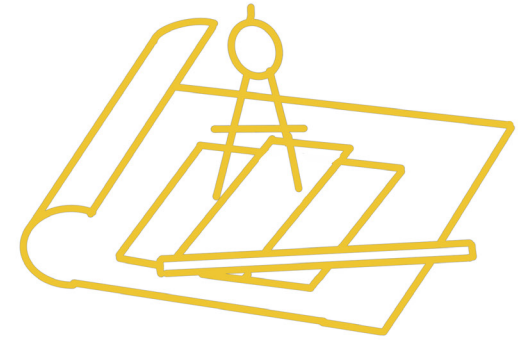
# SITE & SCALE CHOICES

The previous two elements, shared urban imaginaries and social patterns, form part of the analytical foundation for a lines-based urban development brief. However, it is the interpretation of these findings, alongside the intended scope of intervention, that will inform the selection of an appropriate site and scale.

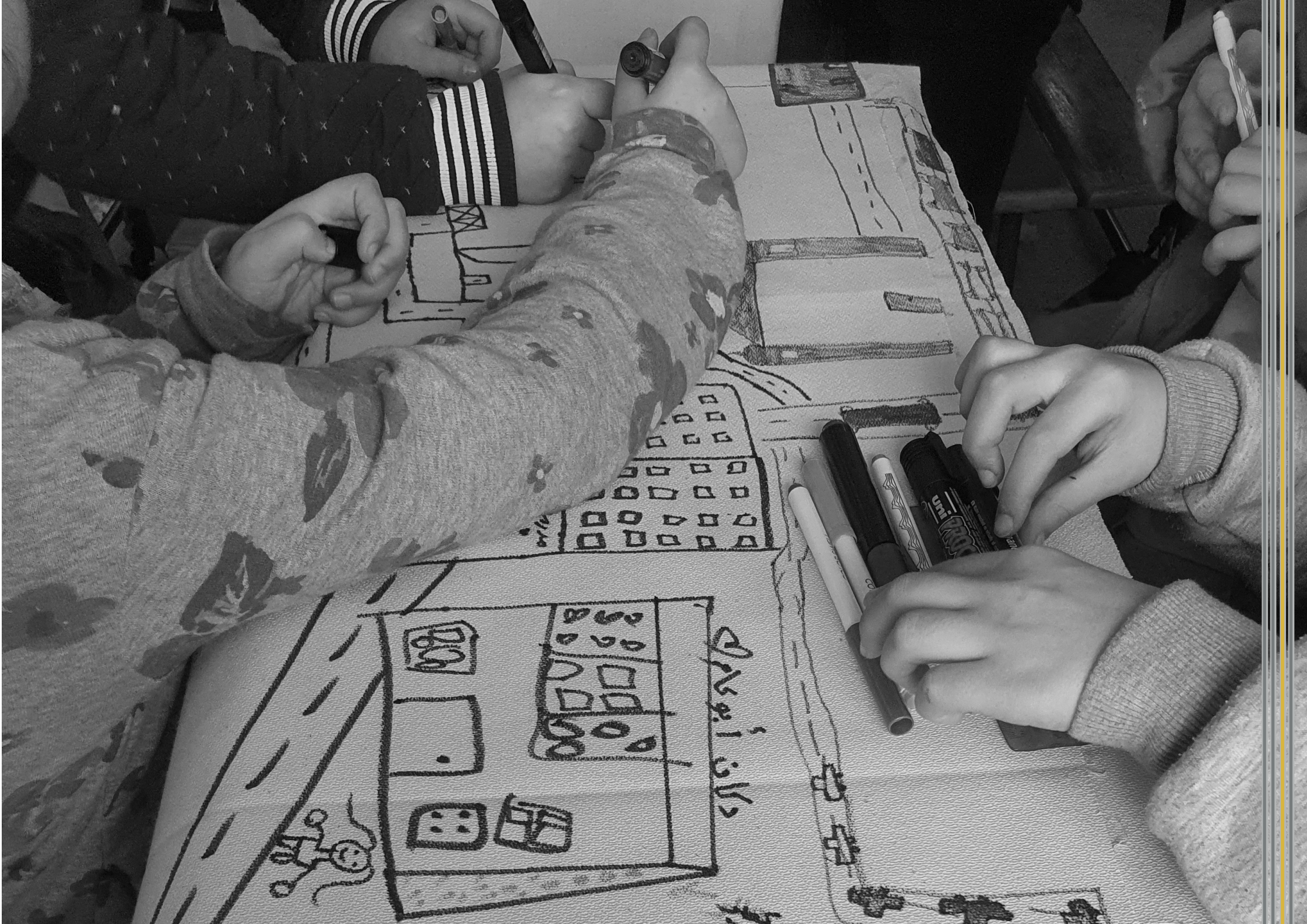
## WHAT IS MEANT BY SITE AND SCALE?

The term 'Site' refers to the location where a brief is situated. This can be a physical location, such as a construction site or exhibition space. Alternatively, it can also denote non-physical contexts, including digital platforms, published documents, or podcasts.

'Scale' pertains to the scope or extent of the work. In physical projects, this often relates to measurable dimensions, such as square footage. In non-physical contexts, it may refer to the reach, audience, or distribution of the work. Within the **Transformative Lines** approach, decisions relating to site and scale should be informed by the nature of the identified Transformative Junction, the extent of the issue or opportunity identified, and the objectives of the proposed intervention.







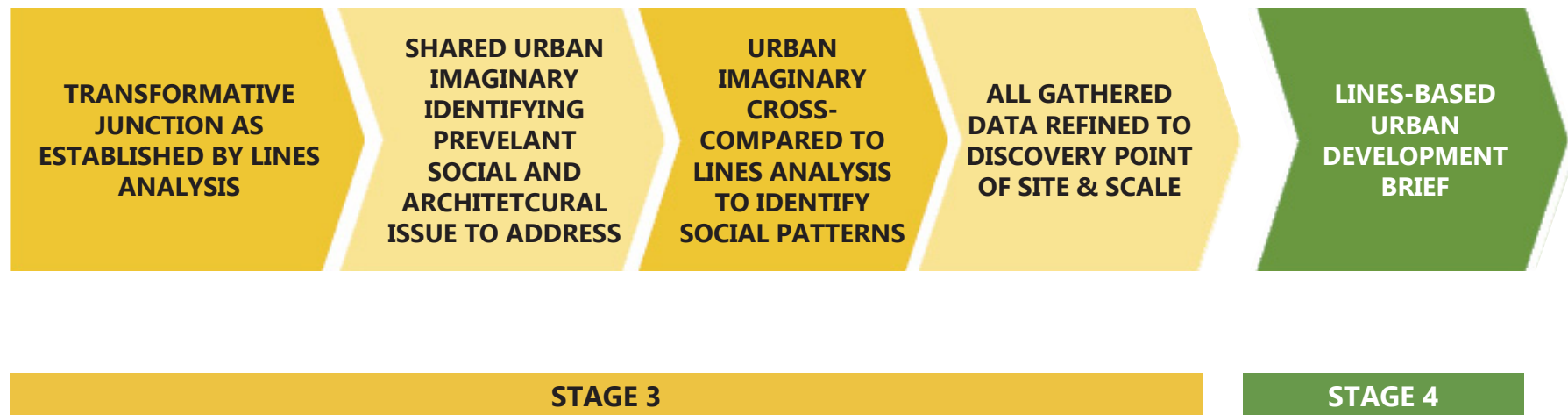




## **STAGE 4: LINES-BASED URBAN DEVELOPMENT BRIEFS**

# LINES TO JUNCTIONS TO BRIEFS

'Lines' serve as the thematic framework for map-making and analysis within the **Transformative Lines** approach. By integrating this concept with data collection strategies, this toolkit outlines the identification of Physical Lines and Intangible Lines as two distinct yet interconnected forms of data. As explained, the comparative analysis of these lines establishes Transformative Junctions as analytical points of intersection, from which Stage 4 – Lines-Based Urban Development Briefs – may be developed. This process supports the identification of social patterns, shared urban imaginaries, and potential sites, scales, and spatial programmes for intervention.



# VARIED SCALES OF DEVELOPMENT

Lines-Based Urban Development Briefs can take various forms depending on the scope of the issue being addressed and considerations such as resource availability, budget, and time constraints. Additionally, access to certain communities may influence the feasibility of proposed solutions. Some localities are subject to complex planning regulations — whether legal or social — meaning that live-build initiatives may not always be feasible, appropriate, or desirable.

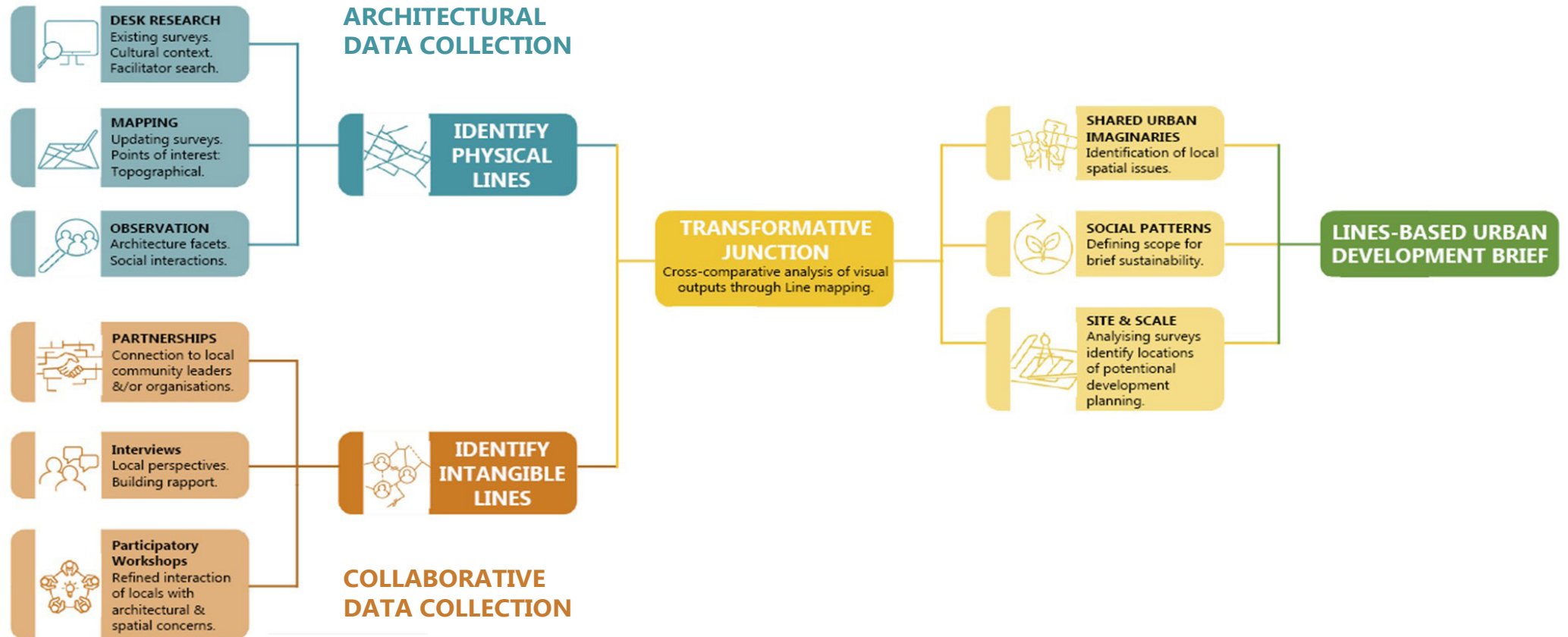
This toolkit recognises that development can offer distinct opportunities for intervention across multiple scales. Some may focus on addressing the needs of specific focus groups, such as workshops. Others, including live builds, handbooks, and guides, may contribute to broader institutional, organisational, or policy-level discussions and support the wider dissemination of urban development practices.

Importantly, the toolkit should be understood as a context-sensitive framework rather than a universally applicable model. The nature, scale, and form of development briefs should remain responsive to local conditions, participant needs, ethical considerations, and available resources.

| SOCIAL LEARNING INITIATIVES                                                                                          | COMMUNITY ADVOCACY                                                                    | HANDBOOKS & GUIDES                                                                                                                                             | EXHIBITS & WORKSHOPS                                                                                          | LIVE BUILD                                                                                                                     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>SITE:</b><br>Community Space                                                                                      | <b>SITE:</b><br>Community Space                                                       | <b>SITE:</b><br>Physical Document/<br>Online                                                                                                                   | <b>SITE:</b><br>Community Space                                                                               | <b>SITE:</b><br>Physical Site                                                                                                  |
| <b>SCALE:</b><br>Hours/Days, Focus Groups                                                                            | <b>SCALE:</b><br>Hours/Days,<br>Community-wide                                        | <b>SCALE:</b><br>Potentially Global                                                                                                                            | <b>SCALE:</b><br>Hours/Days,<br>Community-wide                                                                | <b>SCALE:</b><br>Weeks/Months,<br>Community-wide                                                                               |
| <b>IMPACT:</b><br>Skills/knowledge exchange. Based on discovered junctions, researchers set out to improve outlooks. | <b>IMPACT:</b><br>The pressuring of community topics of concern on local governments. | <b>IMPACT:</b><br>Detailed step-by-step guides to the repeating research process, which may be used by the community to seek further Transformative Junctions. | <b>IMPACT:</b><br>Physical expression of interests, skills, and knowledge shared across the research process. | <b>IMPACT:</b><br>Structural output of data acquired to be used by community members as formed by described Urban Imaginaries. |



# TRANSFORMATIVE LINES APPROACH - VISUAL SUMMARY











## **PRACTICAL APPLICATION - BEIRUT, LEBANON**

# TRANSFORMATIVE LINES APPROACH - PRACTICAL APPLICATION

The **Transformative Lines** approach was developed through a four-stage process, incorporating fieldwork and data collection conducted for the doctoral thesis *Transformative Lines*. This place-based doctoral research involved extensive fieldwork conducted over a one-year period in Beirut, Lebanon, through the application of Architectural Data Collection (ADC) and Collaborative Data Collection (CDC) techniques.

Although the **Transformative Lines** approach may initially appear abstract — particularly with regard to the use of 'Lines' as a methodological framework — this chapter aims to demonstrate the practical application of the approach by providing illustrative examples of each stage, from Stage 1 through Stage 4. In doing so, the chapter seeks to show how Physical and Intangible Lines may be identified, comparatively analysed, and interpreted through the formation of Transformative Junctions to inform lines-based urban development briefs.

## CHAPTER CONTENT:

- Context Introduction
- Practical Application of Stage 1: ADC
- Practical Application of Stage 2: CDC
- Practical Application of Stage 3: Transformative Junctions
- Practical Application of Stage 4: Lines-based Urban Development Brief





# CONTEXT - BEIRUT, LEBANON

Lebanon, situated between the Mediterranean Basin and the Arabian Peninsula (Collelo, 1987)<sup>17</sup>, has been home to some of the world's earliest civilisations. Archaeological excavations at Byblos indicate that the site has been continuously inhabited since at least 5000 B.C. (Dumper & Stanley, 2006:104)<sup>18</sup>.

Beirut, the capital city, is often referred to as the 'Phoenix City' (Llewellyn, 2010)<sup>19</sup> due to the resilience of its residents. However, its turbulent history has contributed to the development of *'a new kind of city, a new kind of urban society with a new kind of relationship with the rural hinterland'* (Hourani, 1983)<sup>20</sup>. The city is known for challenges such as deteriorating infrastructure, a shortage of affordable housing, and difficulties with urban planning (Fawaz, n.a.)<sup>21</sup>.

The subject of urban development in Beirut remains a significant focus within the international architectural community, especially in light of the extensive destruction resulting from the ongoing (as of 2025) Gaza/Israel war, in which Lebanon was directly affected. According to Human Rights Watch (2025)<sup>22</sup>, over 1.2 million people were displaced by the November 2024 ceasefire, many buildings and homes were destroyed, and entire border villages were reduced to ruins.

In this context, reconstruction efforts present an opportunity to consider more inclusive and context-sensitive approaches to urban renewal that engage with the perspectives, lived experiences, and aspirations of residents, including marginalised communities. It is within this socio-spatial context that the **Transformative Lines** approach was developed, seeking to explore how participatory and architectural methods might contribute to understanding local priorities and informing future urban development considerations.



Lines Map of Lebanon







## THE SITES:

The two neighbourhoods chosen as research sites for this project were Karantina and Sabra.

Karantina is a coastal neighbourhood in the north of the city, known for its tragic history of violence, displacement, and sectarian conflict, as well as the 2020 Beirut Port Blast. It is also a neighbourhood that experiences frequent fires and annual flooding due to its proximity to the Beirut River. These events have caused significant damage to local infrastructure, where funding for repair and long-term restoration is often limited.

Conversely, Sabra is an inner-city neighbourhood and is considered one of the most densely populated areas in south-central Beirut. It is home to the renowned Shatila Refugee Camp and has long been shaped by complex social, economic, and spatial conditions, including high population density, informal urban development, and the presence of diverse refugee and migrant communities.

*Map of Beirut, Lebanon with Sites*

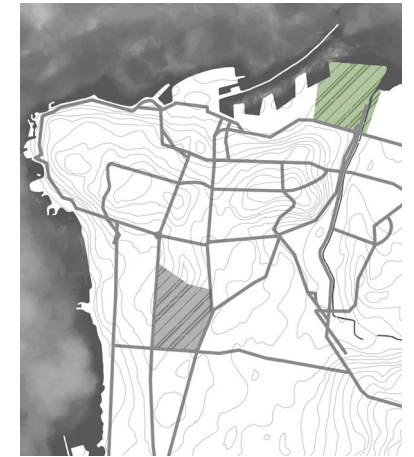


# KARANTINA, BEIRUT

Historically, land within Karantina was owned by religious institutions, and the area served as one of the earliest known refugee camps in the modern era — providing shelter for those fleeing the Armenian genocide in 1915, Palestinians displaced during the 1948 Nakba, and, more recently, Syrian refugees affected by the Syrian civil war.

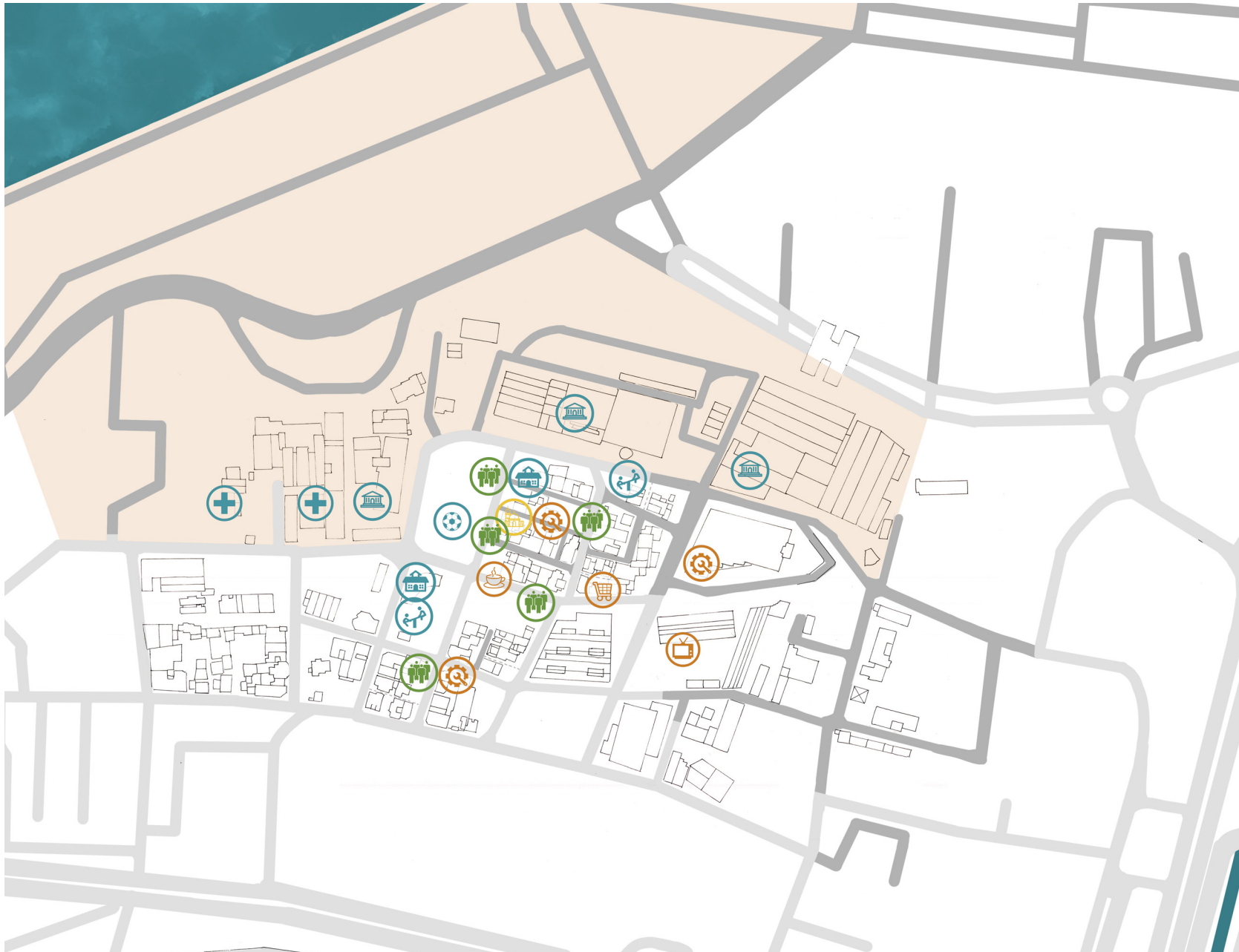
Karantina is situated adjacent to the Port of Beirut and primarily consists of industrial facilities, alongside a small residential community. Its socio-spatial conditions have been shaped by repeated experiences of displacement, infrastructural neglect, and environmental vulnerability.

On August 4, 2020, a significant explosion occurred at the Port of Beirut near Karantina<sup>23</sup>. Widely understood to have resulted from prolonged governmental negligence and failures in oversight, the incident resulted in 218 fatalities and over 7,000 injuries. The blast caused structural damage to residences as far as 10 kilometres away, including areas such as Sabra, leaving approximately 300,000 people homeless.



*Photographs from Karantina, Beirut*





## Private

- Health Care Facilities
- Electronic Stores
- Money Exchange
- Mechanics
- Legal Advice
- Clothing Stores
- Cafes
- Generic Shops
- Water Distributors
- Petrol Stations
- Clothing Stores
- Playgrounds
- Electricity Distributors
- Groceries
- Pharmacies

## Semi-Public/Private

- Places of Worship
- Cemeteries
- Schools
- Sports Pitches

## Formal Public

- Government Buildings
- Community Centres
- Schools
- Sports Pitches
- Playgrounds
- Health Care Facilities

## Informal Public

- Informal Green Spaces
- Public/Informal Social Spaces

Public/Private Structures Map of Karantina, Beirut



# SABRA, BEIRUT

Originally established as a street named after the founding Sabra family, the area has expanded over time to become a fully developed district. The Sabra district in Beirut is now one of the most densely populated neighbourhoods in the south-central part of the city.

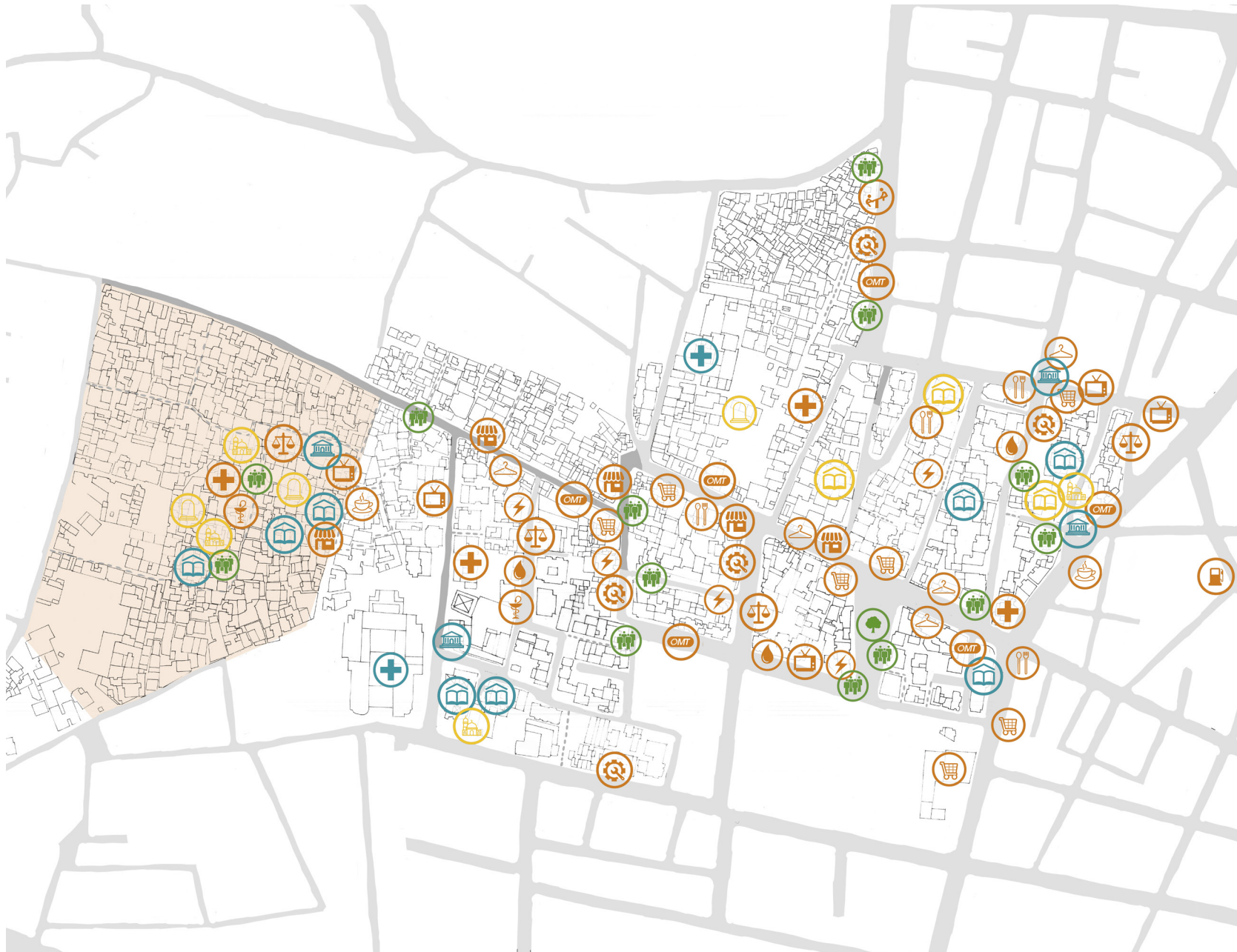
While Sabra is predominantly inhabited by Lebanese residents, it is also home to the Shatila refugee camp, which is estimated to shelter over 15,000 refugees<sup>24</sup>. Although many of these refugees are of Palestinian descent, the camp has also received a significant influx of Syrian refugees due to the ongoing Syrian civil conflict.

The combined area of Sabra and Shatila is often referred to as a single community rather than two separate neighbourhoods. They are geographically adjacent and interconnected, with access to the Shatila camp through Sabra itself. The area is characterised by dense urban conditions, diverse social demographics, and overlapping spatial and socio-economic challenges, making it a significant site for examining questions of participation, inclusion, and socially sustainable urban development.



*Photographs from Sabra, Beirut*





### Private

- Health Care Facilities
- Electronic Stores
- Money Exchange
- Mechanics
- Legal Advice
- Clothing Stores
- Cafes
- Generic Shops
- Water Distributors
- Petrol Stations
- Clothing Stores
- Playgrounds
- Electricity Distributors
- Groceries
- Pharmacies

### Semi-Public/Private

- Places of Worship
- Cemeteries
- Schools
- Sports Pitches

### Formal Public

- Government Buildings
- Community Centres
- Schools
- Sports Pitches
- Playgrounds
- Health Care Facilities

### Informal Public

- Informal Green Spaces
- Public/Informal Social Spaces

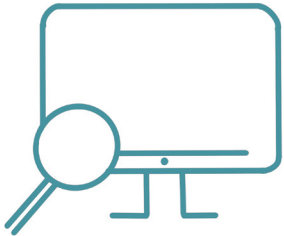
Public/Private Structures Map of Sabra, Beirut





# STAGE 1 - ARCHITECTURAL DATA COLLECTION

## ADC TECHNIQUE 1: REMOTE DESK RESEARCH



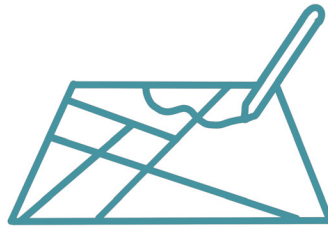
### OBJECTIVE:

To establish a fundamental understanding of contextual factors, thereby enabling a more nuanced and ethically informed approach to research.

### OUTPUT:

Creation of a large database of existing maps and contextual literature, including both architecture and socio-political literature. Initial familiarisation with the context, including the latest news coverage on chosen sites.

## ADC TECHNIQUE 2: ARCHITECTURAL MAPPING



### OBJECTIVE:

To create an updated set of architectural maps to aid in the discovery of Physical Lines.

### OUTPUT:

Significant amounts of architectural surveys and drawings at various scales, identifying various topographical and architectural features, which would lead to the categorisation of Lines.

## ADC TECHNIQUE 3: SPECIALIST OBSERVATION



### OBJECTIVE:

To identify context specific interactions with the natural or built environment.

### OUTPUT:

Anthropological notes regarding peoples and their interactions, without direct input. Foundation for comparison against data produced through a collaborative approach.

## ADC TECHNIQUE 4: FIELDWORK DIARY



### OBJECTIVE:

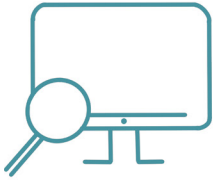
To continuously review positionality and reflect on ethical considerations.

### OUTPUT:

Personal reflective journal used as a tool for memory and positionality analysis. Over 100 entries across one year.



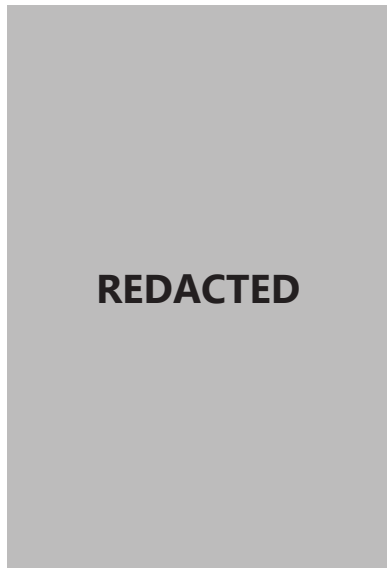




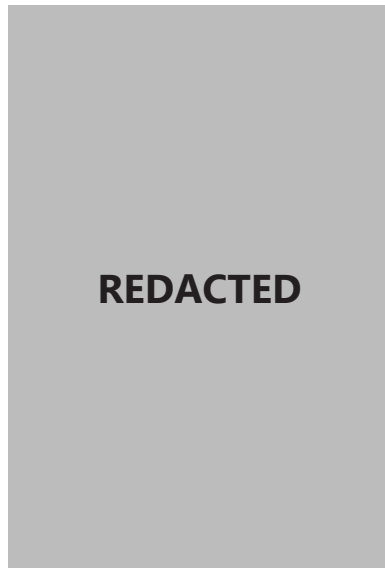
# REMOTE DESK RESEARCH

The remote desk research for this project primarily consisted of gathering existing data, including existing maps of the city, identifying current urban planning initiatives, and developing a deeper understanding of current and historical contextual literature.

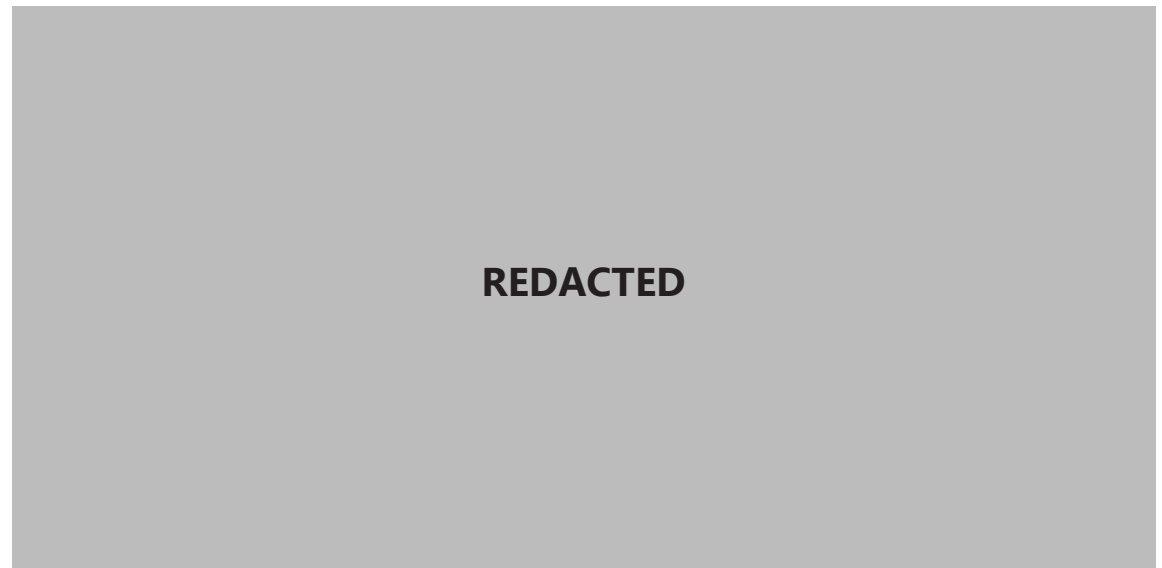
This remote desk research was also pivotal in identifying potential project partners and local research facilitators, supporting contextual understanding and informing the development of the CDC process.



*Public Space Beirut Reconstruction  
Report by AUB<sup>26</sup>*

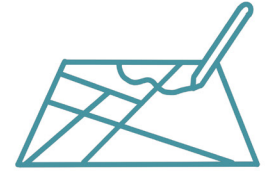


*Visions of Beirut by Hatim El-Hibri<sup>27</sup>*



*Beirut Built Environment Database by Beirut Urban Lab and AUB<sup>25</sup>*

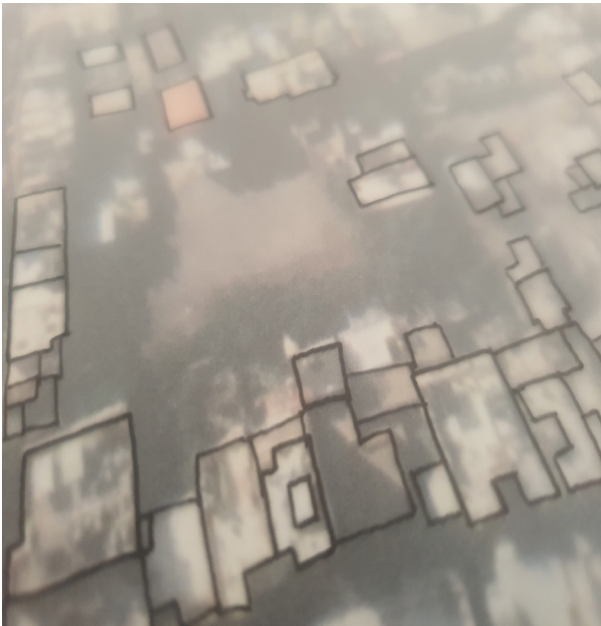
# ARCHITECTURAL MAPPING



CORRECT EXISTING MAPS



PRODUCED NEW UPDATED MAPS



*Photograph of Corrections Mapping of Structures*



*Map of Sabra, Beirut with Formal Refugee Camps Indicated*



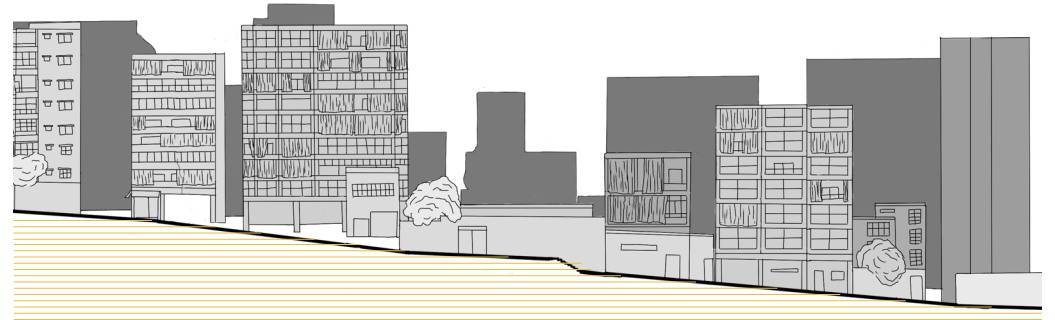
USE NEW MAPS TO OVERLAY TOPOGRAPHICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL DATA



PRODUCE DATA SET IN DIFFERENT VISUAL FORMATS



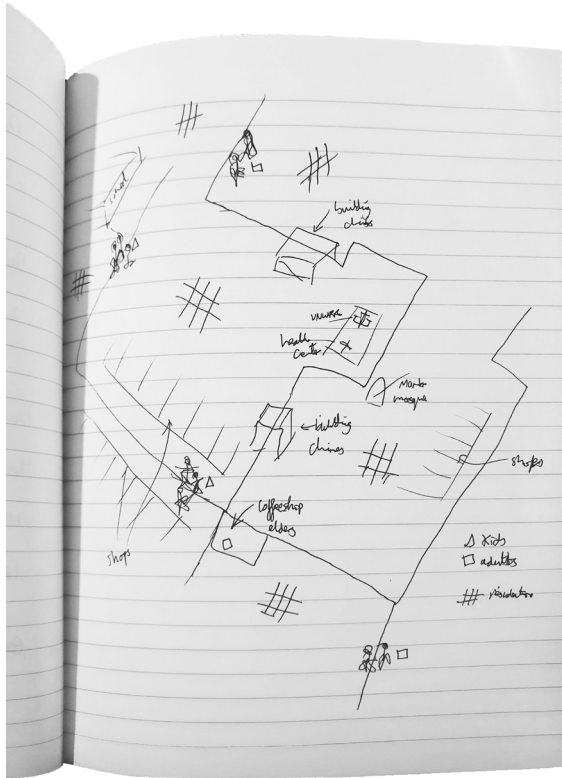
*Contour Line Map of Sabra, Beirut with Site Zoom-In Indicated (5m intervals)*



*Contour Line Exploration Section A-A of Hittine Street*

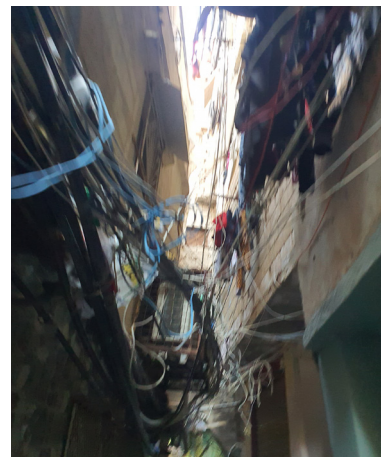
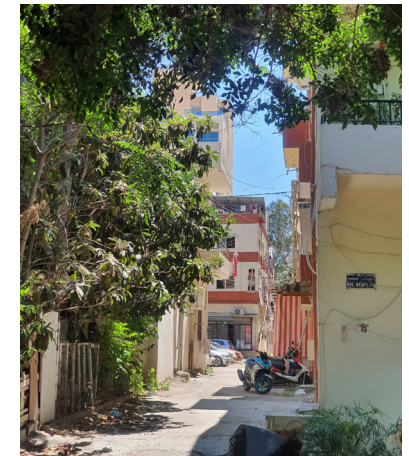


# SPECIALIST OBSERVATION



*Diagrammatic Sketch Produced on Tour of Shatila Camp*

Specialist observation in this context facilitated the identification of urban interactions relevant to the research. These features were often initially observable through architectural analysis; however, the insights gained were used to develop targeted questions and inquiries during the Collaborative Data Collection phase. In this way, specialist observation informed the comparative relationship between ADC and CDC, helping to identify areas requiring further participatory exploration.





# FIELDWORK DIARY

The fieldwork diary proved to be highly valuable in addressing researcher positionality and predispositions. By documenting daily accomplishments, noting unexpected outcomes, and recording initial observations and interpretations of the collected data, it facilitated ongoing reflection on how everyday experiences, challenges, and assumptions influenced the research process.

This practice provided opportunities to critically reflect on routine activities and consider methodologies in an informal manner, thereby supporting thoughtful reflection *'on experiences and addressing potential emotional, methodological, and ethical challenges that may arise'* (Mishra & Gupta, 2024:1295)<sup>13</sup>.

The diary also supported adaptive research decision-making, such as the cancellation of the final field trip due to war and the methodological adaptations that followed in response to changing contextual conditions.

It has been a difficult few months, and I think the decision has been finalised. My third and final field trip will be scraped due to the ongoing war. It is too dangerous for myself to travel, the British Gov has advised against any travel. My research also involves children, many of whom have already been traumatised by war. I do not think it is ethical to pursue any more field work.

I have reviewed my previously collected data with my supervisors and I feel that other than a live build, I will be able to tackle all the outcomes set out for my thesis.

I just realised it has been a year since my first entry. Full(?) circle I guess...

It is a somber note to end this diary on, however research isn't always smooth sailing or pleasant.

.... bill post-doc  
Hosier

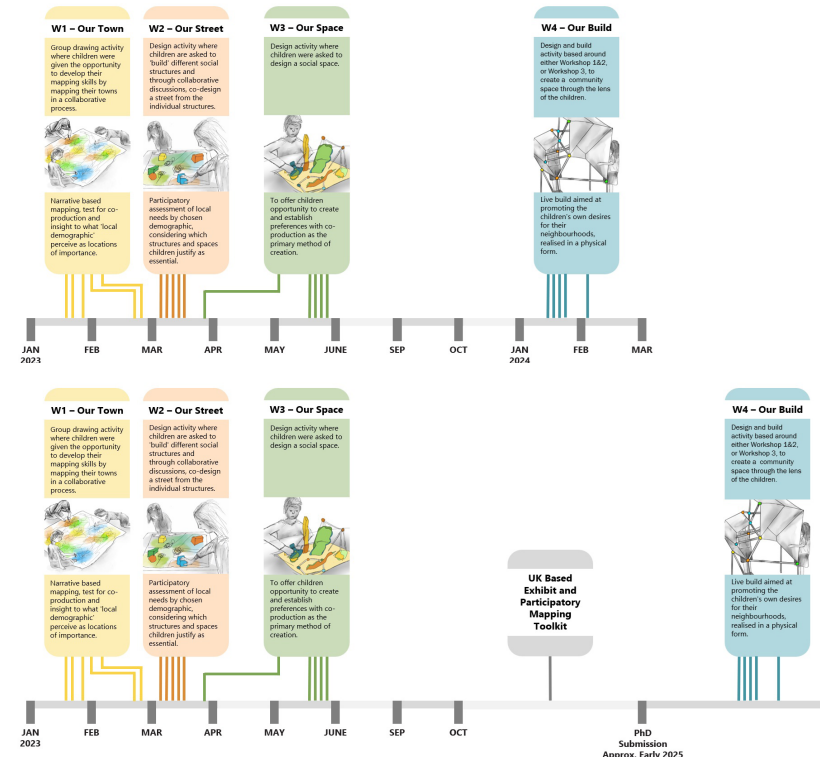
09.01.24  
113

***"IT HAS BEEN A DIFFICULT FEW MONTHS, AND I THINK THE DECISION HAS BEEN FINALISED. MY THIRD AND FINAL FIELD TRIP WILL BE SCRAPED DUE TO THE ONGOING WAR..."***

***I JUST REALISED IT HAS BEEN A YEAR SINCE MY FIRST ENTRY. FULL(?) CIRCLE, I GUESS...***

***IT IS A SOMBER NOTE TO END THIS DIARY ON, HOWEVER RESEARCH IS NOT ALWAYS SMOOTH SAILING OR PLEASANT."***

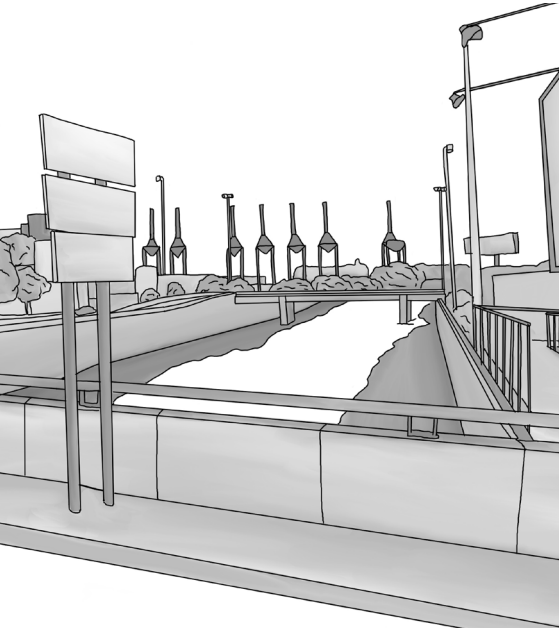
**09/01/2024**



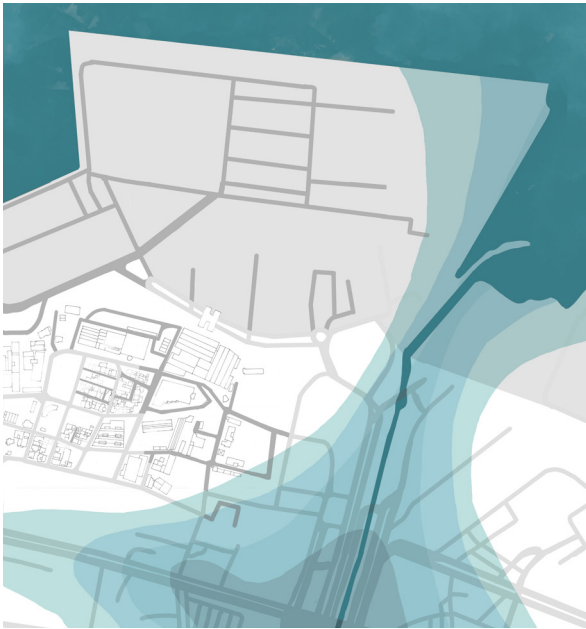


# PHYSICAL LINE IDENTIFICATION

USING ARCHITECTURAL MAPS AND SPECIALIST OBSERVATION, IDENTIFY KEY TOPOGRAPHICAL/STRUCTURAL LINES (FEATURES), AND MAP THESE



Sketch of River Line with view of Forum de Beyrouth, Karantina



Coast and River Lines Map of Karantina, Beirut with the Port of Beirut Indicated



Structures Line Use Map of Karantina, Beirut



- 0.75m Flood Level
- 0.75m Flood Level
- 0.75m Flood Level
- 0.75m Flood Level

- Residential Structures
- Public Structures
- Commercial Structures
- Military Structures

## CREATE SEPARATE MAPS FOR NATURAL LINES AND HUMAN-MADE LINES

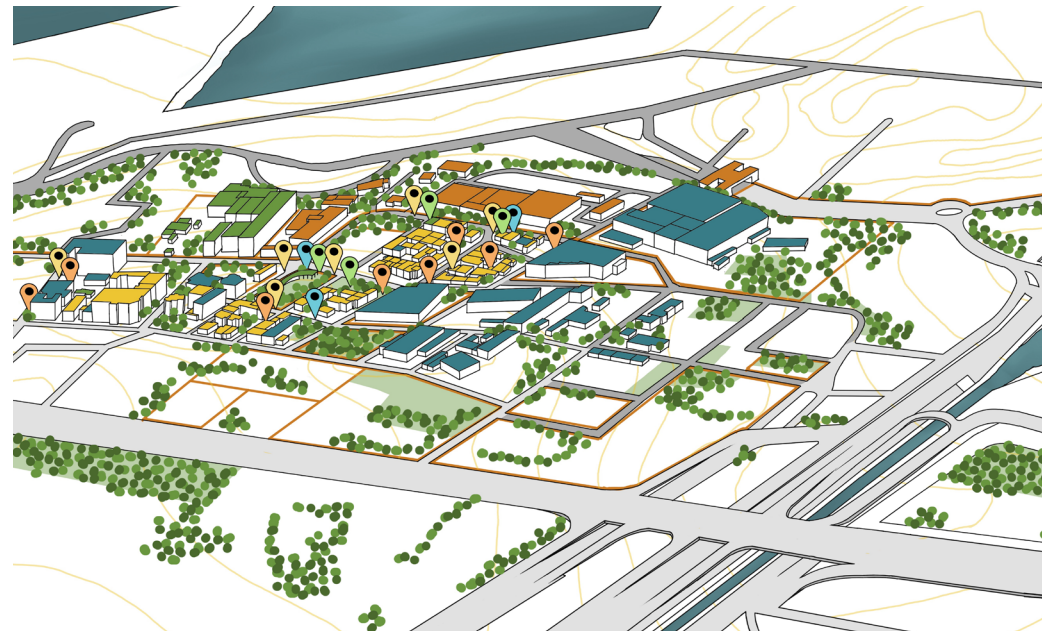


## COMBINE THESE TO FORM PHYSICAL LINE-BASED MAP FOR ANALYSIS



Natural Physical Line Interactions in Karantina, Beirut

- Contour Line
- River & Coast Line
- Green Line



Physical Lines Planometric Map of Karantina, Beirut

- Contour Line
- River & Coast Line
- Green Line
- Structures Line
- Routes Line
- Boundaries Line
- Occupation Line

## STAGE 2 - COLLABORATIVE DATA COLLECTION

### CDC TECHNIQUE 1: PARTNERSHIP BUILDING



**OBJECTIVE:**  
To create mutually beneficial partnerships with local organisations. Sharing of information; context vs skill. Facilitation opportunities.

**OUTPUT:**  
Creation of a database of local community initiatives and potential research partners.

### CDC TECHNIQUE 2: COMMUNITY INITIATIVES



**OBJECTIVE:**  
To gain a better understanding of locals and existing sources of concern as addressed by the initiative. Create trust between the researcher and locals.

**OUTPUT:**  
Introduction to the community through facilitators. Building rapport with community members. Gaining an initial understanding of the matters that concern them. Understanding the facilitator's role within the community.

### CDC TECHNIQUE 3: LOCAL RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT - INTERVIEWS



**OBJECTIVE:**  
To gain direct perspectives from locals helping to define Intangible Lines.

**OUTPUT:**  
Direct input from community members.  
Database of quotes to analyse based on the directed questionnaire.  
Wider grasp of the shared urban imaginary.  
Discovery of issues not visible through observation alone.

### CDC TECHNIQUE 4: PARTICIPATORY WORKSHOPS



**OBJECTIVE:**  
To promote architecture-forward activities with locals to help identify shared urban imaginaries. Additional offer opportunity for participatory design.

**OUTPUT:**  
Numerous physical outputs, including maps, 3D-designed structures, and coproduced child-friendly spaces.  
Data reflecting existing conditions and ambitions for spaces through an architectural model designed by participants.





## PARTNERSHIP BUILDING

Through extensive Remote Desk Research, many potential research partners were identified. This resulted in a partnership with two child-focused organisations, each in one of the chosen sites.

REDACTED

### CATALYTICACTION<sup>1</sup>:

**CatalyticAction** is an architectural charity founded by Joana Dabaj and Riccardo Luca Conti, grounded in principles of child and community empowerment through architectural live-build and research initiatives. With over 52 design projects worldwide, co-production forms a central methodological approach to fostering equitable, inclusive, and sustainable communities.

Having been introduced through peers, **CatalyticAction** became the facilitator for this research project in Karantina, a neighbourhood where the organisation has extensive experience and facilitated four workshops with one focus group of children in a community room previously developed within the neighbourhood.

REDACTED

### THE AICP<sup>2</sup>:

The **Association of Islamic Charitable Projects (AICP)** is a global Islamic charity working to spread values of justice and knowledge among different sectors of society. Among their many initiatives, the **AICP** runs an educational collective called TIES (The Islamic Education Schools) in both America and Lebanon.

After connecting through email and holding several preliminary meetings, the **AICP** facilitated 12 participatory workshops involving four separate focus groups of children, hosted in one of its schools in Sabra.

The establishment of these partnerships proved essential in supporting contextual understanding, participant access, safeguarding considerations, and the development of participatory activities appropriate to each research setting.



# COMMUNITY INITIATIVES



As part of the CDC process, participation in a local community initiative proved to be highly valuable. One notable initiative was the CA 2023 Workshop 2 – Design<sup>28</sup>, organised by CatalyticAction. This week-long workshop centred on addressing gender inequalities and their impact on the built environment. Throughout the programme, participants engaged in critical reflection on these issues and collaborated to develop context-sensitive spatial responses for potential implementation within public space.

The agenda included a combination of field visits and desktop activities. Field visits involved site assessments at various locations across Lebanon, including Mar Mikhael in Beirut, El Mina in North Lebanon, and the Bekaa Valley. Alongside these visits, participants worked closely with the CatalyticAction team to co-design interventions tailored to localised conditions and community needs.

These activities took place at the Karantina Community Centre, a space rehabilitated by CatalyticAction in response to the 2020 Beirut Port explosion.

The workshop organised by CatalyticAction provided a highly informative experience, facilitating a transition from the role of researcher to that of active participant-observer. The familiar context of the workshop allowed participants to draw upon situated knowledge and prior experience to engage meaningfully with the assigned tasks. Participation in this initiative also provided valuable insight into local approaches to facilitation, co-production, and participatory design, informing the development of subsequent research activities within the Transformative Lines process.







# LOCAL RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT - INTERVIEWS

| Name/Gender | Age | Nationality |
|-------------|-----|-------------|
|-------------|-----|-------------|

## The 10 Question Interview:

- 1) What do you like most about your neighbourhood?
- 2) What do you like least about your neighbourhood?
- 3) Do you feel like your neighbourhood has changed? How and to what extent?
- 4) What is your opinion about the social spaces in your neighbourhood?
- 5) Who occupies these social spaces? Why?
- 6) Do you think children have a space in the neighbourhood? If yes, where? If no, why do you think this is the case?
- 7) Do you feel like you have a sense of ownership within your neighbourhood?
- 8) Would you like to be more involved in the development of your neighbourhood – if not already?
- 9) Have you seen any maps of this neighbourhood? If so, do you think they represent the area accurately?
- 10) What is a structural and/or social element that you believe makes this area unique?

During the ADC phase, opportunities were identified to conduct semi-structured interviews with local adults regarding their neighbourhoods. This approach was selected to allow for the purposeful inclusion of participants based on demographic criteria such as age, gender, and nationality, supporting a broader understanding of diverse lived experiences and perspectives within each community.

The sample consisted of approximately 20 adults from each community, representing a diverse range of roles, including business owners, mothers, elderly residents, and community leaders. This was intended to explore points of convergence and divergence between children's perspectives and those of adult community members, thereby supporting a comparative understanding of community priorities, spatial experiences, and shared urban imaginaries.

Furthermore, interviews were conducted with one employee from each facilitating organisation who resides within the respective neighbourhoods. These discussions provided additional insights into the facilitators' perceptions of community priorities, as well as their personal guiding principles within the communities they serve. Such interviews also contributed to contextual understanding by offering perspectives grounded in long-term engagement with local residents and participatory practices.

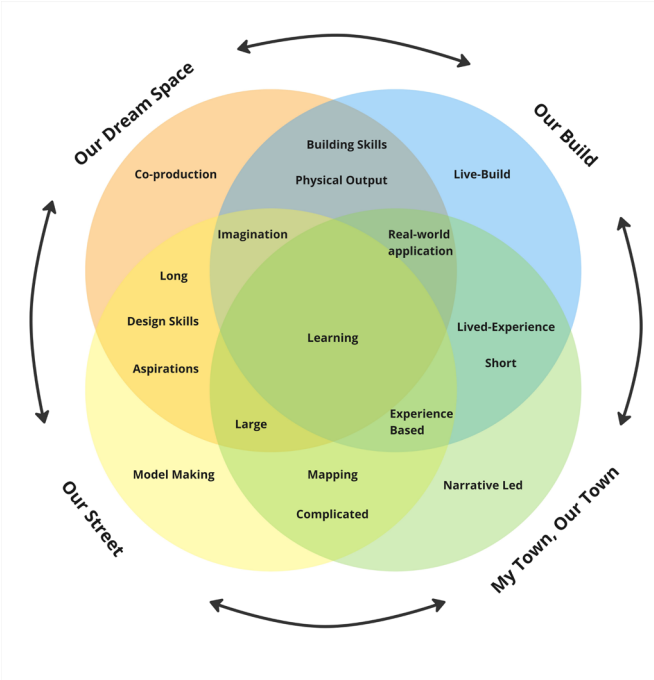
# PARTICIPATORY WORKSHOPS



## DESIGN WORKSHOPS

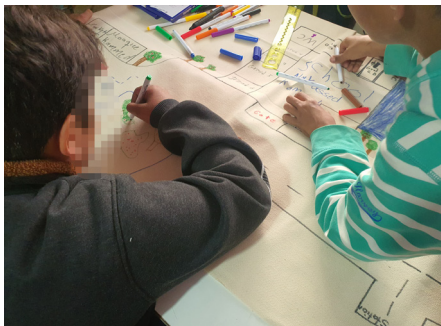


| Workshops                | W1 – Our Town                                                                                                                                       | W2 – Our Street                                                                                                                                                           | W3 – Our Space                                                                                                          | W4 – Our Build                                                                                                                           |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Brief                    | Group drawing activity where children were given the opportunity to develop their mapping skills by mapping their towns in a collaborative process. | Design activity where children are asked to 'build' different social structures and through collaborative discussions, co-design a street from the individual structures. | Design activity where children were asked to design a social space.                                                     | Design and build activity based around either Workshop 1&2, or Workshop 3, to create a community space through the lens of the children. |
|                          |                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                          |
| Relation to Wider Thesis | Narrative based mapping, test for co-production and insight to what 'local demographic' perceive as locations of importance.                        | Co-production/participatory assessment of local needs by chosen demographic, considering which structures and spaces children justify as essential.                       | To offer children opportunity to create and establish preferences with co-production as the primary method of creation. | Live build aimed at promoting the children's own desires for their neighbourhoods, realised in a physical form.                          |



| THEME             | CONTEXT BASED ACTIVITIES  |         | DREAM SPACE BASED ACTIVITY |       |
|-------------------|---------------------------|---------|----------------------------|-------|
| DURATION          | LONG                      | SHORT   | LONG                       | SHORT |
| SCALE             | INDIVIDUAL                | TOWN    | STREET                     | BLOCK |
| CONCEPTUAL OUTPUT | THEMATIC/CONCEPTUAL INTRO | MAPPING | DESIGN                     |       |
| PHYSICAL OUTPUT   | DRAWING                   |         | MODEL                      | COMBO |
| TOOLKIT           | NO TOOLKIT                |         | TOOKIT TEST 1              |       |

## FACILITATE WOPRKSHOPS



## COLLATE WORKSHOP OUTPUTS

### SAMPLE FROM GROUP S-2B:



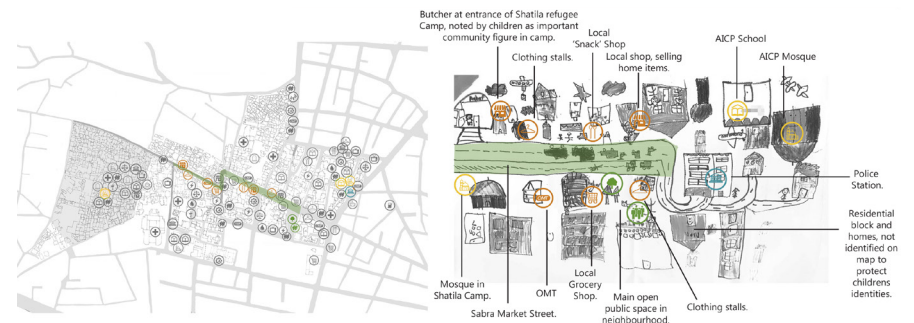
### SAMPLE FROM GROUP S-5A:



### SAMPLE FROM GROUP S-5C:



## ANALYSE WORKSHOP OUTPUTS





# INTANGIBLE LINE IDENTIFICATION

COLLATE COLLABORATIVE DATA ANALYSIS FROM STUDYING QUOTES, WORKSHOP MAPPINGS AND OUTPUTS



***"MY JOURNIES HOME ARE DIFFICULT,  
I HAVE TO TRAVEL THROUGH THE  
MARKET AS NO OTHER ROUTES ARE  
SAFE" BOY, 11 YEAR OLD, SABRA***

*Photograph of discussion with participant children.*



*Mapping Output Sample from Workshop 1*



*Structural Imaginary Output Sample from Workshop 2*

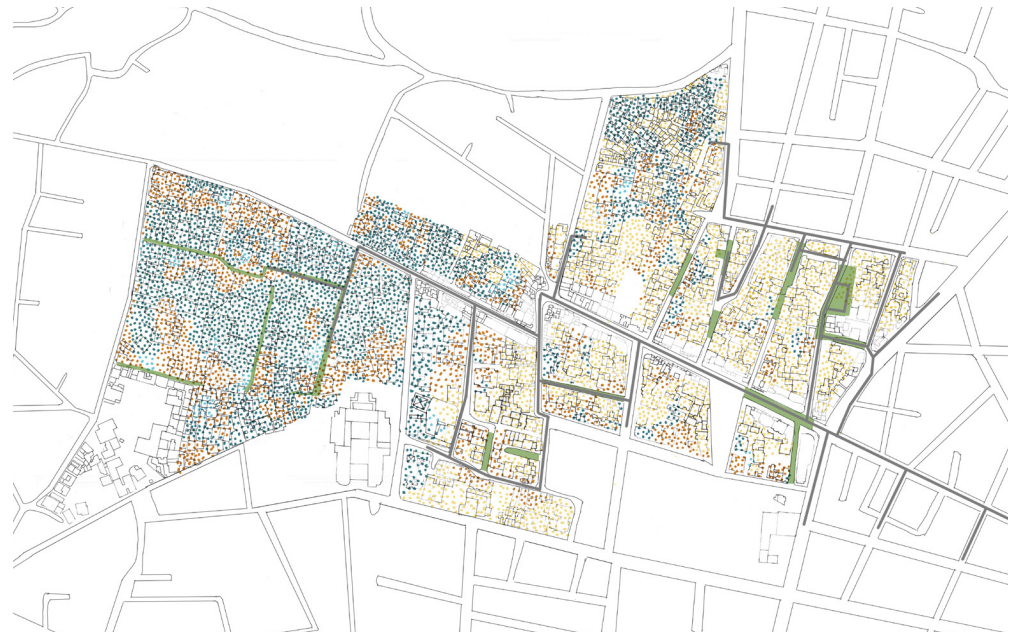
IDENTIFY A KEY TOPICS EMERGENT THROUGH CROSS ANALYSIS OF THESE



COMBINE THESE TO FORM INTANGIBLE LINE-BASED MAP FOR ANALYSIS



*Individual Students Narrative Map in Sabra, Beirut*

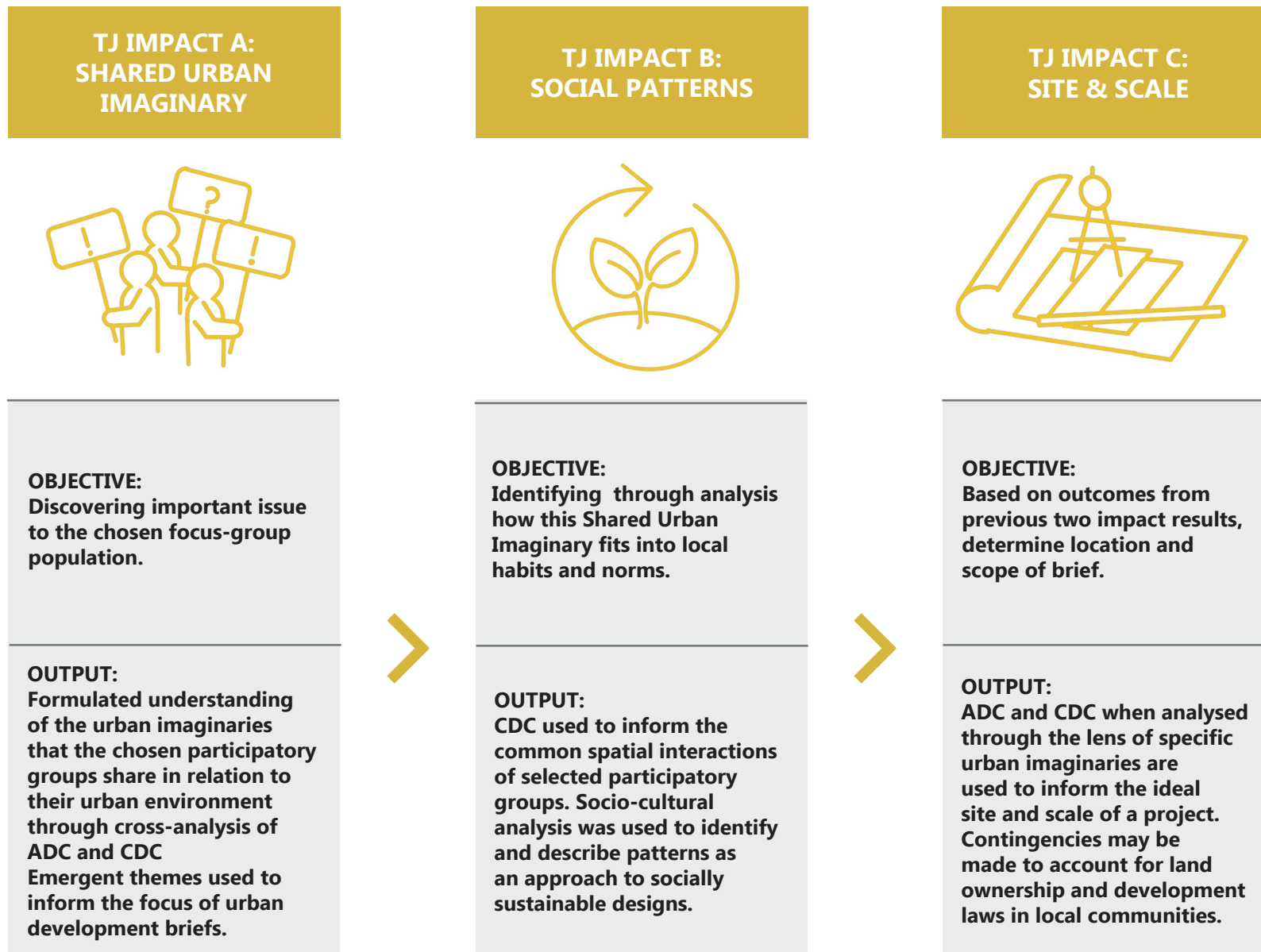


*Implicit Intangible Line Interactions in Sabra, Beirut*





## STAGE 3 - TRANSFORMATIVE JUNCTIONS



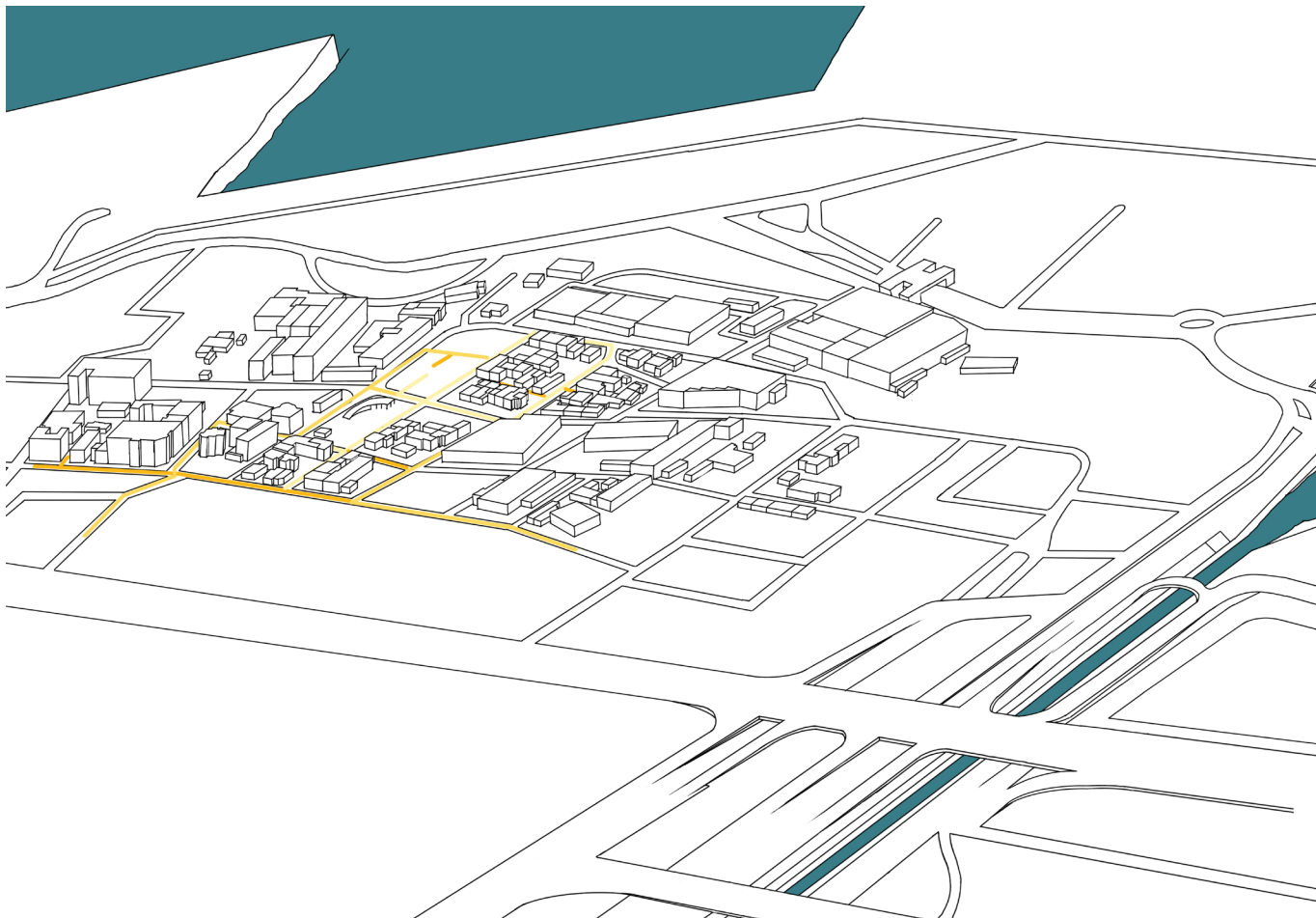
# INTERSECTION BETWEEN THE PHYSICAL AND INTANGIBLE; CROSS-COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

PHYSICAL LINE  
OF INTEREST -  
RIVER



INTANGIBLE LINE  
OF INTEREST -  
EXPERIENTIAL RADIUS

This toolkit presents a theoretical exploration of how the intersection between Physical and Intangible Lines can lead to the identification of Transformative Junctions. The River Line and Experiential Radius Line will serve as illustrative examples in this theoretical demonstration of the practical application of the **Transformative Lines** approach, showing how comparative analysis may support the identification of Transformative Junctions as analytical points of socio-spatial significance.



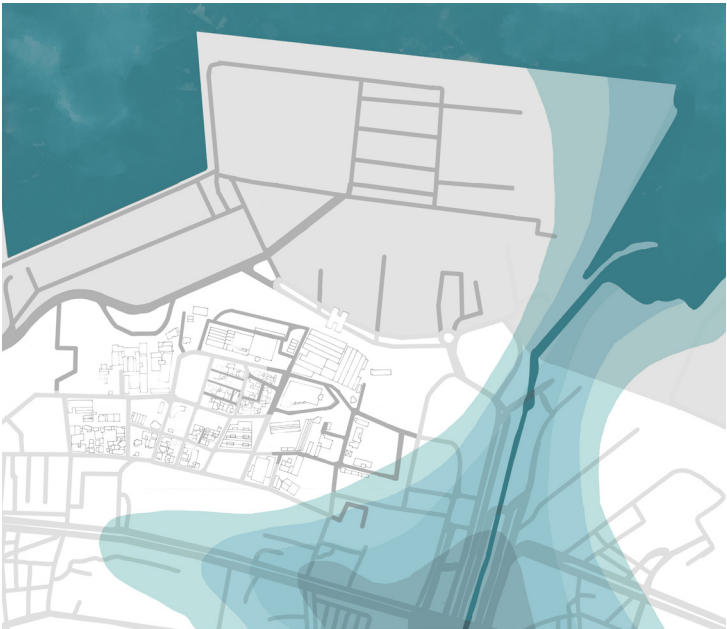
River Line  
Experiential Radius Line

*Intersection Between the Physical River Line and Intangible  
Experiential Radius Line, Karantina*

# CROSS-COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES

## PHYSICAL LINE OF INTEREST - RIVER LINE

### RIVER LINE - ADC MAPPING



Coast and River Lines Map of Karantina, Beirut with the Port of Beirut Indicated



- 0.75m Flood Level
- 0.75m Flood Level
- 0.75m Flood Level
- 0.75m Flood Level

### RIVER LINE - CDC QUOTES

**"I wish there was a place to take my kids when its hot. There used to be a River, but now we have nothing."**  
47 Year-Old Woman, Karantina.

**"I like the water. We dont have any here. Just Rouche but we only go on Eid."**  
8 Year-old Girl, Sabra.

**"I would go to my friends' homes, they all lived here. We would get food from our mothers and go to the river to spend the day. It was so green here. Trees, flowers, everything. But the water, that was a gift from God. Sometimes we'd go all the way to swim at the Raoucheh."**  
83 Year-old Man, Karantina.

### RIVER LINE - CDC WORKSHOP OUTPUTS



Workshop Design Output Listing Lake or Natural Waterway as ideal Feature of Children's Neighbourhoods.

## INTANGIBLE LINE OF INTEREST - EXPERIENTIAL RADIUS

### EXPERIENTIAL RADIUS LINE - CDC MAPPING



*Experiential Radius as Identified through Explicit Intangible Lines Mapping, Karantina.*



*Historical Experiential Radius (1950's), Karantina.*



### EXPERIENTIAL RADIUS LINE - CDC QUOTES

**"I don't get to go any places. My mum says it's not safe. I can play in front of the house or in the park if its open"** 12 Year-old Girl, Karantina.

**"My cousins used to come from East (Beirut). There was a train then. Sometimes we would go to them, but it was more fun here. The beach, the river. We would go to theirs on Eid. When the train stopped, and the river... it was difficult."** 86 Year-old Man, Karantina.

**"Sabra is big, it has everything i want. Sometimes we go to family's houses out side of the city. Not often though."** 9 Year-old Boy, Sabra.

### EXPERIENTIAL RADIUS LINE - CDC WORKSHOP OUTPUTS

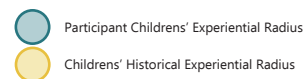


*Maps Denoting Children's Experiential Radiuses of their Daily Journeys, Karantina.*

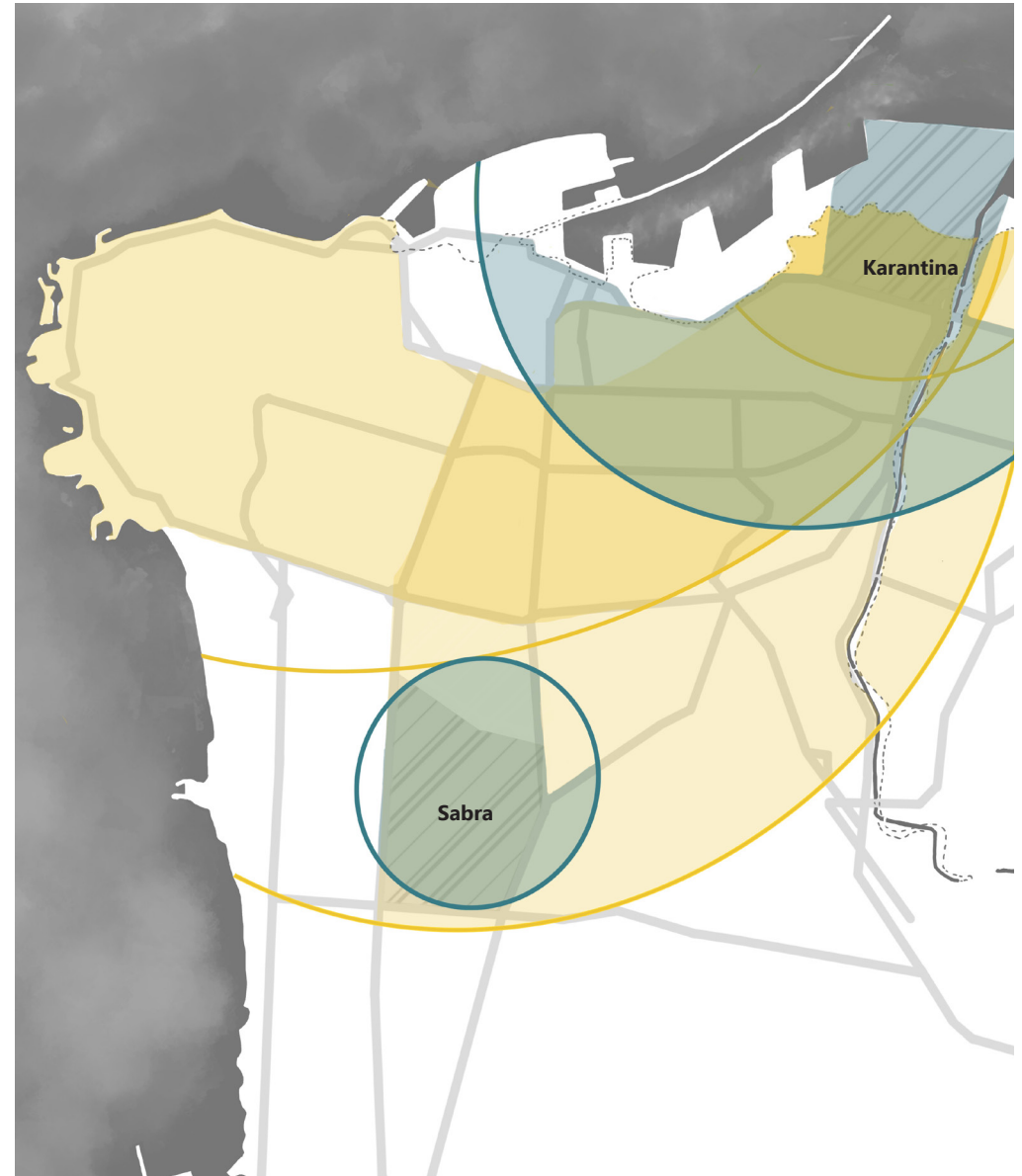
# TRANSFORMATIVE JUNCTION IDENTIFICATION

Through the cross-analysis of the selected Physical River Line and the Intangible Experiential Radius Line, it becomes evident that shifts in both historical and contemporary experiential radius is closely linked to the temporality of the River Line. The comparative analysis of these lines highlights how changes in access to the river have shaped patterns of movement, recreation, and spatial experience over time.

When the river was accessible within the city of Beirut, children were able to travel further to engage in recreational activities in the water. However, the canalisation of the river has restricted access, leading to a reduction in the experiential radius. Therefore, the intersection between these lines may be understood as a Transformative Junction that has historically impacted the area and may offer insight into future context-sensitive development considerations.



*Map Indicating Historical (1950's) and Current Childrens Experiential Radiuses, Beirut*





# SHARED URBAN IMAGINARIES



Through engagement with local communities and the exploration of the intersection between the Experiential Radius Lines and the River Line — further highlighted by discussions with participants — the River Line is recognised as a significant element of the shared urban landscape. Both adults and children expressed aspirations for the River Line to be revitalised as an accessible public space, reflecting its significance within the shared urban imaginary of the community.

- Aspiration of Wider River Bed
- Aspiration for New Topography

*Representation of Reintroduction Natural River Edge as a Potential Public Space*



# SOCIAL PATTERN DISCOVERY



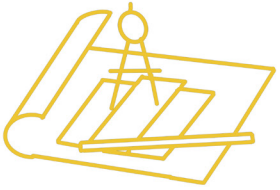
The mapping of local residents' individual Experiential Radius Lines, particularly those from Karantina, within the broader urban context of the city of Beirut, highlights the limited access these communities have to public waterways.

Residents of Karantina often need to travel considerable distances across the city to reach Ramlet Al Baida, the only public beach in Beirut. The analysis suggests that improving access to the River Line as a public space may support more locally accessible recreational opportunities, potentially contributing to socially sustainable practices by reducing the need for residents to travel significant distances for public access to water-based environments.

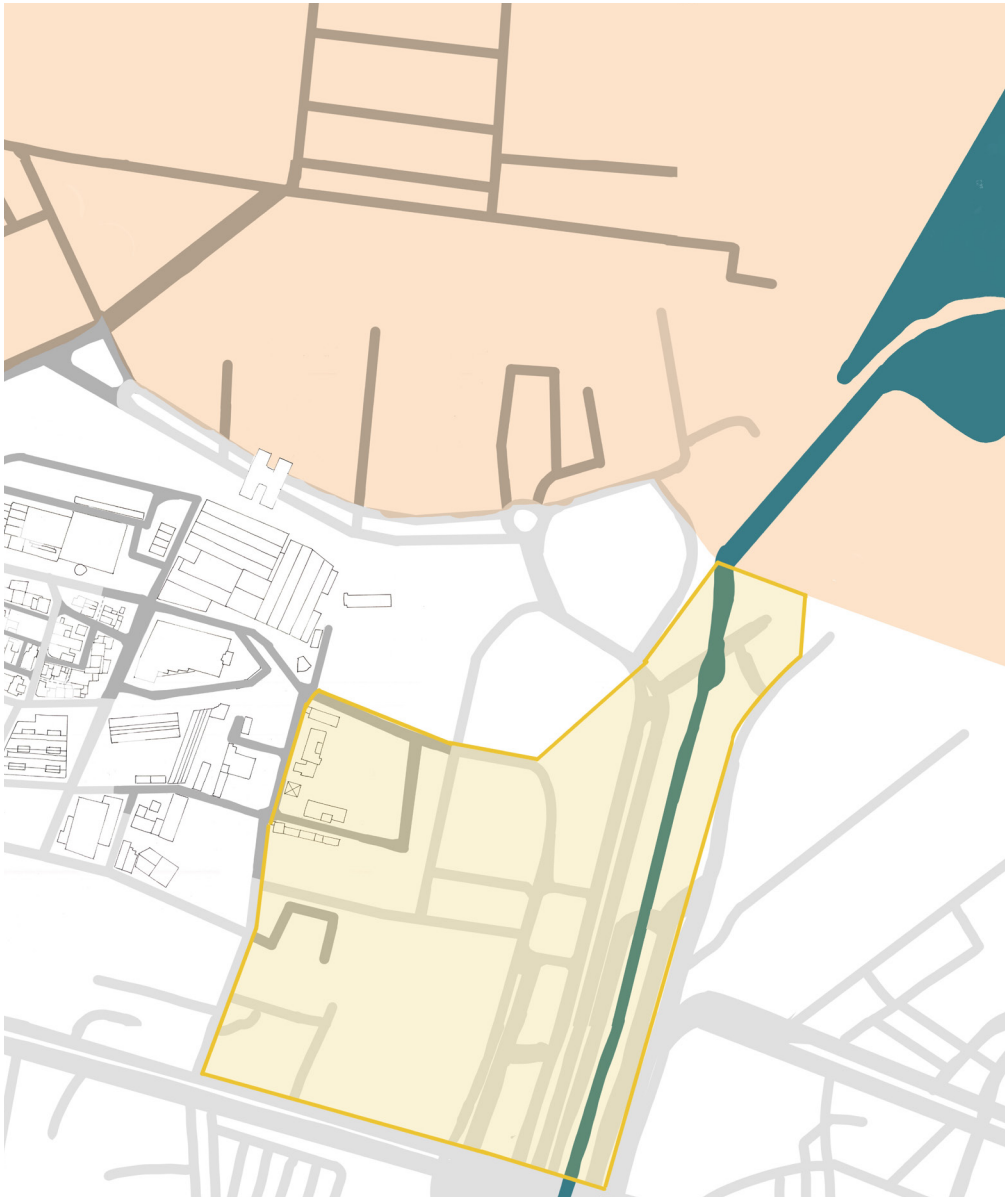
- Public Coast
- Publicly Accessible Natural Waterway
- Journey Routes to Closest Public Waterway

*Journeys to Closest Public Natural Waterway in Beirut for Karantina Residents*





## SITE & SCALE CHOICES



The site identified within this proposed Lines-Based Urban Development Brief is relatively well defined. As the sole River Line within the city, the Beirut River, located adjacent to the Karantina neighbourhood, has been designated as the primary focus for this project. In response to safety concerns related to the movement of children and residents between the neighbourhood and the river, the project may consider extending the site boundary to include pedestrianisation measures and safer routes connecting the neighbourhood to the river.

Furthermore, given the site's vulnerability to recurring annual flooding, redevelopment presents an opportunity to explore context-sensitive flood mitigation strategies alongside social and spatial improvements.

- Proposed Site of Urban Development Brief
- Port of Beirut

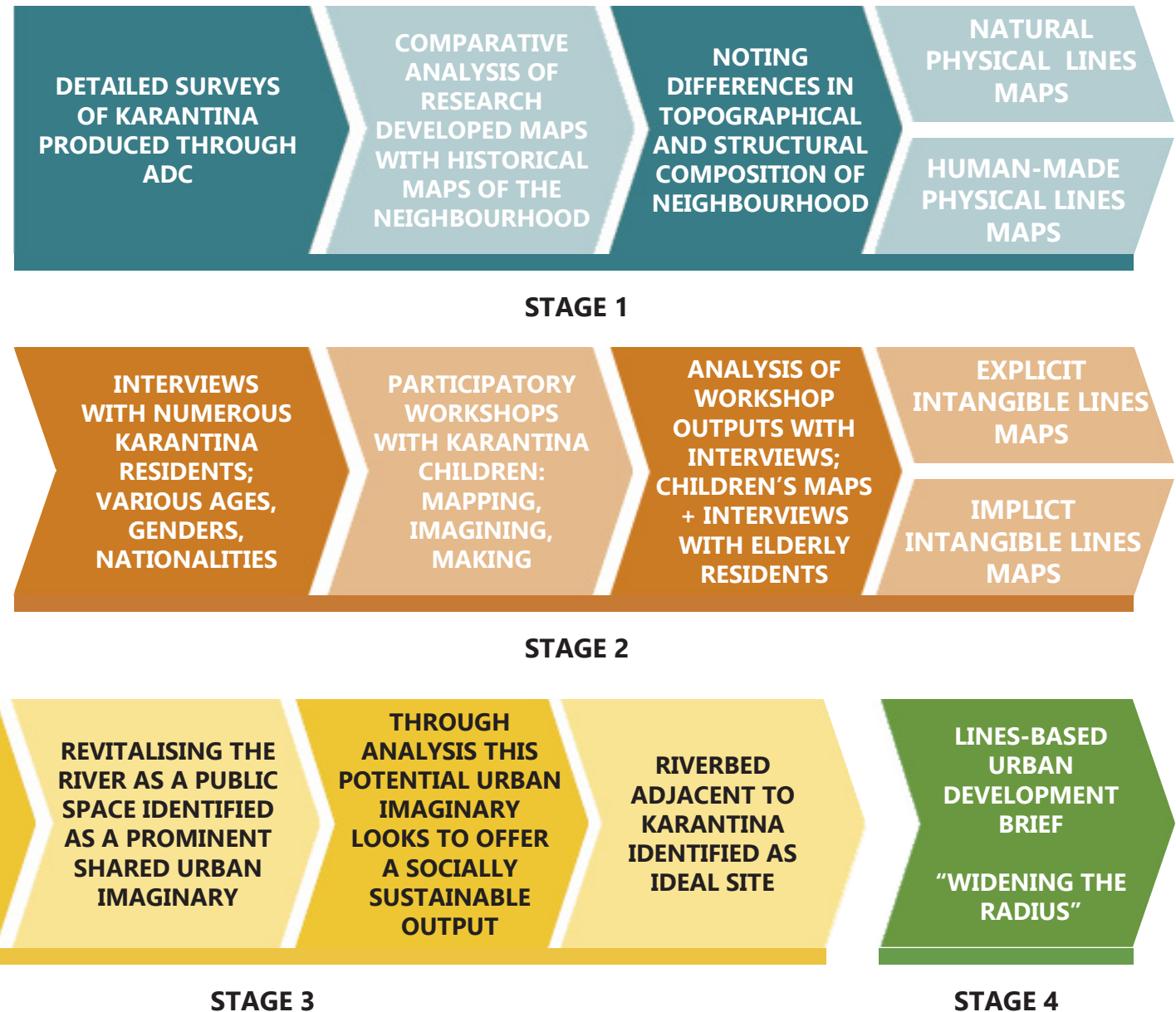
*Proposed Site and Scale, considering Access to Potential Public River Through Karantina*



## STAGE 4 - LINES-BASED URBAN DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

The diagram outlines the four-stage process, highlighting the intersection between the River Line and the Experiential Radius Line through various ADC and CDC techniques, demonstrating a viable Transformative Junction.

The diagram illustrates the application of the **Transformative Lines** approach in relation to the proposed Lines-Based Urban Development Brief, titled Widening the Radius. The diagram outlines the four-stage process, highlighting the intersection between the River Line and the Experiential Radius Line through various Architectural Data Collection (ADC) and Collaborative Data Collection (CDC) techniques, demonstrating how comparative analysis may support the identification of a Transformative Junction as an analytical point of socio-spatial significance.

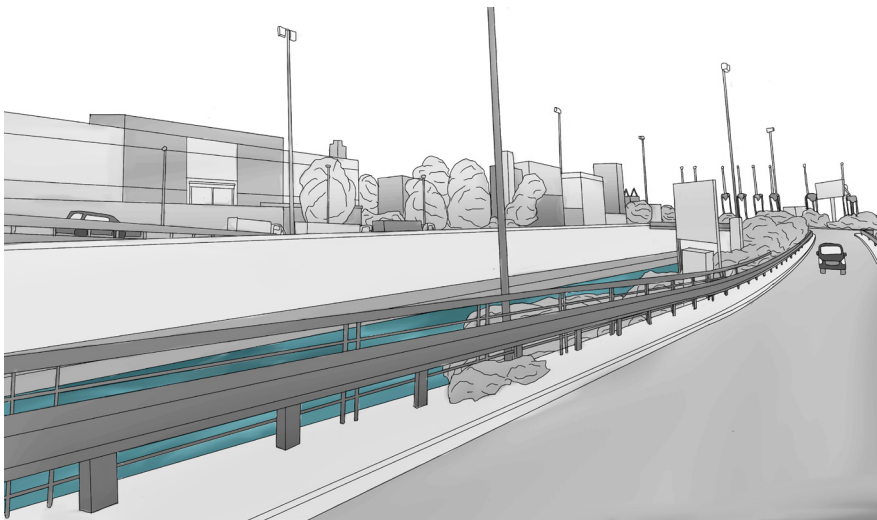


# 'WIDENING THE RADIUS'

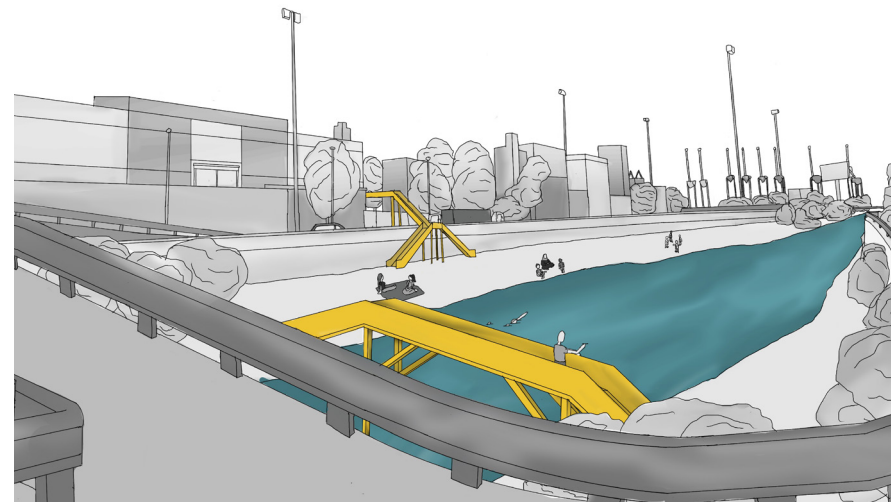
Recurring flooding presents an ongoing urban challenge for the city of Beirut, requiring context-sensitive and long-term responses. Developing a comprehensive urban development strategy across the city will require considerable time and resources; however, prioritising neighbourhoods most affected by flooding, such as Karantina, may support more targeted and locally responsive interventions.

The strategic location of Karantina, adjacent to the Beirut River, offers an opportunity to consider the River Line as a key component of a potential development response. In flood mitigation strategies, common approaches include upgrading infrastructure related to waterways, enhancing vegetation and natural habitat features, and improving traffic accessibility. Additionally, the restoration of ecological conditions along the river may include the introduction of public green infrastructure, such as a riverwalk park or accessible public spaces.

Such interventions may contribute to reconnecting the River Line with the local community's Experiential Radius Line and broader urban fabric, potentially expanding opportunities for recreation, accessibility, and socially sustainable engagement with public space.



*Proposed Site Study Before 'Widening the Radius' Transformative Intervention in Karantina, Beirut*

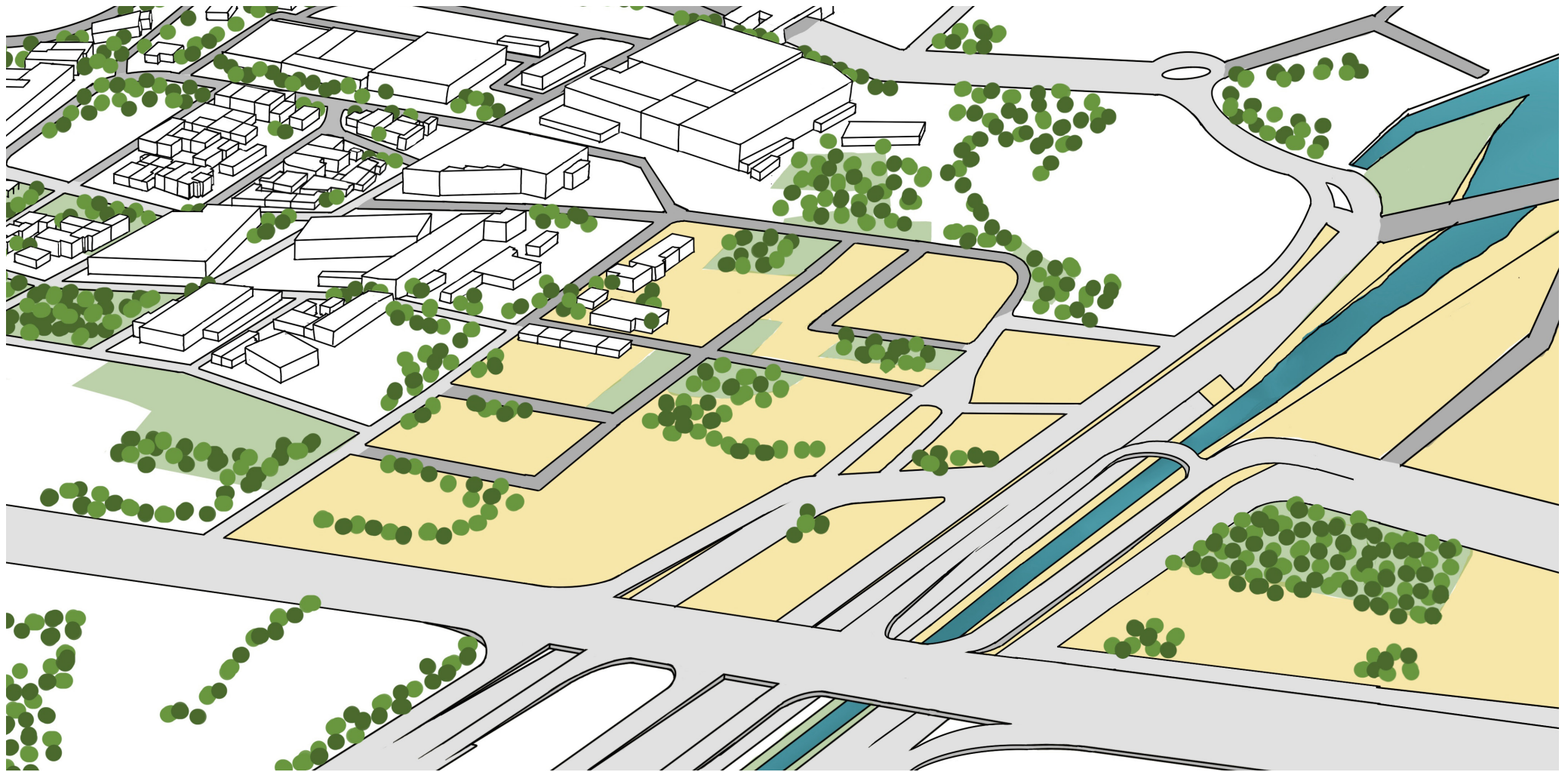


*Proposed Site Study After 'Widening the Radius' Transformative Intervention in Karantina, Beirut*



# 'WIDENING THE RADIUS' LINES-BASED URBAN DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

## BEFORE

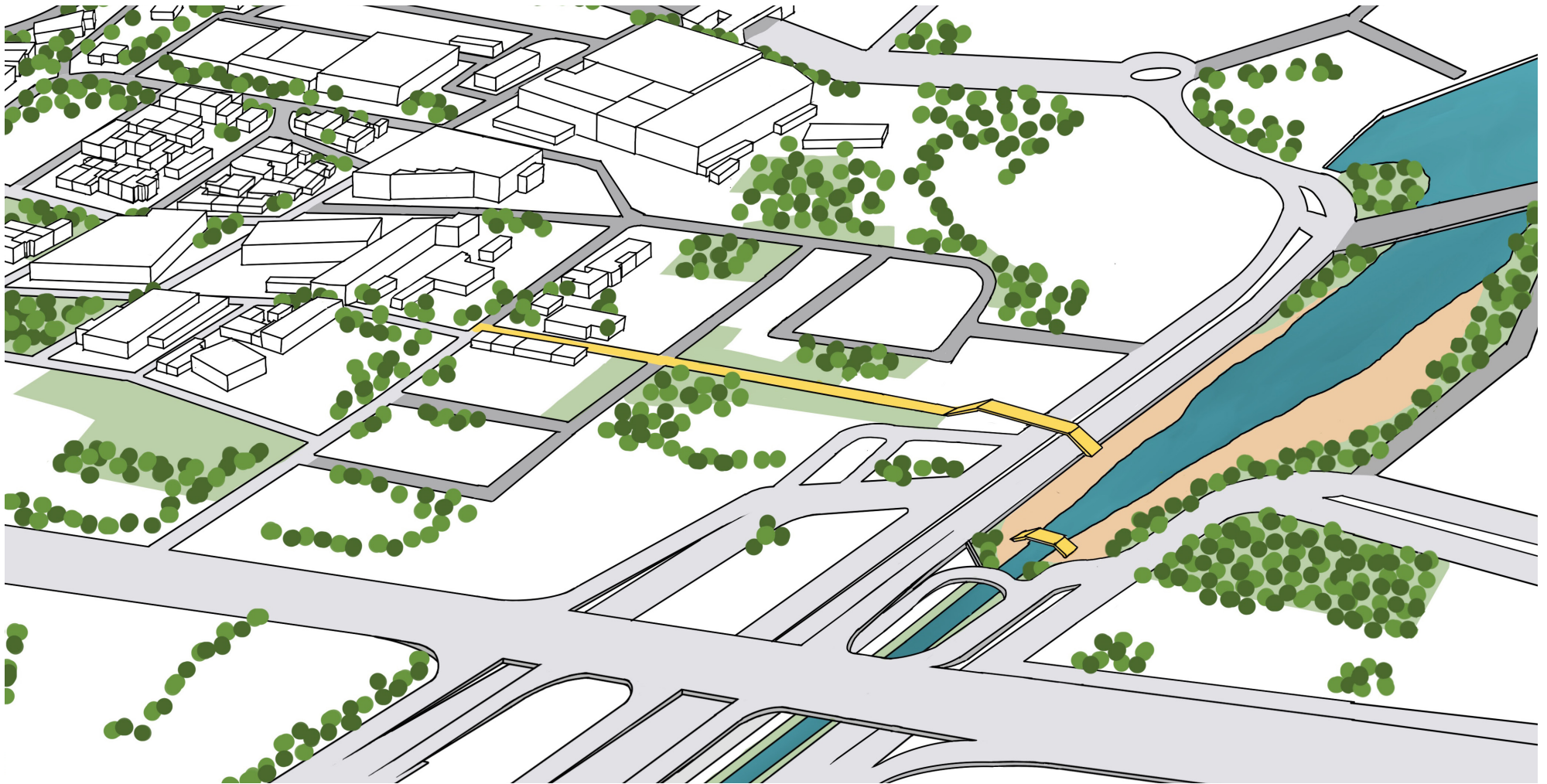


*Proposed Site Before 'Widening the Radius' Transformative Intervention in Karantina, Beirut*



# 'WIDENING THE RADIUS' LINES-BASED URBAN DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

## AFTER



*Proposed Site After 'Widening the Radius' Transformative Intervention in Karantina, Beirut*

- Proposed Pedestrian Highway
- Proposed Public Riverside, Sand & Gravel Deposit
- Re-excavate River & Coast Line
- Expanded Green Line
- Primary Vehicle Routes
- Primary Pedestrian Routes
- Private Routes





## CONCLUSION

# CONCLUSION

As described, the aim of this **Transformative Lines Toolkit** is to propose a context-sensitive approach to urban development through various techniques established in the Dual Data Collection Strategy. It uses both Architectural Data Collection techniques (ADC) and Collaborative Data Collection techniques (CDC) to identify and Physical and Intangible Lines that shape the socio-spatial composition of cities.

The **Transformative Lines** approach expands on concepts developed by Kevin Lynch in *The Image of the City* (1960)<sup>9</sup> and within Tim Ingold's *Lines: A Brief History* (2016)<sup>10</sup>, by using 'lines' as an analytical framework through which both the physical and intangible characteristics of urban environments may be identified, interpreted, and comparatively analysed.

The aspiration for this **Transformative Lines Toolkit** is to provide an adaptable framework that may be applied across different localities and by individuals from diverse educational and social backgrounds, to help uncover shared urban imaginaries and socio-spatial patterns, and to aid in the development of contextually grounded, lines-based urban development briefs informed by Transformative Junctions. However, the toolkit should be understood as a prototype framework whose application will necessarily vary according to local conditions, ethical considerations, participant needs, and available resources.









## **X - REFERENCES**

# REFERENCES

- 1 CatalyticAction (2014) CatalyticAction - About Us. Available at: <https://catalyticaction.org/about-us/> (Accessed 29 July 2022)
- 2 AICP (1930) AICP - About the AICP. Available at: <https://www.aicp.org.uk/index.php/about-the-aicp> (Accessed 11 August 2022)
- 3 Houssami, H (2025) Transformative Lines Thesis. [London]: LMU.
- 4 Hurst, F (2000) Architectural Participatory Design Methods. (1st Ed.) London: 1st Ed.) London: University of Wisconsin-Stout.
- 5 Berney, R . (2023). "Fit for all: Exploring invitations and imaginaries in urban design research", in: The Routledge Handbook of Urban Design Research Methods. (1st Ed.) London: Routledge.
- 6 Afifi, R A; Makhoul, J; El Hajj, T; Nakkash, R T (2011) Developing a logic model for youth mental health: participatory research with a refugee community in Beirut. In: Health Policy and Planning (26:6) pp.508–517 At: <https://doi.org/10.1093/heapol/czr001>. (Accessed 03/02/2025)
- 7 United Nations (2009) Convention on the Rights of the Child – Article 12. New York: UN.
- 8 Wood, E J (2006) The Ethical Challenges of Field Research in Conflict Zones. In: Qual Sociol (29) pp.373–386. At: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11133-006-9027-8> (Accessed 16/04/2024)
- 9 Lynch, K (1960) The Image of the City (1st Ed.) London: The MIT Press.
- 10 Ingold, T. (2016) Lines: A brief History. (1st Ed.) London: Routledge.
- 11 Mitchell, M; and Tang, B (2017) Loose Fit City. (1st Ed.) London: Routledge.
- 12 Kawulich, B. (2012) Collecting data through observation. In: Doing Social Research: A global context (1st Ed.) London: McGraw Hill.
- 13 Mishra, P.; and Gupta, A. (2024) Exploring the use of diary entries for qualitative researchers: Mitigating challenges when investigating sensitive topics on Indian women. In: The Qualitative Report (29:5) pp. 1279-1298. At:[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/380386362\\_Exploring\\_the\\_Use\\_of\\_Diary\\_Entries\\_for\\_Qualitative\\_Researchers\\_Mitigating\\_Challenges\\_When\\_Investigating\\_Sensitive\\_Topics\\_on\\_Indian\\_Women](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/380386362_Exploring_the_Use_of_Diary_Entries_for_Qualitative_Researchers_Mitigating_Challenges_When_Investigating_Sensitive_Topics_on_Indian_Women) (Accessed 13/09/2024)
- 14 Hofisi, C.; Hofisi, M.; and Mago, S. (2014). Critiquing Interviewing as a Data Collection Method. In: Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences. (5) pp.60-64 At: <https://doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2014.v5n16p60>. (Accessed 18/08/2022)
- 15 Ørngreen, R; and Levinsen, K. (2017). Workshops as a research methodology. In: Electronic Journal of e-Learning (15) pp. 70-81 At: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317218341\\_Workshops\\_as\\_a\\_research\\_methodology](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317218341_Workshops_as_a_research_methodology) (Accessed 02/11/2022)
- 16 Appadurai, A (2004) 'The Capacity to Aspire: Culture and the Terms of Recognition' In: Rao, V and Walton, M (eds.) Culture and Public Action (1st Ed.) California: Stanford University Press. Pp.59-84.
- 17 Collelo, T (1989) Lebanon: A Country Study. (1st Ed.) Washington: Library of Congress.
- 18 Dumper, M.; Stanley, B. (2006) Cities of the Middle East and North Africa : A Historical Encyclopaedia. (1st Ed.) California: ABC-CLIO.
- 19 Llewellyn, T. (2010) Spirit of the phoenix : Beirut and the story of Lebanon. (1st Ed.) Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books.
- 20 Hourani, A. (1983) Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798–1939 (1st Ed.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 21 Fawaz, M (N.A.) Unsettling the 'Refugee Crisis': Notes from Beirut. In: IJURR. At: <https://www.ijurr.org/spotlight-on/the-urban-refugee-crisis-reflections-on-cities-citizenship-and-the-displaced/unsettling-the-refugee-crisis-notes-from-beirut/> (Accessed 29/01/2024)
- 22 Human Rights Watch (2025) Lebanon: Destruction of Infrastructure Preventing Returns [Online] At: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2025/02/17/lebanon-destruction-of-infrastructure-preventing-returns> (Accessed 18/06/2025)
- 23 Human Rights Watch (2021) "They Killed Us from the Inside" An Investigation into the August 4 Beirut Blast [Online] At: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2021/08/03/they-killed-us-inside/investigation-august-4-beirut-blast> (Accessed 14/09/2022)

- 24 UNRWA (2023) Shatila Camp [Online] At: <https://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/lebanon/shatila-camp> (Accessed 16/04/2024)
- 25 Beirut Built Environment Database – Lebanon. Available at: <https://beirut-built-environment-database-bul-aub.hub.arcgis.com/datasets/AUB::topography-10mlines-beirut/explore?location=33.856592%2C35.515812%2C14.23> (Accessed 29/11/2024)
- 26 Dabaj, J; Maassarani, S; Rigon, A; and Conti R L (2023) Rebuilding communities through public space interventions: Co-learning from Beirut’s reconstruction after the 2020 port blast. Beirut: CatalyticAction & University College London.
- 27 El-Hibri, H. (2021) Visions of Beirut: The Urban Life of Media Infrastructure. (1st Ed.) North Carolina: Duke University Press.
- 28 CatalyticAction (2023) ‘CA Design Workshop – 2023’ Workshop, Karantina Community Centre, [Beirut], August 2-6.





# TRANSFORMATIVE LINES

## THE WORKSHOP DIARY

HOSN HOUSSAMI



### Appendix C

**Transformative Lines** is a PhD-by-Project comprising of a 40,000 word **Thesis** and accompanying **Project Portfolio**, submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of London Metropolitan University in August 2025.

This document presents Appendix C of the **Transformative Lines - Project Portfolio**.

*Please note:*

*The colour-coding within this **Workshop Diary** is used independently and does not relate to the colour-coding used across the **Transformative Lines Portfolio Drawings** and **Transformative Lines Toolkit** to identify steps in the **Transformative Lines** Approach.*

# CONTENTS

|                                            |    |
|--------------------------------------------|----|
| THE WORKSHOP DIARY - INTRODUCTION          | 6  |
| CHILD-FOCUSED PARTICIPATORY PRACTICES      | 9  |
| TRANSFORMATIVE LINES: PARTICIPATORY DESIGN | 31 |
| TRANSFORMATIVE LINES: THE WORKSHOPS        | 55 |
| WORKSHOP OUTPUT ANALYSIS                   | 73 |
| REFERENCES                                 | 99 |

## THE WORKSHOP DIARY - INTRODUCTION

The Collaborative Data Collection (CDC)<sup>1</sup> stage of the **Transformative Lines** research methodology was developed to incorporate participatory practice as a fundamental component of decolonially rooted approaches to data collection, subsequent analysis, and outputs. The objective was to ensure that the insights derived from this study accurately represent the experiences of local communities. Rather than relying solely on specialist observation techniques, the decision to employ participatory methods within the CDC aimed to centre the perspectives of the local population alongside those of the researcher.

Children are often overlooked as potential participants in co-production processes for development. It is a common misconception that they lack the experience or knowledge necessary to contribute meaningfully to discussions on urban development, despite being directly impacted by the resulting decisions. This is particularly relevant in the context of Beirut, Lebanon, where there are no formal governmental procedures for involving children in matters that concern them. Although Lebanon ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>2</sup> in 1991, Article 12 - which affirms that children capable of forming their own views have the right to express them freely in all matters affecting them — is not explicitly referenced in Lebanese legal guides<sup>3</sup> related to children's rights. Although numerous NGOs and grassroots initiatives have sought to address this gap, the opinions of children remain relatively underexplored in comparison to those of their adult resident counterparts.

While architectural surveying typically only requires legal access to the site, data collection through participatory and collaborative approaches necessitates additional planning to ensure that the process is both logistically feasible and ethically sound.

In designing the participatory research approach, I determined that collaborative workshops with targeted focus groups would serve as the primary qualitative data collection technique within the CDC. These workshops involved children from both chosen research sites (Sabra and Karantina)<sup>4</sup>, with group sizes determined based on access and population ratios. While the primary outcomes of these workshops were expected to include creative and physical outputs, embedded interviews within the sessions were conducted to supplement the data collected. Additionally, interviews conducted outside of the workshops were pursued to expand participation to include individuals of different ages, providing a broader basis for comparison during analysis.

Further, an extensive research ethics approach was undertaken to ensure the safety of all participants involved, especially children, given the volatile research context and the logistical and architectural decisions required for workshop delivery.





*Photograph from  
Workshop 2,  
Karantina*

This diary aims to introduce the concepts related to child participation that have influenced the development of the CDC. within the framework of the **Transformative Lines** approach. Part of this includes an examination of child-centred architectural workshop precedents that informed the design of the workshops facilitated for this thesis, alongside a comprehensive analysis of their structures. Additionally, a detailed summary of each workshop session, including key outputs and subsequent analysis, is provided.



# CHILD-FOCUSED PARTICIPATORY PRACTICES

|                                                   |    |
|---------------------------------------------------|----|
| CHILDREN IN PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH [GENERAL]      | 10 |
| CHILDREN IN PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH [ARCHITECTURE] | 11 |
| PERSONAL PARTICIPATORY PRACTICE                   | 12 |
| ADDRESSING WORKSHOP FORMATS                       | 16 |
| WORKSHOP PRECEDENTS                               | 17 |
| PRECEDENTS TO WORKSHOP DEVELOPMENT                | 28 |

## CHILDREN IN PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

### [GENERAL]

Decolonial research methodologies have increasingly gained prominence in academic discourse concerning research conducted in foreign localities or involving individuals from diverse backgrounds. This thesis is situated within the context of Beirut, Lebanon. While I am of Lebanese descent, employing decolonial research methodologies was a crucial ethical consideration, given that my national identity is British rather than Lebanese and that my academic background is rooted in epistemologies shaped by colonial histories. As such, engaging with decolonial approaches provided an important framework through which to critically reflect upon positionality, knowledge production, and the ethical implications of conducting research within a context to which I hold cultural ties, yet remain partially external.

Scholars such as Linda Tuhiwai Smith assert that *'every issue has been approached by Indigenous peoples with a view to rewriting and rerighting our position in history,'* and emphasise that *'Indigenous peoples want to tell our own stories, write our own versions, in our own ways, for our own purposes'* (Smith, 2021:31)<sup>5</sup>. In examining relevant literature, it became evident that the inclusion of children in collaborative research practices can be viewed as an extension of these decolonial methodologies, particularly in relation to broadening whose voices are recognised and represented within knowledge production.

While self-expression is a core element of decolonial research approaches, in relation to children, whether through decolonial approaches or otherwise, *'children and young people are expected to fit into institutional contexts, in an adult-driven framework'* (Groundwater-Smith et al., 2015:11)<sup>6</sup>. Involving children in participatory practices equally important to the inclusion of adults, particularly for researchers seeking to adopt fundamentally decolonial approaches. Children are not a homogenous group and possess unique perspectives grounded in their lived experiences; their experiences vary significantly according to social, cultural, and spatial context (Collins & Foley, 2008)<sup>7</sup>.

*'[With children] variations occur both within and between geographic boundaries; they may be governed by such macro variables as social class, ethnicity, race and gender, and through further considerations of social history and the nature of the places in which children and young people live and learn.'* (Groundwater-Smith et al., 2015:11)<sup>6</sup>.

# CHILDREN IN PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

## [ARCHITECTURE]

In the development process, children are frequently overlooked as potential contributors, despite their needs often being a primary concern. Whether discussions focus on infrastructure, educational facilities, or healthcare amenities for children, the emphasis is typically placed on safety rather than creativity, playfulness, or lived experience. However, such prioritisation can neglect the everyday experiences of children. Dudek notes that *'listening to young children [...] holds particular challenges for the architectural community, who often find their design process to be confined by limited budgets and health and safety frameworks. These constraints can limit the quality of the environment, and make it less suitable for young children'* (2005:1).<sup>8</sup>

Many environments designed by adults are not inherently suitable for children, a disparity that is especially evident in urban areas. In cities, particularly in developing regions, children often lack a sense of ownership over public spaces and are rarely granted the freedom to engage with space in imaginative ways. They may therefore seek alternative spaces in which to play and explore independently. Eyck suggests that children actively seek environments that enable free play, exploration, and imaginative interaction (2008: 23)<sup>9</sup>. This highlights the importance of recognising children not solely as passive users of space, but as active participants capable of contributing valuable insights into the environments they inhabit.

Participatory development, which emphasises a bottom-up approach, is commonly regarded as a means of creating more equitable cities. However, such approaches remain incomplete if children - a significant demographic - are not actively involved. Children offer a unique perspective on urban environments, and engaging with their viewpoints can broaden adult and designer understandings of space. Despite often lacking formal technical knowledge or resources, children's resourcefulness should be recognised and nurtured, as it can contribute to innovative spatial ideas that adult designers may not envision. Involving children in planning not only benefits communities through their distinctive outlooks but can also contribute positively to children's own development, as learning frequently occurs through observation, participation, and interaction.



## PERSONAL PARTICIPATORY PRACTICE

While centring one's own voice in research has been intended, I believe it is important to contextualise my personal interests which have informed this particular exploration of my chosen research gap within the broader architectural discourse. Participatory approaches have consistently played a fundamental role in both my academic studies and professional practice. My ongoing interest in engaging specifically with children has been evident across various activities, from initiatives undertaken during my master's programme to volunteer work related to architecture outside of formal academic settings. This interest originates from my personal enthusiasm for architecture, which developed at a young age. Both my own experiences and those of my peers have reinforced my belief in children's capacity to participate meaningfully in discussions concerning architectural and urban topics.

In designing the participatory workshops for the **Transformative Lines** thesis<sup>10</sup>, I drew upon previous workshops that I co-facilitated with children in various localities, including Athens, Greece, and London, UK. My objective was to identify common features across these workshops that fostered engaging collaboration between the child participants and facilitators. Additionally, I reflected on challenges encountered during these sessions to assess how they might be theoretically mitigated or improved.

My personal participatory practice extends beyond facilitation; I also have experience as a participant in co-productive workshops. This includes my participation in CatalyticAction's 'CA Design Workshop – 2023'<sup>11</sup> in Beirut, Lebanon, where I had the opportunity to collaborate not only with other professionals in related fields but also directly with local resident children, particularly teenage girls. These experiences informed the development of the CDC stage of the **Transformative Lines** methodology, particularly in relation to approaches to facilitation, workshop design, and the ethical considerations associated with collaborative engagement with children across different socio-spatial contexts.

## IMPROMPTU CO-PRODUCTION - ATHENS, GREECE

During an exploration of various sites in the north of the Eleonas district of Athens, Greece, a small group of my peers and I came across a seemingly abandoned children's playground. We noticed a group of young children playing on the road beside the playground and were interested in understanding why it had reached this state, whether due to limited use by the children or a lack of interest and/or capacity among adults to maintain it. The community had two playgrounds: one consisted of a well-kept private garden primarily accessible to Greek children, and the second was the playground we had originally come across. These two playgrounds served as a spatial representation of the divide within the community, both socially and economically.

We decided to host impromptu drawing workshops across three consecutive afternoons, with increasing numbers of children joining each day. Through translation applications, we asked the children to draw what they considered their dream afternoon, with most opting to depict themselves playing in a colourful playground with their friends. As these workshops were intended to contribute to our personal research, we felt it necessary to contribute to the children in some way. In this sense, co-production was understood as requiring mutual benefit for all parties involved.

We proceeded to organise a spontaneous 48-hour fundraiser to reinvigorate the abandoned playground. The fundraiser gained enough traction to enable us to afford to buy paints, tools, and even toys. We informed the children of our plans the evening prior and were surprised to find a large group of them waiting to join us in fixing restoring their playground. As we were working, two Greek men arrived on site after noticing the work undertaken and offered to help. According to our understanding of the area and previous explanations of community relations, this represented one of the first recorded interactions between Roma children and their Greek adult neighbours.

The children sought greater ownership of over their place of play, understanding that their ambitions for the space could be realised through some of their own efforts. In addition to this, the restoration process became a forum for the two different groups within the community to collaborate and acknowledge each other as equals. Despite existing tensions between Roma children and Greek adults, the collaborative restoration of the playground appeared to temporarily bridge divisions within the community through a shared process of collective action.



*Photographs from Impromptu Collaborative Drawing Session and Playground Rehabilitation with Children in Athens, Greece*

## COLLABORATIVE CONVERSATIONS - LONDON, UK

In 2019, I collaborated with three peers to facilitate a mapping workshop as part of a preliminary project for our Master's degree. The workshop was hosted by The Woodcraft Folk<sup>12</sup> and took place in a community hall, at a children's club. To engage the participants effectively, we asked the children to design their ideal club spaces.

While the elements of the physical outputs - such as maps and drawings - were expected, what proved particularly insightful was the children's awareness of space, both physically and socially, as demonstrated through collaborative conversations. They identified areas associated with familiarity and social meaning, while also describing zones where they felt free to occupy space and areas where they sensed they were unwelcome, even in the absence of explicit cues.

The first tangible outcome from this exercise was the neighbourhood maps created by the children. In the subgroup that I facilitated, the maps highlighted important landmarks, such as schools, homes, the community hall, playgrounds, and local shops, often depicted in a seemingly arbitrary arrangement. When asked about their choices, the children explained that these landmarks represented places they visited frequently or with which they had a strong emotional connection. Interestingly, the spatial placement of landmarks on the maps did not necessarily correspond to real-world distances; places drawn close together might in reality be geographically distant, and vice versa. This revealed an alternative understanding of spatial perception and movement, highlighting a conceptual hierarchy in which certain spaces were prioritised and emphasised over others.

The third activity - drawing an ideal club space - appeared to prompt more forward-looking and aspirational thinking. Unlike the previous tasks, which focused primarily on recollection and observation, this activity required the children to imagine future possibilities. It was notable that, during the earlier tasks, children worked independently with minimal peer influence; however, in this phase, there was a natural tendency towards collective discussion. The children demonstrated an understanding that the proposed club space should serve all members rather than individual preferences alone. They considered practical aspects, such as noise levels and cleanliness, reflecting a developing sense of shared ownership and collective responsibility.



*Photograph from Workshop with Child Residents regarding Improvement to Local Park in London, UK*

The insights gained from these activities significantly enhanced my understanding of the local area and informed the development of subsequent project proposals. The children's feedback highlighted existing issues while also identifying valued community elements that should be incorporated into design considerations, ensuring that their voices contributed meaningfully to community-centred planning. This experience further reinforced the value of participatory engagement with children, particularly in revealing social and spatial understandings that may otherwise remain overlooked through conventional architectural methods.

## RESEARCHER TO PARTICIPANT - BIERUT, LEBANON



*Photograph  
from Catalytic  
Action's 'CA  
Design Workshop  
– 2023' in Beirut,  
Lebanon*

The CatalyticAction 'CA Design Workshop - 2023'<sup>11</sup> centred on the theme of gender inequalities and their manifestation within the built environment. Over the course of a week, participants engaged in reflective activities and sought to develop spatial solutions applicable to public spaces. The workshop comprised both fieldwork and desktop research components. During the fieldwork activities, participants visited various sites across Lebanon, including Mar Mikhael in Beirut, El Mina in North Lebanon, and the Bekaa Valley, to observe differing urban contexts firsthand.

The desktop component involved close collaboration with the CA team to co-design context-specific interventions. These activities took place at a community centre in the Karantina neighbourhood, which had been rehabilitated following the 2020 Beirut port explosion. The objective was to contribute to advancing spatial justice through targeted public space interventions within the local community.

Our investigation began with on-site visits focused on analysing existing urban challenges and identifying potential design responses. A key aspect of the process involved assessing how co-designed public spaces could promote greater inclusion and equality. Engaging with residents of diverse ages, genders, and backgrounds ensured that proposed interventions were rooted in community participation. This approach was further reinforced through collaborative activities with teenage female residents, including the co-design of a mural that reflected themes of empowerment for young women in the neighbourhood.

Participating in the CA workshop provided a valuable opportunity to transition from the role of researcher or workshop facilitator to that of an active participant. The workshop context was familiar to me, enabling me to draw upon prior knowledge to deepen my engagement with the assigned tasks. During sessions with local youth residents, I utilised skills developed through previous participatory workshops with children and adapted them to engage with an older demographic. This experience provided valuable comparative insights, enabling reflection on how broader social and spatial inequalities are experienced across different age groups and reinforcing the importance of participatory engagement beyond childhood contexts.

# ADDRESSING WORKSHOP FORMATS

Before designing the workshops, it was essential to establish access to the respective sites. This was accomplished through partnerships with local facilitators. In Karantina, my facilitator was CatalyticAction<sup>13</sup>, an architectural NGO that has been active in the neighbourhood since the 2020 Beirut Blast<sup>14</sup>, facilitating numerous live-build projects and participatory activities focused on children. In Sabra, my facilitator was the AICP<sup>15</sup>, an Islamic NGO operating globally with several educational facilities across Lebanon, including multiple primary schools.

These partnerships were instrumental in securing site access and establishing connections with child participants, as well as determining workshop duration and defining the scope of engagement. Each facilitator provided a location to host the workshops: a small community room in Karantina and traditional classrooms in Sabra. This, in turn, established the physical scale at which the workshops could be conducted.

Regarding participants, in Karantina, due to space limitations at the workshop site, CatalyticAction formulated a list of approximately 20 potential child participants. In Sabra, given the school-level access provided by AICP, I was responsible for determining the number of children to involve. Considering population ratios, school schedules, and the timeline of my research project, I determined that facilitating four classes involving approximately 100 children in Sabra would provide a suitable basis for comparison with participation levels in Karantina. These logistical differences inevitably shaped the structure and scale of participation across both sites, requiring the workshops to be adapted according to their respective spatial and institutional contexts.

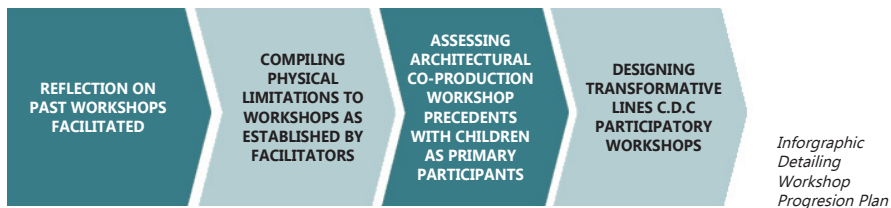
| KARANTINA                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | SABRA                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Facilitator:</b><br/>CatalyticAction</p> <p><b>Workshop Site:</b><br/>Karantina Public Park Community Room</p> <p><b>Site Area:</b><br/>12m2, Open Plan</p> <p><b>Number of child Participants:</b><br/>20</p> <p><b>Potential Workshop Days/Lengths:</b><br/>Saturdays, 2-3 hours</p> | <p><b>Facilitator:</b><br/>AICP</p> <p><b>Workshop Site:</b><br/>Classrooms at AICP Hidaya Primary School Sabra</p> <p><b>Site Area:</b><br/>25m2, Desk Limitations</p> <p><b>Number of child Participants:</b><br/>100</p> <p><b>Potential Workshop Days/Lengths:</b><br/>Weekdays, 50 minutes</p> |

Chart Detailing  
Base Workshop  
Details as  
Established by  
Facilitators Across  
Each Site



## WORKSHOP PRECEDENTS

Building on my prior participatory experience and considering the logistical constraints established by my facilitators, I encountered a challenge in determining the most appropriate workshop formats. Rather than focusing solely on the desired analytical data outcomes, I chose to evaluate existing architectural workshops involving children. The objective was to analyse the physical and analytical outputs of these workshops and consider how such frameworks might be adapted and integrated into my own research design. Although it may seem unconventional to review precedents before defining the intended outcomes of my own workshops, this approach enabled me to identify successful and unsuccessful strategies through an iterative process of evaluation, rather than assessing them retrospectively.



## PRECEDENT ASSESSMENT CATAGORIES

I looked at several workshops based in various locations, both contemporary and historical, and assessed them based on several categories:

- Originality of the workshop format
- Accessibility
- Ease of understanding
- Appropriate age range
- Tools required
- Time required
- Type of output generated (physical and/or theoretical)

This comparative assessment enabled a more informed understanding of how workshop structures, activities, and outputs could be adapted to suit the specific ethical, spatial, and logistical requirements of the **Transformative Lines** research context.

# THE PYRAMID WORKSHOP - NIGEL FROST

|                          |                                     |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Originality of workshop: | Nigel Frost                         |
| Accessibility:           | High; little limitations.           |
| Ease of understanding:   | Easy                                |
| Age limit:               | 6-12 (Research Range)               |
| Tools required:          | Light Weight Construction Materials |
| Time required:           | 1 day                               |
| Output generated:        | Physical                            |

## The Pyramid Workshop:<sup>16</sup>

A workshop leader demonstrates and explains with clarity and precision how to fix the materials together, in stages to make specific architectural and engineering forms such as triangular trusses or portal frame arches. Participants start with just six sticks and four rubber bands to make one small tetrahedron each. These are then assembled until only one very large pyramid remains.

REDACTED

*Frost, N (1991)  
The Pyramid  
Workshop*

## DEEPER UNDERGROUND - RIBA

|                                 |                                                   |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Originality of workshop:</b> | RIBA                                              |
| <b>Accessibility:</b>           | Medium; some limitations.                         |
| <b>Ease of understanding:</b>   | Medium                                            |
| <b>Age limit:</b>               | 7-10                                              |
| <b>Tools required:</b>          | Sketch tools, Light Weight Construction Materials |
| <b>Time required:</b>           | 2 Days                                            |
| <b>Output generated:</b>        | Theoretical and Physical                          |

### Deeper Underground:<sup>17</sup>

Explore the potential of underground dwelling and infrastructure through making, designing, and play. Begin with a game asking children to imagine they are underground. Further, ask them to draw what they imagined.

Discussion circles related to proposed designs. Reconsideration of designs through a making session, where children are asked to make 3D representations of their designs.

**REDACTED**

*RIBA (2022)  
Deeper  
Underground  
Workshop*

## LET'S BUILD - MATT + FIONA

|                                 |                                                   |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Originality of workshop:</b> | MATT + FIONA                                      |
| <b>Accessibility:</b>           | Medium; some limitations.                         |
| <b>Ease of understanding:</b>   | Medium                                            |
| <b>Age limit:</b>               | 10                                                |
| <b>Tools required:</b>          | Sketch tools, Light Weight Construction Materials |
| <b>Time required:</b>           | 1-2 Weeks                                         |
| <b>Output generated:</b>        | Theoretical and Physical                          |

### Let's Build:<sup>18</sup>

Explore the requirements of outdoor performance spaces by addressing four distinct questions: What is a performance space? What is a good performance space? Can spaces have multiple uses? And what does this space look like?

These questions are addressed through design workshops and construction sessions.

**REDACTED**

## ARCHITECTURE IN SCHOOLS - OPEN CITY

|                                 |                           |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Originality of workshop:</b> | Open City                 |
| <b>Accessibility:</b>           | Medium; some limitations. |
| <b>Ease of understanding:</b>   | Medium                    |
| <b>Age limit:</b>               | 7-12                      |
| <b>Tools required:</b>          | Sketch tools              |
| <b>Time required:</b>           | 2-4 Weeks                 |
| <b>Output generated:</b>        | Theoretical               |

### Architecture in Schools:<sup>19</sup>

Begin by asking students to consider the functions of certain spaces: who will use the space? How can it be accessed? Is it sustainable? After proving ideas through these questions, lead students through a process of creating a project portfolio complete with photographs, sketches, and notes documenting their design process for a new architectural space.

**REDACTED**

*Open City (2018)  
Architecture in  
Schools*



## POWER DRESSING - RIBA

|                                 |                                                   |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Originality of workshop:</b> | RIBA                                              |
| <b>Accessibility:</b>           | Medium; some limitations.                         |
| <b>Ease of understanding:</b>   | Medium                                            |
| <b>Age limit:</b>               | 7-10                                              |
| <b>Tools required:</b>          | Sketch tools, Light Weight Construction Materials |
| <b>Time required:</b>           | 2 Days                                            |
| <b>Output generated:</b>        | Physical                                          |

### **Power Dressing:<sup>20</sup>**

Explore architecture as a wearable element. Ask children to design and make their own colourful architectural costume and model it on a collaborative catwalk.

**REDACTED**

## BOX CITY - CUBE

|                                 |                           |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Originality of workshop:</b> | CUBE                      |
| <b>Accessibility:</b>           | High; little limitations. |
| <b>Ease of understanding:</b>   | Easy                      |
| <b>Age limit:</b>               | 6-12 (Research Range)     |
| <b>Tools required:</b>          | Lego Blocks               |
| <b>Time required:</b>           | 5 days                    |
| <b>Output generated:</b>        | Physical                  |

### Box City:<sup>21</sup>

Each child creates a 10 cm figure, a “citizen” for their Box City. Then, each child is issued a “building permit” for a building or landscape feature (public; commercial; residential; recreational; industrial/transportation; or green space).

Next, children construct their model buildings. Older children map out the city, preparing the “base map” of landscape, roads, rivers, signs, etc. Child “planners” may also determine the layout of the town, i.e., which specific buildings will be placed where.

**REDACTED**

*Learn by Design  
(2011) Box City*

## COMMUNAL PLAY + SPACE - DESIGNTINKERS

|                                 |                                                   |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Originality of workshop:</b> | DesignTinkers                                     |
| <b>Accessibility:</b>           | High; little limitations.                         |
| <b>Ease of understanding:</b>   | Easy                                              |
| <b>Age limit:</b>               | 6-12 (Research Range)                             |
| <b>Tools required:</b>          | Sketch tools, Light Weight Construction Materials |
| <b>Time required:</b>           | 3 Days                                            |
| <b>Output generated:</b>        | Theoretical and Physical                          |

### **Communal Play + Space:<sup>22</sup>**

A project-based workshop where children will be re-imagining communal play; working in groups, children are encouraged to explore ways to keep their playground accessible to children (and adults) of all abilities, promoting inclusive play for all.

Children will also be exploring types of structural framing systems that could be introduced as key features in their playground design. As they brainstorm and get hands-on in the design, making, and building of their ultimate dream playground.

**REDACTED**

|                                 |                           |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Originality of workshop:</b> | ARUP                      |
| <b>Accessibility:</b>           | High; little limitations. |
| <b>Ease of understanding:</b>   | Easy                      |
| <b>Age limit:</b>               | 6-12 (Research Range)     |
| <b>Tools required:</b>          | Lego Blocks               |
| <b>Time required:</b>           | 1 Day                     |
| <b>Output generated:</b>        | Physical                  |

### Reclaim Play:<sup>23</sup>

Using LEGO blocks prompts children to build replicas of their homes or play spaces. Additionally, ask them to use the GO blocks to add to or alter these spaces to better reflect what they would want from a location.

**REDACTED**

ARUP (2018)  
Reclaim Play

## PLACE TO LEARN - LEARN BY DESIGN

|                                 |                                                   |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Originality of workshop:</b> | Learn by Design                                   |
| <b>Accessibility:</b>           | Medium; some limitations.                         |
| <b>Ease of understanding:</b>   | Medium                                            |
| <b>Age limit:</b>               | 8-12                                              |
| <b>Tools required:</b>          | Sketch tools, Light Weight Construction Materials |
| <b>Time required:</b>           | 10 days                                           |
| <b>Output generated:</b>        | Physical                                          |

### Place to Learn:<sup>24</sup>

Children are asked to design or redesign one classroom, a larger school area, a school entryway, a community school - including play spaces and places to learn about nature.

The first task is to generate ideas: brainstorm, list, sketch, diagram. Considerations include the size and shape of areas, circulation patterns, and the relationships of areas to adjacent rooms and the outdoors. The children are asked to describe the solution through a prototype (drawing or model); practicing those skills, they draw scale plans and build 3D scale models.

**REDACTED**



## “JUNK” PLAY INFLUENCED - C. T. SORENSEN

|                                 |                                 |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Originality of workshop:</b> | As influenced by C. T. Sorensen |
| <b>Accessibility:</b>           | Medium; some limitations.       |
| <b>Ease of understanding:</b>   | Medium                          |
| <b>Age limit:</b>               | 8-12                            |
| <b>Tools required:</b>          | Waste Material                  |
| <b>Time required:</b>           | 1 days                          |
| <b>Output generated:</b>        | Physical                        |

### “Junk” Play:<sup>25</sup>

Influenced by the Emdrup Playground, children are offered an outdoor space with a pile of ‘junk’. They are at liberty to play and create what they want while being supervised.

REDACTED

*Sørensen, C. T.  
(1943) Emdrup  
Playground*

## PRECEDENTS TO WORKSHOP DEVELOPMENT

As previously explained, my objectives for the workshops were developed following the preliminary studies on workshop precedents. This sequence emerged because my data collection framework, which later evolved into the **Transformative Lines'** Dual-Data Collection Strategy<sup>26</sup>, comprised both the Architectural Data Collection (ADC) and Collaborative Data Collection (CDC). These dual strategies were established concurrently with the workshop planning process. In defining my intentions for the ADC, I was able to identify relevant data points for the cross-analytical interpretation of data derived from the CDC and, more specifically, determine the themes and topics that the workshops should address.



*Screenshot from  
Transformative  
Lines Workshop  
Planning Miro  
Board*

Additionally, it was important to consider the children's prior experience with architectural exercises. In Karantina, child participants generally had extensive experience with participatory architectural practices. Conversely, based on information provided by their head teacher, the children in Sabra appeared to have little to no prior experience in this area. It was therefore clear that, within the workshop design, I needed to consider ways of introducing children to architectural concepts and relevant themes while simultaneously advancing the broader research objectives underpinning the workshops. As a result, the workshop structure required sufficient flexibility to accommodate differing levels of familiarity while ensuring that meaningful and comparable data could still be generated across both sites.

THESIS AIMS

To articulate the individual experiences of chosen residents within the city of Beirut and to discover hidden collective narratives and aspirations among a selected focus group.



PRECEDENT STUDIES

Addressing the literature on child-focused architectural participatory practice. Assessing the intentions of these practices and evaluating their success.



KEY ELEMENTS OF WORKSHOP DESIGN

SCALE & TIME

Workshop activities should consider the collaboration between groups formed of divisions of 20 (groups of 2/4), and a time constraint of a minimum of 50 minutes.

MATERIALS & SPACE

Workshop activities should be achievable within the spatial limitations of a traditional school desk. Materials should be sourced locally, and equipment should be safe for use by children.

OUTPUTS

Physical architectural-inspired outputs, such as drawings and models, all focused on the themes of experience, city planning, and child-focused development.



WORKSHOP DESIGN

3 to 4 productive workshops designed with a progressive framework to ease children into themes, concepts, and technical abilities.

Infographic  
Detailing  
Structure of  
Workshop Design



# TRANSFORMATIVE LINES: PARTICIPATORY DESIGN

|                                    |    |
|------------------------------------|----|
| INTRODUCTION                       | 32 |
| WORKSHOP AIMS                      | 33 |
| WORKSHOP SPACE LAYOUT              | 34 |
| WORKSHOP DESIGN PROCESS            | 36 |
| THE TRANSFORMATIVE LINES WORKSHOPS | 38 |
| WORKSHOP FOCUS GROUPS              | 43 |
| WORKSHOP TIMELINES                 | 44 |
| CHILD SAFEGUARDING                 | 46 |
| CONSENT/ ASSENT FORMS              | 48 |
| INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE            | 54 |



## INTRODUCTION

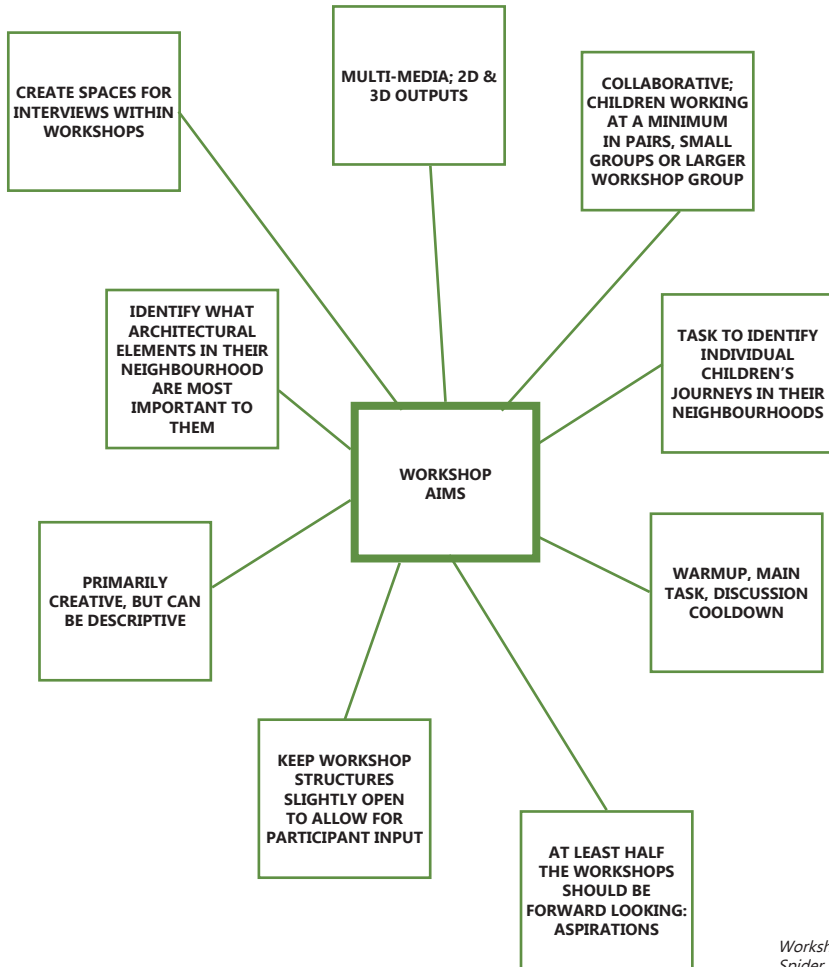
The workshop design process was a critical component of the thesis's methodological framework, alongside the facilitation of sessions and the outcomes they yielded. Establishing a coherent progression between workshops was essential, as I worked with the same group of children throughout each stage of the series. Additionally, key considerations included ensuring the careful structuring of interactions with participants to maintain safety and adhere to ethical standards.

Understanding the materials and tools to be used in relation to the occupied space was also important, necessitating the inclusion of a health and safety introduction within each workshop. Furthermore, given the sensitive and personal nature of the information shared by the children, it was necessary to allocate time for reaffirming my position as a researcher and obtaining informed assent from participants during each session.

While these considerations may be viewed as bureaucratic procedural requirements, they were fundamental to maintaining the ethical integrity of the research and directly influenced the timeframe available within each session. Given the limited duration of approximately 50 minutes per session, it was not feasible to complete all planned activities within a single workshop. Therefore, activity design had to account for these temporal constraints, requiring exercises to be carefully structured and prioritised according to both research objectives and participant capacity. This also reinforced the importance of developing workshop activities that were adaptable, accessible, and capable of generating meaningful engagement within a constrained timeframe.

## WORKSHOP AIMS

The first formal step in designing the workshops specific to this fieldwork was to determine the primary aims of the workshops as a collective, both in terms of their implementation and intended outputs. I aimed to keep these objectives relatively simple to allow flexibility throughout the subsequent design stages. This flexibility was particularly important given the differing participant groups, spatial conditions, and logistical constraints across the two research sites.



*Workshop Aims  
Spider Diagram*

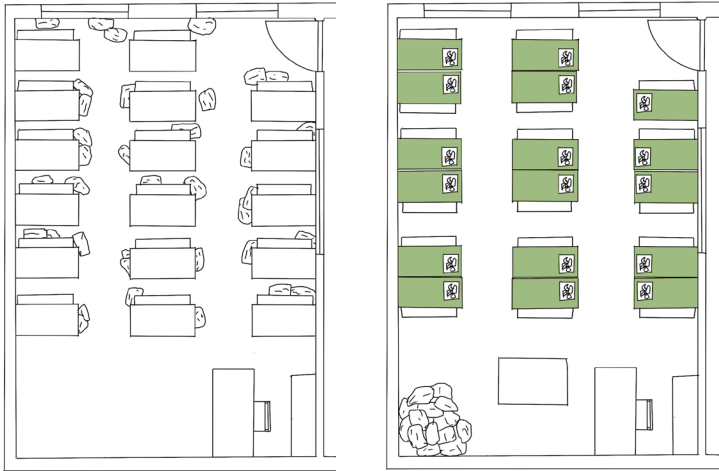
# WORKSHOP SPACE LAYOUTS

The workshop environments played a crucial role in determining the scope and format of the activities conducted. Each facilitator, CatalyticAction and AICP, provided different types of spaces in which to host the workshops.

## SABRA WORKSHOP SPACE

In Sabra, the primary available spaces were classrooms, which required adaptation due to the existing furniture occupying much of the available area. Prior to each workshop, I rearranged the desks to position groups of four students facing one another, fostering a more collaborative and discussion-oriented environment.

Sketch of Workshop Room, Sabra As Normal Classroom, and as Workshop Space



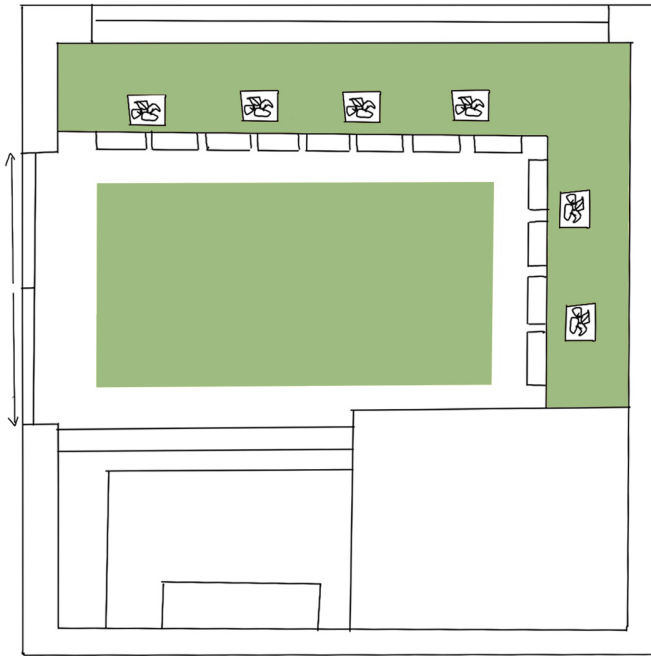
Map of Workshop Location, Sabra



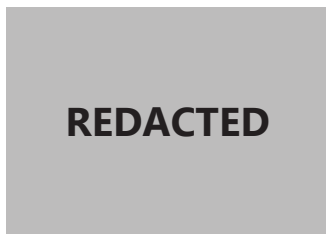
REDACTED

Hidaya School Facade by AICP

## KARANTINA WORKSHOP SPACE



*Sketch of  
Workshop Room,  
Karantina*



Catalytic Action' Karantina Playground by  
Mauricio Yazbek.



*Map of  
Workshop  
Location,  
Karantina*

In Karantina, CatalyticAction provided access to the Public Community Room within Karantina Public Park. This space was sufficiently large to accommodate workshops with up to 20 participants when activities required limited spatial movement. For larger-scale activities, participant capacity was reduced accordingly. Activities were adapted to take place either along the perimeter desks or within the open-plan centre of the room, depending on the spatial requirements of the exercise. These contrasting spatial conditions necessitated flexibility in workshop delivery, reinforcing the importance of adapting activities to suit both participant needs and the physical limitations of each setting.

# WORKSHOP DESIGN PROCESS

I had planned for four workshops to be conducted throughout the fieldwork period, scheduled across three trips over the course of a year. Distributing the workshops in this manner was intended to provide opportunities to analyse outcomes in conjunction with the ADC and to adapt subsequent workshops accordingly.

These four workshops were designed to explore various topics related to children’s experiences within their neighbourhoods. I also envisioned the final workshop as being more comprehensive than the earlier sessions, culminating in an interactive physical output, such as a live-build activity or exhibition.

I decided to focus on theoretical scale as a means of structuring both the sequence of the workshops and their anticipated outputs, progressively shifting from a broader town/existing condition scale toward a more focused site/aspirational scale. This approach followed a more traditional architectural design process, moving from town, to street, to design intervention. Structuring the workshops in this way also enabled earlier cross-comparison with the ADC maps within the participatory process.

| THEME             | WORKSHOP 1                                      | WORKSHOP 2                                              | WORKSHOP 3                                            | WORKSHOP 4                                      |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
|                   | Mapping Neighbourhood and Journeries            | Designing Ideal Street                                  | Designing Ideal Space for Children                    | Building Ideal Space for Children               |
|                   | Single Session                                  | Single Session                                          | Single Session                                        | Multiple Sessions                               |
|                   | Theoretical Scale: Town<br>Physical Scale: 1x1m | Theoretical Scale: Street<br>Physical Scale: 30x30x30cm | Theoretical Scale: Site<br>Physical Scale: 30x30x30cm | Theoretical Scale: Site<br>Physical Scale: 5x5m |
|                   | 2D Mapping;<br>Drawing Exercise                 | 3D Designing;<br>Decoration Exercise                    | 3D Modelling;<br>Forming Exercise                     | 3D Build;<br>Construction Exercise              |
| CONCEPTUAL OUTPUT | Drawing                                         | Model                                                   | Model                                                 | Combination                                     |

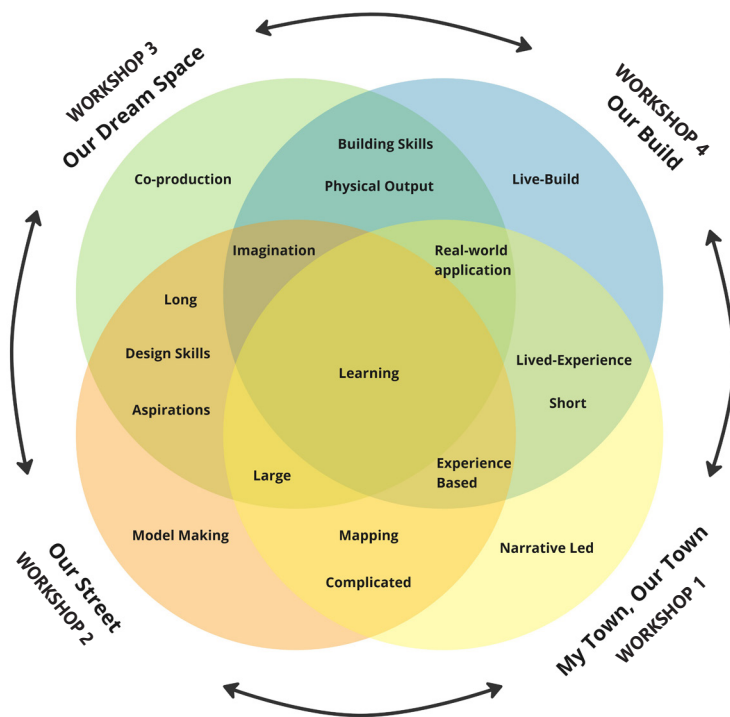
Initial  
Workshop  
Design  
Chart

### ESTABLISHED ADVANTAGES

- Facilitated a more efficient development of the Toolkit.
- Reflected a process commonly employed within architectural practice.
- Followed a progression from 'existing' conditions to 'proposed' interventions.

### EXPECTED LIMITATIONS

- For this demographic, shifting scales between Workshop 1 and Workshop 2 may have posed challenges for children's comprehension.
- Children may find it easier to engage with scale progressively from 'small to large' rather than 'large to small'.



*Participatory  
Workshop  
Child Learning  
Development  
Venn Diagram*

As part of the workshop design process, I also wanted to consider how these workshops might positively contribute to children's learning and development, while simultaneously functioning as engaging and participatory activities. This required balancing the research objectives of the thesis with activities that remained accessible, enjoyable, and developmentally appropriate for participants.



## THE TRANSFORMATIVE LINES WORKSHOPS

The **Transformative Lines** workshops for the Collaborative Data Collection (CDC), conducted as part of the thesis methodology, comprised four individual workshop formats, each centred on a distinct topic and producing a different physical output. The workshops were designed to progress sequentially, guiding participants through a narrative transition from personal experiences towards future aspirations. The series began with Workshop 1 – Our Town, which reflected children's existing experiences and understandings of their neighbourhoods. This initial session was followed by workshops focused on hypothetical and aspirational thinking: Workshop 2 – Our Street and Workshop 3 – Our Space. The series was intended to conclude with Workshop 4 – Our Build, which would have involved a physical architectural realisation of concepts developed throughout the preceding workshops. In this way, the workshop sequence was structured to move from reflection on existing conditions towards collaborative spatial imagination and, ultimately, material intervention.

### W1 – Our Town

Group drawing activity where children were given the opportunity to develop their mapping skills by mapping their towns in a collaborative process.

Narrative based mapping, test for co-production and insight to what 'local demographic' perceive as locations of importance.

### W2 – Our Street

Design activity where children are asked to 'build' different social structures and through collaborative discussions, co-design a street from the individual structures.

Participatory assessment of local needs by chosen demographic, considering which structures and spaces children justify as essential.

### W3 – Our Space

Design activity where children were asked to design a social space.

To offer children opportunity to create and establish preferences with co-production as the primary method of creation.

### W4 – Our Build

Design and build activity based around either Workshop 1&2, or Workshop 3, to create a community space through the lens of the children.

Live build aimed at promoting the children's own desires for their neighbourhoods, realised in a physical form.

*Transformative  
Lines Workshop  
Series Infographic*

## WORKSHOP 1 - OUR TOWN

### BREIF

A collective drawing activity where children will use mapping skills while associating them with locations they already know.

### INSTRUCTIONS

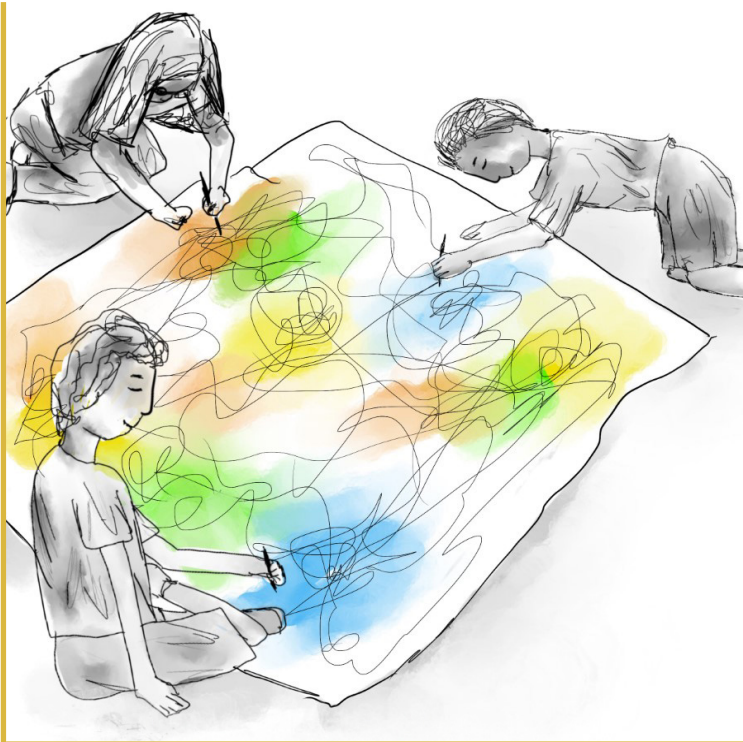
- In teams, children will be given large spans of fabric.
- They will be asked to view their school or common location as a central point.
- From here, children will be asked to draw their towns growing out of the school, promoted by questions regarding their journey to school, where they live, where they go frequently, and where they play.

### MATERIALS/TOOLS

- Fabric
- Pens
- Post-it Notes

### RELATION TO WIDER THESIS

Narrative-based mapping, a test for co-production, and insights into what 'local demographics' perceive as locations of importance.



Sketch from  
'Workshop  
1 - Our Town'  
Design Planning

## WORKSHOP 2 - OUR STREET

### BREIF

Children will be asked to 'build' their own streets, teaching them cooperation skills, 3D-making skills, and critical assessment skills.

### INSTRUCTIONS

- As a larger group, children will be questioned about what they think an 'ideal street' needs: e.g., a school, playground, restaurant, shop.
- In pairs, they will be assigned one block to build one of the architectural structure smentioned in the discussion.
- Following the build, the wider group will be asked to assess how each block should sit on the 'street': e.g., should the school be next to the playground, etc.?

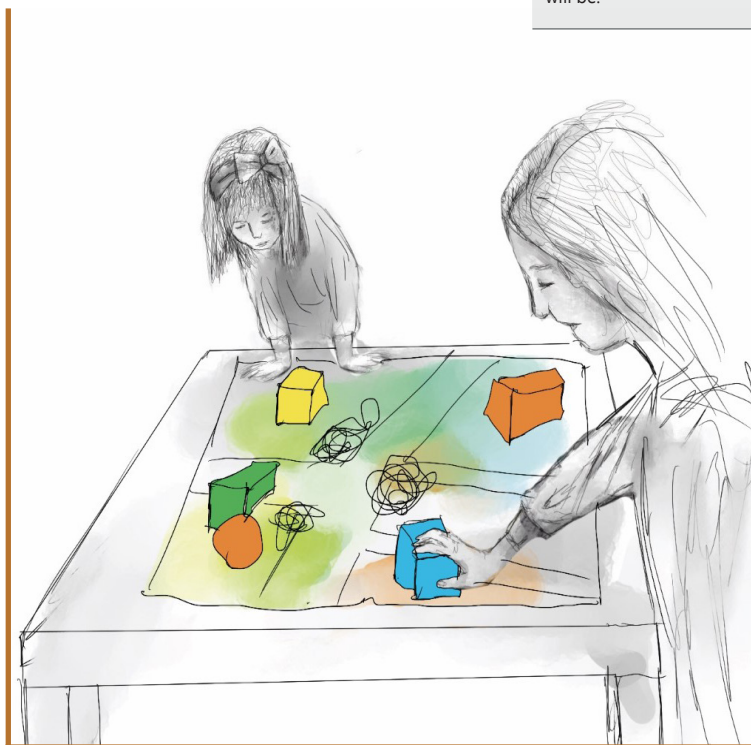
### MATERIALS/TOOLS

- Paper
- Pencils
- Pens
- Cardboard
- Coloured Card

### RELATION TO WIDER THESIS

Co-production / participatory assessment of local needs by the chosen demographic.

This will give the researcher an idea of where children assume the highest value location for a play space will be.



Sketch from  
'Workshop  
2 - Our Street'  
Design Planning

## WORKSHOP 3 - OUR SPACE

### BREIF

Children will be asked to design a space, combining skills learned in the first two workshops (understanding spatiality, 2D drawing, 3D making).

### INSTRUCTIONS

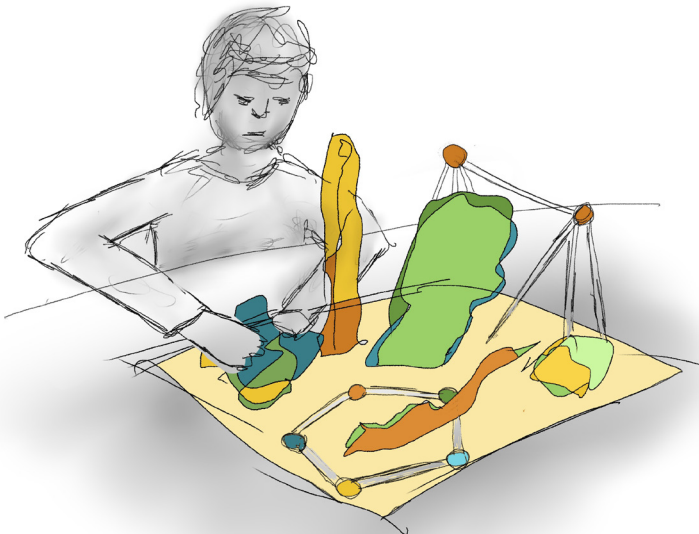
- Children individually will be asked to design their dream space.
- They will then come together in small teams, where they will be asked to work together to create a dream space from their designs.
- From this, they will be asked to create a model of their dream space.

### MATERIALS/TOOLS

- Paper
- Pencils
- Pens
- Modelling material

### RELATION TO WIDER THESIS

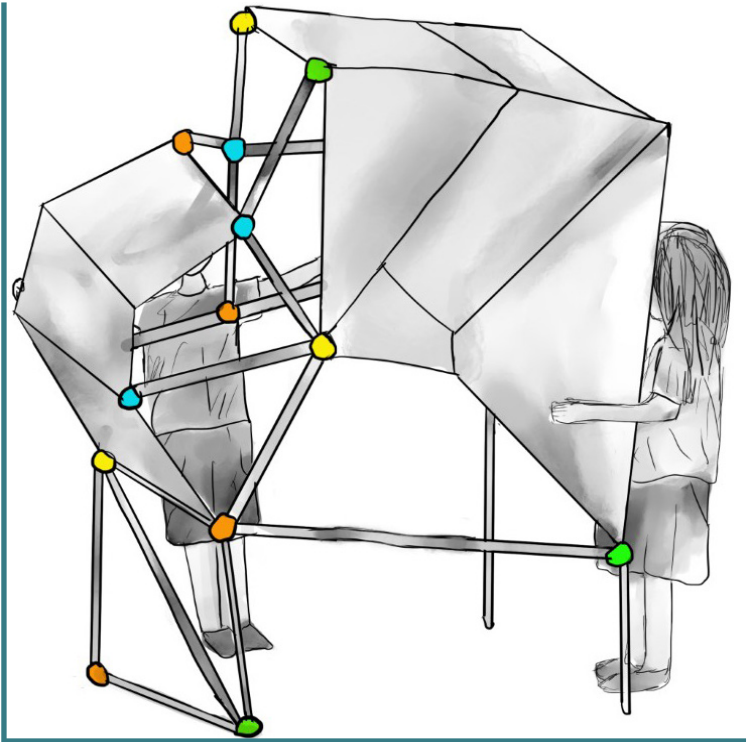
To offer children a space to create individually but then establish co-production as the primary method of development, with designs to be used to influence the creation of the space.



Sketch from  
'Workshop  
3 - Our Space'  
Design Planning

# WORKSHOP 4 - OUR BUILD

| BREIF                                                                                                                                                        | INSTRUCTIONS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | MATERIALS/TOOLS                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Using outputs from previous workshops, children will be given the opportunity to build their own temporary structure and curate an exhibition of their work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Children will spend time designing an exhibit of their work, making spatial decisions.</li><li>- With a team of adult participants, children will build their designs.</li><li>- Ending with a community-wide celebration of their work.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Timber</li><li>- Brick</li><li>- Rope</li><li>- Paint</li><li>- Previous Outputs</li></ul>         |
|                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | RELATION TO WIDER THESIS                                                                                                                   |
|                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | To offer children a physical output of their imaginaries. Showing them the steps between collective aspiration and collective realisation. |



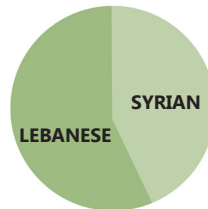
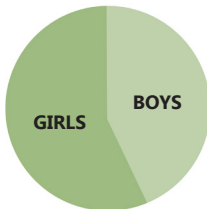
Sketch from  
'Workshop  
4 - Our Build'  
Design Planning

## WORKSHOP FOCUS GROUPS

As previously described, I was offered the opportunity to work with a larger number of children in Sabra than in Karantina. As a result, it was important to accurately identify the backgrounds of participating children in order to develop a more cohesive understanding of how potential outcomes might reflect the social composition of the respective neighbourhoods. Consideration of participant demographics was therefore important in contextualising the findings and identifying potential variations in experiences, perspectives, and spatial understandings across both sites.

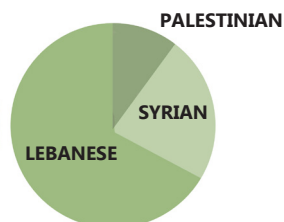
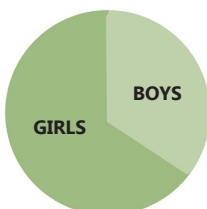
### PARTICIPATORY WORKSHOP FOCUS GROUP - KARANTINA

|                                   |                                                         |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| NUMBER OF WORKSHOP GROUPS         | 1                                                       |
| NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS PER GROUP  | 13                                                      |
| GENDER DIVERSITY<br>(GIRLS, BOYS) | ETHNIC DIVERSITY RATIO<br>(LEBANESE:SYRIAN:PALESTINIAN) |
| G:7, B:6                          | L:7, S:6, P:0                                           |



### PARTICIPATORY WORKSHOP FOCUS GROUPS - SABRA

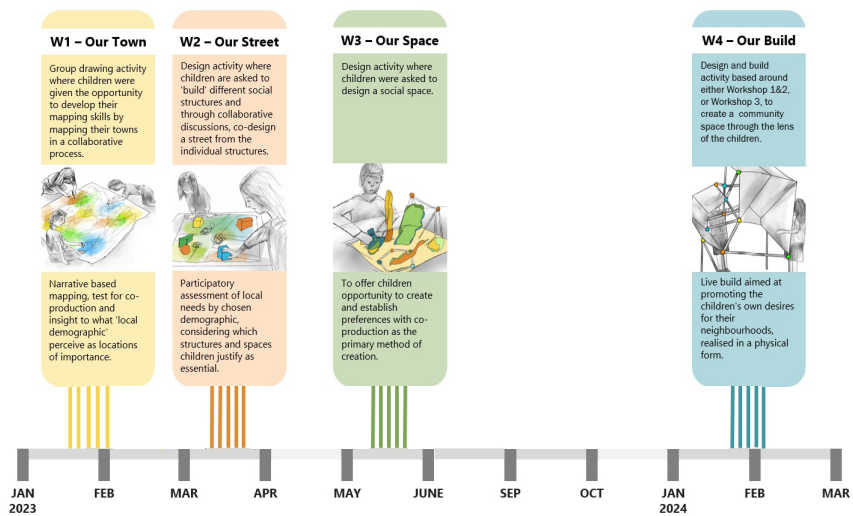
|                                  |                                                   |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| NUMBER OF WORKSHOP GROUPS        | 4<br>(2b, 2c, 5a, 5c)                             |
| NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS PER GROUP | Total: 103-107<br>2b:25, 2c:28-32, 5a:26, 5c:24   |
| GENDER DIVERSITY<br>(GIRLS:BOYS) | ETHNIC DIVERSITY<br>(LEBANESE:SYRIAN:PALESTINIAN) |
| G:56-58, B:47-49                 | L:68-70, S:21-23, P:14                            |





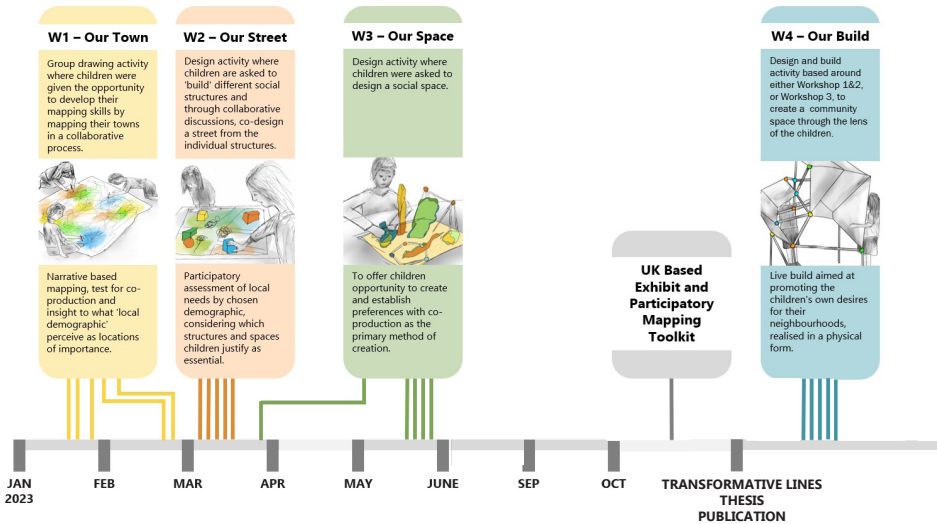
# WORKSHOP TIMELINES

Site-based research often presents unforeseen challenges, requiring researchers to adapt their initial plans accordingly. I originally scheduled three distinct fieldwork trips to Beirut, Lebanon: January–March 2023, May–September 2023, and January–March 2024. However, during the first field trip, Beirut experienced earthquakes<sup>27</sup>, which resulted in the postponement of workshops for several weeks.



*Transformative  
Lines Workshops  
Timeline as  
Proposed Prior to  
Fieldwork*

More significantly, the outbreak of the Israel-Gaza conflict<sup>28</sup> and the escalation of violence affecting Lebanon, which began between the second and third field trips, led to the suspension of all plans for the final phase of fieldwork, including the planned Workshop 4. These disruptions required methodological adaptation and inevitably affected the scope and sequencing of the participatory process, limiting the originally intended continuity between workshop phases.



*Transformative Lines Workshops Timeline as Realise through Fieldwork*

## CHILD SAFEGUARDING

A key consideration in ethics and safeguarding when working with children is obtaining informed consent. I reviewed relevant literature to determine whether children are capable of providing consent for participation in research activities of this nature. This exploration included a range of considerations, such as obtaining consent directly from children, from their parents or guardians, and the relevant governmental regulations governing these processes.

Consultations with my facilitators and NGOs with prior experience conducting research in Lebanon, alongside my own investigation, indicated that there was no formal requirement for ethics approval for this type of research within Lebanon. Similarly, no clearly established process for ethics approval within educational institutions or scientific organisations was identified in this context. Consequently, I established a self-defined ethical framework to address issues of ownership, power dynamics, and the decolonisation of research methodologies.

To ensure appropriate ethical standards, I obtained a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, which I presented to the organisations and schools involved. Additionally, my research included an investigation into ethical practices and regulations related to working with children in Lebanon. I adhered to the principles outlined in the *Charter of Ethics and Guiding Principles of Scientific Research in Lebanon* (2016)<sup>29</sup>. Furthermore, insights provided by facilitators regarding participatory ethics informed my approach to data management, and I complied with the child safeguarding policies established by my facilitators. These measures sought to ensure that participation remained voluntary, appropriately safeguarded, and ethically grounded, while recognising the particular sensitivities associated with conducting participatory research with children in a complex and volatile context.

## CATALYTICAction - VOLUNTEER TRAINING SESSION

A key aspect of my collaboration with both facilitators was their extensive experience working with children. While AICP's engagement with local children in Sabra occurs within a highly formalised, government-regulated environment, CatalyticAction's work places greater emphasis on empowering children through increased agency and ownership, positioning them as active participants alongside adult facilitators.

Since workshops with AICP were conducted within their primary school during school hours, the organisation provided valuable guidance on ethical considerations and workshop planning tailored to the school setting. This included procedures for obtaining parental permission for extracurricular activities, adherence to child safeguarding policies and protocols within the school, and assistance with translating and distributing consent forms. All of these activities were coordinated directly with school administrators and year-group leads.

In addition to the support provided by AICP, CatalyticAction invited me to participate in a volunteer training session, which offered further insight into how safeguarding policies may be implemented through a research-informed and participatory approach. This training proved instrumental in critically evaluating my research methodology in relation to established theories concerning children's participation and engagement as active contributors within architectural research. The experience also reinforced the importance of embedding safeguarding practices within participatory methodologies, ensuring that children's agency could be meaningfully supported while maintaining appropriate ethical protections.



*Photograph from  
CA Volunteer  
Training (2023)*

## CONSENT/ASSENT FORMS

In considering assent and consent, I followed ethical academic guidelines, which generally assume that children are not able to provide fully informed consent to research participation independently. Therefore, it was of great importance that I developed a consent form for parents and guardians, alongside a clear and accessible process for obtaining informed assent from the children themselves.

While this process may initially have appeared to add an additional logistical burden, it ultimately provided a greater opportunity for me to embed myself within the communities in which I was working. Even when pursuing impromptu interviews with local residents, their awareness of my facilitation of workshops with neighbourhood children made introducing myself and my research significantly easier. Parents are a vital component of the community, not only because they are directly connected to the children, but also because they occupy diverse roles within the neighbourhood that can contribute to highly informative discussions and insights.

While I initially developed these forms in English, I was fortunate to receive translation support from my facilitators, enabling them to be distributed in Arabic for parents and guardians who did not read English. Furthermore, I ensured that I always carried a copy of an oral consent script in situations requiring consent for data collection from individuals who did not have the time, literacy level, or opportunity to engage with a written consent form. These adaptations aimed to ensure that participation remained as accessible and informed as possible, while recognising the linguistic and contextual realities of the research environment.

## CONSENT INFORMATION SHEET [ENGLISH]

### 1. INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH

This information sheet is to explain what research is being done and what participatory involvement it requires. Please read the information carefully and discuss it with your child/ward and others if you wish. If anything is not clear please feel free to ask for a clarification from research lead, Hosn Houssami. Please take your time in making the decision to consent for your child/ward to participate or not.

### 2. WHY IS THIS RESEARCH BEING CONDUCTED?

This research will focus on mapping and drawing of neighbourhoods, with the help of participants. This involves mapping what the neighbourhoods currently look like, and also what changes participants wish to change/improve. This set of workshops will focus specifically on children's spaces within communities, with children participating in mapping their communities and what they wish to have in them.

### 3. WHY HAS YOUR CHILD/WARD BEEN INVITED TO TAKE PART?

Your child/ward has been chosen to participate as a child resident in this community.

### 4. DO I HAVE TO TAKE PART?

It is your own decision if you wish to allow your child/ward to take part or not. You may allow them to take part, and then change your mind. No reason or explanation is required. If after taking part you wish for your child/wards data to be removed from study, you may contact research lead, Hosn Houssami, and all data relating to your child/ward will be destroyed.

### 5. WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO MY CHILD/WARD IF THEY TAKE PART IN THE RESEARCH?

Parent/Guardian consent and child assent will be taken for observational studies and workshops. This will be done through written consent forms, or oral consent depending on the information being collected.

The research and workshops will take place in the local neighbourhood. Drawing tools and equipment for workshops will be provided.

Participants will be involved for the duration of the workshops, and may be asked to return to further workshops if they wish. Workshops may last from 1–5 hours, some participants may be asked to return for further workshops if they wish. Workshops will have regular breaks and each workshop will have a breakdown given prior of the activities to be involved and the timings for each.

Workshops will be facilitated through local partners that are qualified to work with children, and abide by the ethics guidelines of Lebanon and the UK.

Participants can ask to pause or leave the research activities at any time.

The workshops will involve mapping exercises of the community including homes, community spaces, and children's spaces. Photographs may be taken in these workshops for record. Photographs of children will be blurred or cropped to remove facial features. If you do not wish for your child/ward to be photographed please state so in the consent form.

### 6. WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE DISADVANTAGES AND RISKS IN TAKING PART?

All participants names will be anonymised, however due to the research involving the mapping of the community, there might be some architectural identifying factors such as names of shops, schools, etc.

If this may be of any risk for your child/ward please reject involvement in project.

### 7. ARE THERE ANY BENEFITS IN TAKING PART?

There will be no direct benefit to you from taking part in this research. However,

*Parent Consent  
Form was  
Translated in  
Traditional Arabic  
and Edited by  
Facilitators*



## CONSENT INFORMATION SHEET [ENGLISH CONT.]

the hope is that this research will lead to a mapping toolkit that can be used by the community for development proposals. And as part of this a proposal for a built children's space to be design with the contribution of the community children.

### 8. WHAT INFORMATION WILL BE COLLECTED?

- Participatory produced maps of neighbourhood
- Participatory produced drawings of children's spaces
- Making workshops and photographs of outputs
- Photographs of participants (face to be blurred/and or cropped for anonymity) during workshops

All information collected will be uploaded to a secure internet drive, with physical copies of audio recordings and photographs destroyed. Physically produced maps and drawings will be retained by research lead, Hosn Houssami, and destroyed after completion of PhD.

Identifiable data (including consent forms) will be stored on a secure internet drive and destroyed after completion of PhD. Other research data will be stored for 5 years after publication or public release of the work of the research.

Only the researcher, Hosn Houssami, will have access to all the research data. Research team, supervisor, and collaborators will only have access to anonymised research data.

Research data may be transferred to, and stored at, a destination outside the UK and the European Economic Area. In this case Lebanon.

### 9. WILL THE RESEARCH BE PUBLISHED? COULD I BE IDENTIFIED FROM ANY PUBLICATIONS OR OTHER RESEARCH OUTPUTS?

The findings from the research will be written up in a thesis, dissertation, academic publications, conference presentations, a report commissioned by an external organisation, websites, videos etc.

Participants information will be anonymised and all identifying features removed. However maps will be used in publications. These maps will not include any names or specific addresses of participants. Quotes from interviews will be anonymised unless participant consents to name being used.

### 10. DATA PROTECTION

Data will be protected under UK government and London Metropolitan University guidance and Guidance by Lebanese Government.

### 11. CONTACT DETAILS

If you would like to discuss the research (or if you have questions afterwards) and/or are seeking further information, please contact:

Researcher: Hosn Houssami

Role: PhD Research Student

Department: School of Art, Architecture and Design - London Metropolitan University

University Address: Calcutta House, Old Castle St, London E1 7NT University email:

hoh0094@my.londonmet.ac.uk

*Parent Consent  
Form was  
Translated in  
Traditional Arabic  
and Edited by  
Facilitators*

PARENT CONSENT FORM [ENGLISH]

CONSENT FOR CHILD TO TAKE PART IN WORKSHOPS FOR LINES RESEARCH PROJECT

PURPOSE OF STUDY:

This research will focus on mapping and drawing of neighbourhoods, with the help of participants. This involves mapping what the neighbourhoods currently look like, and also what changes participants wish to change/improve. Some workshops will focus specifically on children's spaces within communities.

PLEASE INITIAL  
EACH BOX IF YOU  
AGREE WITH THE  
STATEMENT

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet provided for me, dated 16/01/2023 the above research. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw my child's work at any point until 01/04/2023 without giving any reason.                                                                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I understand who will have access to personal data provided, how the data will be stored and what will happen to the data at the end of the project.                                                                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I understand my identity will be anonymised from any publications or other outputs.                                                                                                                                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| [Optional] I consent to my child being audio recorded.                                                                                                                                                                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| [Optional] I consent to my child having my photo taken with cropping or blurring of face.                                                                                                                                               | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I understand how to raise a concern or make a complaint.                                                                                                                                                                                | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I agree to my child taking part.(*)                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |

NAME OR INITIALS OF PARENT

DATE

SIGNATURE

NAME OF RESEARCHER

DATE

SIGNATURE

(\*) [In certain projects researchers may want to add an additional statement:  
[I hereby assign to the researcher all copyright in my contribution for use  
in all work stemming from this project and future projects.]

## INFORMATION AND CONSENT/ASSENT LEAFLET

In order to capture the attention of child participants and encourage engagement with the consent and assent materials, I chose to reformat the information sheets as colourful Arabic-language leaflets rather than conventional black-and-white documents. This decision was intended to encourage children to either read the materials themselves or ask their parents or guardians to review them with them.

This approach was viewed positively by both facilitators and parents/guardians, as the children appeared more eager to engage with and understand the information presented within these highly visual documents. The use of visually engaging materials also aligned with the broader participatory ethos of the research, recognising the importance of presenting information in an accessible and child-appropriate format.



يهدف ورقة المعلومات هذه إلى شرح البحث الذي يتم إجراؤه وما نوع المشاركة التي تتطلبها. فمماثل قراءة المعلومات بعناية ومناقشتها مع طفلك، إذا كان هناك أي شيء غير واضح، فلا تتردد في طلب التوضيح من المشرفة البحث، حسن الحسامي. يرجى أخذ وقتك في اتخاذ القرار بالموافقة على مشاركة طفلك.

[illegible]

سيركز هذا البحث على رسم خرائط الأبناء ورسمها بمساعدة المشاركين. يتضمن ذلك رسم الخرائط لشكل الأبناء حاليًا ، وأيضًا التغييرات التي يرغب المشاركون في تغييرها / تحسينها. ستركز مجموعة ورش العمل هذه بشكل خاص على مساحات الأطفال داخل المجتمعات حيث يشارك الأطفال في رسم خرائط لمجتمعاتهم وما يرغبون في وجوده فيها.

ها، من الضروري أن يشارك طفلك؟

أنه فراقك بنفسك إذا كنت ترغب في السماح لطفلك بالمشاركة أم لا إذا كنت ترغب بعد المشاركة في إزالة بيانات طفلك من البحث يمكنك الاتصال بالمشرقة على البحث، حسن الحسامي، وسيتم إتلاف جميع البيانات المتعلقة بطفلك.

**ما هي المعلومات التي سيتم جمعها؟**

- إتاحت جرائد لتأريخه الحي.
- إتاحت رسومات لتأريخه المساحات الأظلال.
- تفصيل ورش عمل وصور للتأريخ.
- صور المشاركين مع الخطأ فمن يرغب بذلك
- جدول ورش العمل.

سليم تحصل جميع المعلومات التي تم جمعها على محرر إلكتروني إلكتروني، مع ذلك، نسخ مادية من النسخة المطبوعة والمسموعة سيتم الاحتفاظ بها للتأريخ.

والرسومات المتعددة مائلا بواسطة المشرفة على الجيت، حسن الحسامي، وألقائها بعد انتهاء من التدريب.

جدولها الأحدث، حسن الحسامي، يمكنها الوصول إلى جميع بيانات الجيت.

**هل سيتم نشر الخطأ أم يمكن التصرف على من شارك من أي مشغولات أو نتائج أخرى؟**

سيتم إتاحت نتائج التأريخ، أي أطروحة، والمنشورات الأكاديمية، وعروض المنشورات، ومواقع الترويجية، ومناطق فيديو، إلخ.

جميع ميزات التصرف، ومع ذلك، سيتم استخدام الخطأ في المنشورات لن تضمن هذه الخطأ أي أسماء أو عناوين محددة للمشاركين.

- إنتاج خراطيش تشاركية للحج.
- إنتاج رسومات تشاركية لمساحات الأطفال.
- تفعيل ورش عمل وصور للناتج.
- صور المشاركين، مع إخفاء الوجه لمن يرغب بذلك خلال ورش العمل.

سيتم تحميل جميع المعلومات التي تم جمعها على محرك إنترنت آمن، مع إتلاف نسخ مادية من التسجيلات الصوتية والصور. سيتم الاحتفاظ بالخرائط والرسومات المتحركة مبدئياً بواسطة المشرقة على البحث، خُسن الحسامي، وإتلافها بعد الانتهاء من الدراية.

ووجهها الباحثة، خُسن الحسامي، يمكنها الوصول إلى جميع بيانات البحث.

هل سيتم نشر البحث؟ هل يمكن التعرف على

من شارك من أي منشورات أو نتائج بحثية أخرى؟  
 سيتم كتابة نتائج البحث في أطروحة، والمنشورات  
 الأكاديمية، وعروض المؤتمرات، ومواقع الكترونية،  
 ومقاطع فيديو، إلخ.  
 سيتم إخفاء هوية معلومات المشاركين وإزالة  
 جميع ميزات التعريف، ومع ذلك، سيتم استخدام  
 الخرائط في المنشورات. لن تتضمن هذه الخرائط أي  
 أسماء أو عناوين محددة للمشاركين.

الغرض من الدراسة:

هذا البحث على رسم خرائط الأحياء ورسمها بمساعدة المشاركين من ذلك رسم خرائط شكل الأحياء حالياً. وأيضاً التغييرات التي يرغبون في تغييرها / تحسينها. ستركز بعض ورش العمل بشكل خاص على مساعدات الأطفال داخل المجتمعات.

يرجى كتابة الأحرف الأولى من كل مربع إذا كنت توافق على البيان

|                          |                                                                  |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | في ذات قرأت وفهمتم وثيقة المعلومات المقدمة في التاريخ 24/01/2023 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | أولاً وقد أذنت لي بالتحقق من صحة المعلومات                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | من شركائكم الموقرة التي قد تم سحب عمل لطيف في أي وقت             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | دون إيراد أي سبب 01/04/2023                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | من سيكون له حق الوصول إلى البيانات الشخصية المقعدة ،             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | ميدان تخزين البيانات ومصادرها سيحدث للبيانات في نهاية المشروع    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | في ميدان إخفاء هوية والذي هي منشورات أو مخرجات أخرى              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | وافق على تسجيل طفلي صوتياً                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | وافق على التنازل صراحة لطفلي مع اقتصاص الوجه أو تشويشه           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | تقديم شكوى                                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | شكراً لكم                                                        |

توقيع أحمد الدين

الاسم أو الأحرف الأولى

اسم الشخص الذي يأخذ الاموال

الاسم أو الأحرف الأولى

**خطوط**  
عن

ستتم حماية البيانات بموجب توجيهات حكومة المملكة المتحدة وجامعة لندن متروبوليتان و توجيهات من قبل الحكومة اللبنانية.

**تفاصيل الاتصال**  
كنت ترغب في مناقشة البحث و/ أو كنت تبحث عن  
مزيد من المعلومات ، فيرجى الاتصال بـ:

كنت أرغب في مناقشة البحث و/ أو كنت تبحث عن مزيد من المعلومات ، فبرجى الاتصال بـ:

الباحثة: خُسن حسامي  
الدور: طالبة دكتوراه باحثة  
القسم: كلية الفنون والعمارة والتصميم  
جامعة لندن متروبوليتان  
عنوان الجامعة: منزل كلكتا، شارع أولد كاسل  
لندن E1 7NT

**البريد الإلكتروني للجامعة:**

**حماية البيانات**

ستتم حماية البيانات بموجب توجيهات حكومة المملكة المتحدة وحاجاة لندن ميروبوليان ونهجيات من قبل الحكومة البريطانية.

**الوصول الى البيانات**

إذا كنت ترغب في ملاحظة الحق أو كنت تبحث عن مزيد من المعلومات، يرجى الاتصال بـ:

الخدمة: خمسة سبيلي  
البرق: طالية ديوروا باجة  
القسم: كلية الشؤون والعامة والتصميم  
حاجاة لندن ميروبوليان  
عنوان الخدمة: ميل كلاك شارع لويد كاسل  
E9 7NL

**البريد الإلكتروني للخدمة:**  
hoh094@my.londonmet.ac.uk

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Following the workshops, another key CDC technique I utilised was conducting interviews. I anticipated that these would remain relatively informal, occurring either during workshop sessions or alongside on-site surveying activities. To facilitate this process, I designed the interview questions to be straightforward and limited the total number to ten.

Additionally, I incorporated flexibility within the interview structure to allow participants the opportunity to expand upon their responses should they wish to engage in further discussion. This approach created an open space for additional dialogue and insights, while enabling participants to elaborate on experiences or perspectives that may not have emerged through the workshops alone. The intentionally informal structure also supported a more conversational and participant-led approach, aligning with the broader participatory and relational aims of the research methodology.

## THE 10 QUESTION INTERVIEW

1) What do you like most about your neighbourhood?

---

---

---

2) What do you like least about your neighbourhood?

---

---

---

3) Do you feel like your neighbourhood has changed? How and to what extent?

---

---

---

4) What is your opinion about the social spaces in your neighbourhood?

---

---

---

5) Who occupies these social spaces? Why?

---

---

---

6) Do you think children have a space in the neighbourhood? If yes, where? If no, why do you think this is the case?

---

---

---

7) Do you feel like you have a sense of ownership within your neighbourhood?

---

---

---

8) Would you like to be more involved in the development of your neighbourhood – if not already?

---

---

---

9) Have you seen any maps of this neighbourhood? If so, do you think they represent the area accurately?

---

---

---

10) What is a structural and/or social element that you believe makes this area unique?

---

---

---

x) Other discussion had:

---

---

---

---

*The '10 Question Interview' was Translated in Traditional Arabic and Edited by Facilitators*





# TRANSFORMATIVE LINES: THE WORKSHOPS

|                                         |    |
|-----------------------------------------|----|
| INTRODUCTION                            | 58 |
| WORKSHOP REFLECTIONS & WORKSHOP OUTPUTS | 60 |
| FIELDWORK DIARY SAMPLES                 | 72 |
| CATALYTIC ACTION BLOG POST              | 78 |

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a summary of the workshops prior to the analysis of the resulting outputs. Throughout the fieldwork period, a fieldwork diary was maintained to document daily reflections on events and experiences encountered. These reflections often included observations extending beyond the original research plan and served as a means of evaluating both immediate and retrospective responses to the data. Maintaining this reflective practice formed part of the ethical framework of the thesis and represented an integral component of the place-based research approach. Keeping these records helped to ensure transparency regarding the potential influence of emotions on in-the-moment interpretation and reflexive engagement with the research context.

The fieldwork diary functioned as a daily, informal tool for personal reflection; however, I recognised the need for more structured documentation prior to analysis. This documentation aimed to systematically record factual details of each workshop, including dates, activities facilitated, participant attendance, and summaries of workshop proceedings. As a result, a comprehensive workshop report was developed for each session across both sites. In addition to this foundational information, I also documented facilitation challenges encountered during each workshop and recorded initial observations concerning how outcomes and discussions aligned with the research objectives outlined in the study design. This process enabled both methodological transparency and a clearer understanding of how workshop activities evolved in response to participant engagement and contextual conditions.



*Photograph from  
Workshop 1,  
Karantina*



*Photograph from  
Workshop 3,  
Karantina*



*Various  
Photograph  
from Workshops,  
Karantina &  
Sabra*

# KARANTINA: WORKSHOP 1 - Our Town

## WORKSHOP REFLECTIONS

### GENERAL SUMMARY

**Location:** Karantina Public Park

**Facilitator:** CatalyticAction

**Date/s:** 18/02

**Number of Workshop Groups:** 1

**Number of Participants:** 9

**Age Range:** 7-14

### ACTIVITIES

#### Warm Up: Spaces and Places / The Cube

In a group warm-up activity, the children were asked to name types of buildings and locations in their neighbourhoods through a story; guiding the traveller from one place to another. Further, they were given cube templates to cut out and stick together to form their own cubes for a later activity.

#### Activity A: 'This is Our Town' Mapping

In groups of 4 and 5, the children were asked to map their towns using Karantina Park as the central point, drawing out from it their homes, nearby places, and places they frequent.

#### Activity B: Town Changer

Using the cubes they had made earlier, the children were asked to decorate these as new spaces they wished to add to the neighbourhood.

#### Cool Down: Summary

Children were asked to review the activities, noting which ones they enjoyed or didn't.

### CHALLENGES

During this session, the children appeared significantly more confident and engaged in the activities. They seemed to better understand and enjoy the tasks more than their Sabra counterparts. However, incorporating large group activities presents additional challenges in fostering effective collaboration and



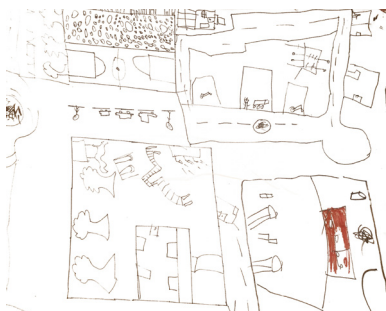
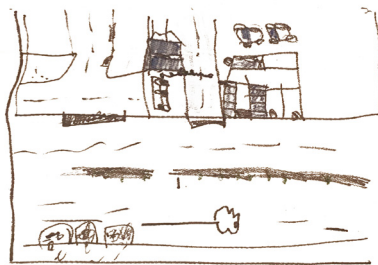
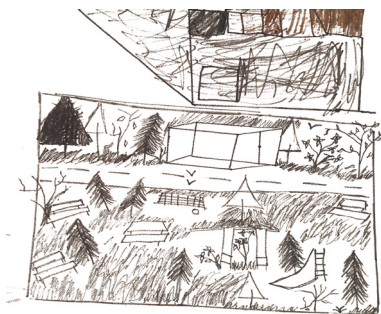
*Photograph from  
Workshop 1,  
Karantina*

encouraging politeness and consideration among participants. For example, there was an instance where a child preferred to work independently on the mapping task. After some discussion, a compromise was reached to modify the mapping space within the group to accommodate this preference.

### EMERGENT THEMES RELATED TO THESIS

It is noteworthy that, although the children in this area have access to a community park - unlike children in Sabra - they still experience a sense of limited ownership due to the frequent closures of the park resulting from government regulations. When asked about familiar or frequently used spaces, it became apparent that children in Karantina have more consistent and safe access to their neighbourhood streets compared to children in Sabra. A significant proportion of children here play in the streets and feel secure doing so, which may be attributed to the social spaces established for them by CatalyticAction.

### WORKSHOP OUTPUTS





# SABRA: WORKSHOP 1 - Our Town

## WORKSHOP REFLECTIONS

### GENERAL SUMMARY

**Location:** Sabra AICP School

**Facilitator:** AICP

**Date/s:** 25/01, 26/01, 30/01, 31/01

**Number of Workshop Groups:** 4

**Number of Participants:** 24-32

**Age Range:** 7-8, 10-11

### ACTIVITIES

#### Warm Up: Spaces and Places

In a group warm-up activity, the children were asked to name types of buildings and locations in their neighbourhoods through a story; guiding the traveller from one place to another.

#### Activity A: 'This is Our Town' Mapping

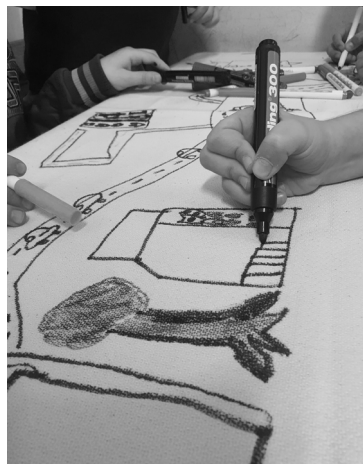
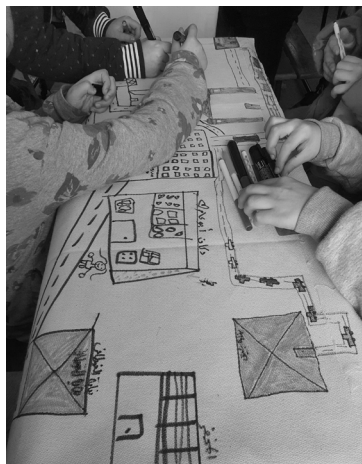
In groups of 4 and 5, the children were asked to map their towns using the school as the central point, drawing out from it their homes, nearby places, and places they frequent.

#### Cool Down: Summary

Children were asked to review the activities, noting which ones they enjoyed or didn't.

### CHALLENGES

The workshop faced two primary challenges. Firstly, the available classroom space limited group sizes, and the 45 minute duration of a single lesson constrained the scope of activities, resulting in the omission of certain components, such as the cube exercise demonstrated in W1 Karantina. Secondly, since the setting was a school environment, not all students reside in Sabra. While most do, it was important to ensure effective collaboration among all participants regardless of their place of residence.



*Photographs  
from Workshop  
1, Sabra*

## WORKSHOP OUTPUTS

### SAMPLES FROM GROUP S-2B:



### SAMPLES FROM GROUP S-2C:



### SAMPLES FROM GROUP S-5A:



### SAMPLES FROM GROUP S-5C:



### EMERGENT THEMES RELATED TO THESIS

This activity across the classes was highly informative. During my initial observations of the neighbourhood, I focused on basic architectural features, such as building types, population, and public amenities. However, the children in each class were able to identify aspects of the neighbourhood that I had not noticed, e.g., the locations and significance of money exchange services in the area. Additionally, it became evident that the children primarily use the public streets as thoroughfares to travel from one point to another, rather than engaging with these spaces for recreational or entertainment purposes, with the only primary social activity on streets being football.

# KARANTINA: WORKSHOP 2 - OUR STREET

## WORKSHOP REFLECTIONS

### GENERAL SUMMARY

**Location:** Karantina Public Park

**Facilitator:** CatalyticAction

**Date/s:** 04/03

**Number of Workshop Groups:** 1

**Number of Participants:** 7

**Age Range:** 7-14

### ACTIVITIES

#### Warm Up: What is a Street?

Children were asked to name types of buildings that compose a street; however, as some children were running late, this activity was cut short in order to fit the time needed for the subsequent activities.

#### Activity A: Little Architects

Each child chose a type of building and decorated their boxes to reflect that building.

#### Activity B: Town Makers

As the majority of the children had to leave, the three remaining kids had an open discussion regarding how a street should be formed with the buildings they had made. They discussed which building should be next to which other building and whether there should be a wide street or a narrow path between each.

#### Cool Down: Summary

Children were asked to review the activities, noting which activities they enjoyed and which they did not.

### CHALLENGES

The biggest challenge was attendance numbers. There was an event in the neighbourhood, and some of the children had medical appointments. While this limited the outputs in Karantina, there was little to be done about the situation from a researcher's perspective.



*Photographs  
from Workshop  
2, Karantina*

## WORKSHOP OUTPUTS



### EMERGENT THEMES RELATED TO THESIS

After conducting this workshop following most of the Sabra W2 sessions, I observed that the majority of the structures the children focused on were enclosed public facilities, such as schools and hospitals. Although this group was smaller, it allowed for more in-depth discussions, including considerations about street widths and spatial relationships between structures. Additionally, in this smaller setting, individual voices tended to be more prominent; even if only one child supported a particular idea, their input was carefully considered, and their suggestions were often adopted.



*Photograph from  
Workshop 2,  
Karantina*

# SABRA: WORKSHOP 2 - OUR STREET

## WORKSHOP REFLECTIONS

### GENERAL SUMMARY

**Location:** Sabra AICP School

**Facilitator:** AICP

**Date/s:** 01/02, 02/02, 14/05

**Number of Workshop Groups:** 4

**Number of Participants:** 24-30

**Age Range:** 7-8, 10-11

### ACTIVITIES

#### Warm Up: What is a Street?

Children were asked to name types of buildings that compose a street.

#### Activity A: Little Architects

Each pair of children chose a type of building and decorated their boxes to reflect that building.

#### Activity B: Town Makers

An open class discussion regarding how a street should be formed with the buildings they had made. Discussing which building should be next to which other building.

#### Cool Down: Summary

Children were asked to review the activities, noting which activities they enjoyed and which they did not.

### CHALLENGES

The primary challenge in these workshops was encouraging the children to select a specific location or building types and to broaden their understanding of what constitutes a street or neighbourhood. While each class provided similar responses regarding the overall development of a town, they varied more in their ideas about the composition of a street.



*Photographs  
from Workshop  
2, Sabra*



### EMERGENT THEMES RELATED TO THESIS

The workshop provided valuable insights into how children perceive the elements essential to a functioning community. It required active facilitation to encourage them to recognise and consider spaces traditionally associated with childhood, such as play areas, libraries, and gaming cafes. A preliminary observation suggests that they may not currently perceive themselves as integral to the town's overall composition and may benefit from guidance in envisioning their role within it.



*Photograph from  
Workshop 2,  
Sabra*

### WORKSHOP OUTPUTS





# KARANTINA: WORKSHOP 3 - OUR SPACE

## WORKSHOP REFLECTIONS

### GENERAL SUMMARY

**Location:** Karantina Public Park

**Facilitator:** CatalyticAction

**Date/s:** 18/03

**Number of Workshop Groups:** 1

**Number of Participants:** 10

**Age Range:** 7-14

### ACTIVITIES

#### Warm Up – What is a Child’s Space?

Children were asked to name elements of a space for children.

#### Activity A – Space Design

In groups, the children were asked to design a ‘dream’ space through drawing.

#### Activity B – Space Model

In groups, the children were asked to build models of their dream space.

#### Cool Down – Summary

Children were asked to review the activities, noting which activities they enjoyed or did not.

### CHALLENGES

Similarly to the previous workshop, the primary challenge was participant turnout; however, a greater number of children were able to remain until the conclusion of the session. The main objective was to encourage children to adapt their perception of ‘space for children’ from solely football fields to recognising an expanded view of this as social play environments.

### EMERGENT THEMES RELATED TO THESIS

As the participants chose to form groups separated by gender, this provided valuable insight into how each group perceives different spaces as suitable for



*Photograph from  
Workshop 3,  
Karantina*

play and social interaction. The male group's design was oriented towards a football pitch concept, which appeared to reflect their current use of football pitches as their primary social and recreational space. Conversely, the female group created a more inclusive environment featuring seating and diverse play elements, reflecting their lack of access to football pitches and expressing a preference for a space that accommodates everyone.

## WORKSHOP OUTPUTS



*Photograph from  
Workshop 3,  
Karantina*

# SABRA: WORKSHOP 3 - OUR SPACE

## WORKSHOP REFLECTIONS

### GENERAL SUMMARY

**Location:** Sabra AICP School

**Facilitator:** AICP

**Date/s:** 15/03, 21/05, 23/05

**Number of Workshop Groups:** 4

**Number of Participants:** 24-32

**Age Range:** 7-8, 10-11

### ACTIVITIES

#### Warm Up – What is a Child’s Space?

Children were asked to name elements of a space for children.

#### Activity A – Space Design

In groups, the children were asked to design a ‘dream’ space through drawing.

#### Activity B – Space Model

In groups, the children were asked to build models of their dream space.

#### Cool Down – Summary

Children were asked to review the activities, noting which activities they enjoyed or didn’t.

### CHALLENGES

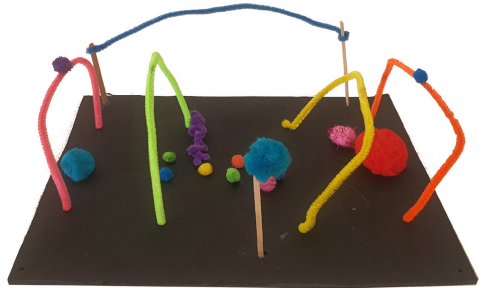
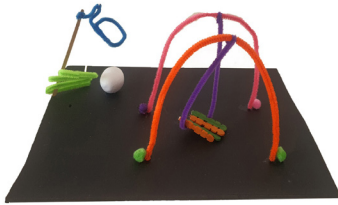
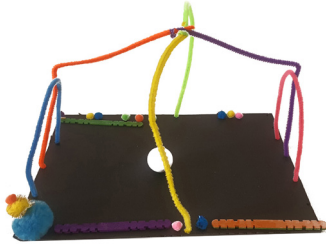
Similar to the approach taken with Karantina, the primary challenge was to reframe the children’s understanding of “a place for them” from viewing it solely as football fields to recognising it as an opportunity to design social play areas. This shift was particularly prominent among the boys.



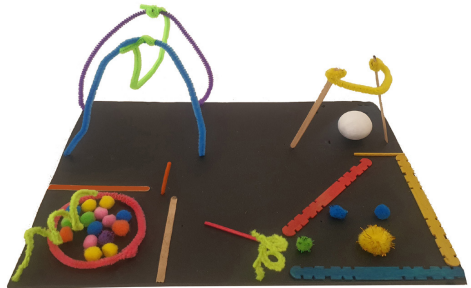
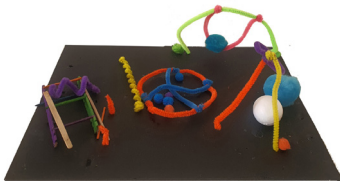
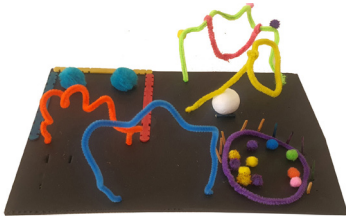
*Photograph from  
Workshop 3,  
Sabra*

## WORKSHOP OUTPUTS

### SAMPLES FROM GROUP S-2B/2C:



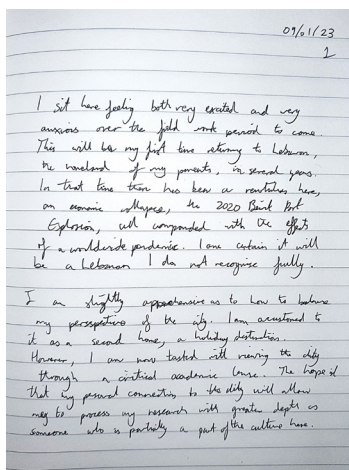
### SAMPLES FROM GROUP S-5A/5C:



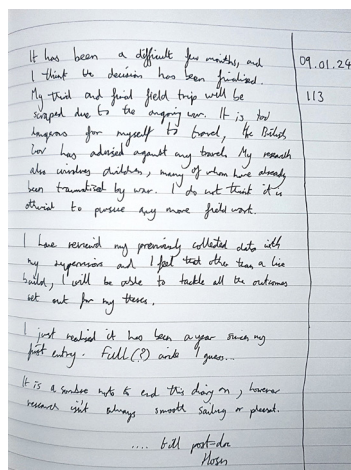
### EMERGENT THEMES RELATED TO THESIS

It was interesting to observe several children viewing the street and amusement parks as potential play areas. Their designs demonstrated a high level of creativity, with the children effectively utilising the properties of the materials to create innovative shapes.

## FIELDWORK DIARY SAMPLES



Fieldwork Diary Samples, First and Last Entries



Please note that these chosen transcripts of Fieldwork Diary<sup>30</sup> entries reflect personal moments within the field work periods, rather than reflections on the workshops. Researchers must contend with the emotional and ethical consequences of place-based research.

### JANUARY 2023 SAMPLES

#### 09.01.2023 - Journal Entry No. 1

I sit here feeling both very excited and very anxious over the field work period to come. This will be my first time returning to Lebanon, the homeland of my parents in several years. In that time there has been a revolution here, an economic social collapse, the 2020 Beirut Port Explosion, all compounded with the effects of a worldwide pandemic. I am certain it will be a Lebanon I do not recognise fully.

I am slightly apprehensive as to how to balance my perspective of the city. I am accustomed to it as a second home, a holiday destination. However, I am now tasked with viewing the city through a critical academic lens. The hope is that my personal connection to the city will allow me to process my research with greater depth as someone who is partially a part of the culture here.

#### 13.01.2023 - Journal Entry No. 3

These past few days have been quite frantic, however an expected franticness. While there is the task of setting up the data collection itself, there are practical elements to consider for the wider research trip. Lebanon is currently experiencing a vast energy shortage, with most people relying on private electricity subscriptions that only run for a few hours at a time. Although the majority of my mapping techniques consist of hand drawn elements, I will still require access to digital programmes, files and digital communication methods with facilitators and supervisors.

I have spent the past two days simply trying to set up electricity and internet access. These practical things have not yet been fully sorted and I would prefer

to have this done before the data collection begins.

Most of the amenities have now been set up and I feel that I can proceed with my research with greater levels of comfort and security. I have contacted both facilitators and arranged initial meeting with the two. While they are aware of my research generally I hope to give them a clearer explanation of my intentions of working in this city and how the partnership with them fit into that.

The key aim for these meeting is organising research and workshop days with them as soon as possible, however my initial timescale for these meetings has had to change slightly as one of the facilitators is abroad and will only be able to meet next week.

### **18.01.2023 - Journal Entry No. 8**

Today was my first mapping day in Sabra, I went along with two elders associated with the AICP and had discussions with them related to the changes in the neighbourhood over the past few years and further back from the time of their childhoods, as they have been witness to the exponential population growth.

I allowed myself to not be distracted with my impressions of the town and let myself to be guided by the locals in what they were trying to point out to me. It would be quite simple for me to map the architectural features of interest however, when it comes to social mapping, I have very little understanding of the dynamics of the neighbourhood. They pointed out shops and stalls that were Lebanese run, however are now owned by Syrians, and also the electricity/water situation, and the social 'boundaries' between communities.

### **27.01.2023 - Journal Entry No. 16**

I quite honestly don't know where to begin in describing today. I guess I will begin by describe the impression of the camp the general Lebanese public have on the camp. When I first informed people that I wished to go into the camp, I was told it was a 'crazy' idea, and that it was very dangerous and that even 'grown men' do not go there as it is highly guarded by its residents to the point where even Lebanese national security cannot entre. And further from this from an architectural stand point most descriptions of the camp as a residential slum with little infrastructure or social amenities other than clinics and schools.

Although all of these in a way are true, there is also so much more to the camp. The first major thing I noticed was the cleanliness; after trekking through the littered streets and market of Sabra and access the camp, suddenly the streets and pathways become litter-free. While this might not seem significant, littering is a highly common issue in Beirut and it struck me as odd that the streets were clean, in asking the guides why that is I was informed that the UNWRA pays a small group of residents a wage to clean the streets weekly. There is a social order within the camp that is unique to it compared to the rest of the city.

When given access to the camp I was informed I would always be accompanied by a member of the 'security' within the camp, and further from this, I would not be allowed to take photos or produce drawings within the camp. However, after interviewing some of the locals, including the elders within the camp, and explaining my research, a line of trust seemed to be formed and I was informed that I would at a later date be able to access the camp, and take as many picture and survey what I wanted – with a few exceptions. I was also told that they would be able to set up a meeting with me and the head teacher at the UNWRA primary school within the camp if I wanted to host some workshops with the children there. I feel as if I saw so much however recording this here in short form is almost impossible. I look forward to returning to the camp.



## FEBRUARY 2023 SAMPLES

### 08.02.2023 - Journal Entry No. 23

Two days ago there was a huge earthquake that hit the region, I don't know what to say about it much. It's global news: many have lost their lives and thousands are still trapped. We were luckier here in Lebanon as we didn't suffer as much damage at all, and seemingly the main issue we're dealing with is unsafe travel and damage to Wi-Fi/data connections.

### 11.02.2023 - Journal Entry No. 24

Most places are still closed, and we have been told to try and stay put as long as much as possible for this week. Although I don't know how many weeks of research I will lose to this, it is an important reminder that not everything can be planned for, and that it is ok to take a break especially when there is no other choice. I haven't really been in the mental space to do anything. We keep hearing news of death or injury to people we know in Turkey.

### 15.02.2023 - Journal Entry No. 26

In addition to the earthquakes the past few days we've also had rainstorms which has meant even surveying and mapping on ground has been highly limited. I am feeling a bit at a loss.

## MARCH 2023 SAMPLES

### 04.03.2023 - Journal Entry No. 29

Although I am not feeling the best, the Karantina workshops are quite tightly organised and therefore I pushed myself to attend to host it. This workshop had the smallest turnout however I believe it was so far the most successful. The kids were highly engaged and using quite advanced logical thinking to assess how the street they formed should be structured. It was highly interesting to hear them compare it to their existing neighbourhood, and mention faults or benefits to the existing town layout.

### 22.03.2023 - Journal Entry No. 44

Quite a simple day; redrawing the messy surveys, starting with Sabra. Due to long term hand injury the process is much slower than I expected.

## APRIL 2023 SAMPLES

### 17.04.2023 - Journal Entry No. 51

While this diary's primary use was to record my experiences and feelings, academic or personal throughout my field work, I am now back in the UK preparing to submit my first RD2. I am therefore in a process of reflection. My initial field work plans derailed due to situations beyond my control and I was not able to complete the planned workshops. While I was hoping to focus on more architectural surveying in my second trip, I am now reformatting the trip to allow for further workshops. This will be difficult as in the case of Sabra and the AICP, schools end in June. I hope I will be able to complete the workshops before then, otherwise will have to postpone till September or the 3rd Field work trip. I am now more certain of my adaptive methodological approach, it has mad

these changes to plans much easier to process.

## **JUNE 2023 SAMPLES**

### **02.06.2023 - Journal Entry No. 63**

As described these past few days have been quite busy, I had my final workshop with the AICP groups today prior to their summer holidays. Even with the break between workshops, the children still showed great amounts of interest in the workshop task, and the conversations with individual students were easier to pursue. I have understood how to adapt my language and tone to better suit their understanding and comfort. The teachers have also adapted to the workshops well, and rather than just observing the workshops, they are actively engaging with the children also. Some teachers have commented on their previous biases regarding children's understanding of spatial needs, and have acknowledged that such discussions and workshops would be highly beneficial to implement on a regular bases.

### **17.06.2023 - Journal Entry No. 71**

I have spent the past few days photographing, and packing away the outputs from the first 3 workshops, as these will be stored her in Lebanon until the completion of the field work it is important that they are stored safely, as to avoid damage but also to abide by the ethics standards designed for this thesis. I have decided that for the reminder of this month I will be focusing on evaluating work produced in the first fieldwork trip and these last workshops. I believe that it is through this I will be able to curate a plan for the next few weeks of surveying and on site interviews which will more directly align with the adapted outcomes of my thesis.

## **JULY 2023 SAMPLES**

### **05.07.2023 - Journal Entry No. 81**

As I have almost three more months here, I decided I might look into creating partnerships for further workshops that I would not have been able to establish from a distance. I connected with key figures from the Shatila refugee camp and was taken around to most of the UNRWA schools to see whether it would be possible to run some summer-time workshops with the child residents of the camp. These meetings were highly fruitful and the headteachers and head of the education programme were willing to meet and offered me an opportunity in a few days' time to have a meeting to present my research and workshop plans. While this was not a part of the original data collection plan, it would offer further insights on the children's urban imaginaries. If these workshops go ahead I will have to revise my data ratios for each site. The Sabra data quantity will become significantly higher than Karantina, therefore I must address the potential impact of this on the research results.

### **10.07.2023 - Journal Entry No. 83**

My meeting with UNRWA was cancelled due to unforeseen internal circumstances. I will get back into contact with the team once their lead is back in the country to try and arrange some workshops. I am going to take the rest of the day off, and tomorrow I will plan out my next few weeks.

### **25.07.2023 - Journal Entry No. 87**

Today's surveying went relatively well, I managed to speak to more people in Karantina about their perspectives, and I think people are more used to seeing me in the area. I feel more comfortable approaching people to talk, however I underestimated my anxiety with strangers. It has taken months of surveying and familiarity with the neighbourhood and the locals to build the courage to go up to individuals without 15 minutes of internal dialogue.

There are stresses to research by practice that need to be discussed more.

Otherwise, things are going well. I think I am almost finished with my architectural maps. They still need to be redrawn stylistically. But the data is there.

## **AUGUST 2023 SAMPLES**

### **06.08.2023 - Journal Entry No. 90**

Today was the final day of the CA Design workshop. It was great to see the culmination of a few days of different activities all based in Karantina. It was a highly interesting experience in that I was able to remove myself from the position of "Researcher"/"Workshop host" to the position of "Participant". While the context of the workshops were highly familiar to me and I was able to use my own knowledge to further delve into the tasks assigned.

In the days where we worked with the local youth residence I was able to use skill learnt from running the workshops with younger children and was able to adapt to working with those in an older age category.

I was glad for this process as I was able to take part in research where I was not a primary organiser.

### **28.08.2023 - Journal Entry No. 96**

I have been very ill the past few weeks, between pain flare ups and another bout of covid, I am somewhat glad the summer time workshops did not work out.

Is this a common feeling? To be glad to have research goals fail in the face of typical life struggles.

## **SEPTEMBER 2023 SAMPLES**

### **07.09.2023 - Journal Entry No. 101**

I finally managed to get contact with the headteacher at the AICP school, however it seems that the first week of school will coincide with a religious holiday and the week of (25th-31st September) will be filled with religious activities for the children. We have agreed to run this workshop and the exhibit leading from it in my final field trip at the end of the year.

This will hopefully coincide with a further workshop to run in Karantina in this upcoming fieldtrip also.

### **26.09.2023 - Journal Entry No. 109**

This second field trip is approaching its end, and I feel (similar to the first field trip) that I haven't achieved what I set out to do. I have to relinquish the feeling of guilt. I can only chieve what I am able to considering the limitations of by practice research.

I look forward to returning to the UK to being writing up my data collection

phase, and also to start analysing the data through my thesis outcomes. I can see the lines that are being drawn however it is time to get it articulated in written form.

I will be spending the next week or so with my family and enjoying the final days of summer here.

## OCTOBER 2023 SAMPLES

### **06.10.2023 - Journal Entry No. 111**

Finally back in the UK. I will be seeing my supervisors soon, so need to compile my data in a legible way, these next few days will be administrative.

### **07.10.2023 - Journal Entry No. 112**

This diary is for field work but I think I need to write something, except I don't know what to write. This isn't normal... I'm scared for what will come.

## JANUARY 2024 SAMPLES

### **09.01.2024 - Journal Entry No. 113 – Final Entry.**

It has been a difficult few months, and I think the decision has been finalised. My third and final field trip will be scraped due to the ongoing war. It is too dangerous for myself to travel, the British Gov has advised against any travel. My research also involves children, many of whom have already been traumatised by war. I do not think it is ethical to pursue any more field work.

I have reviewed my previously collected data with my supervisors and I feel that other than a live build, I will be able to tackle all the outcomes set out for my thesis.

I just realised it has been a year since my first entry. Full(?) circle I guess.

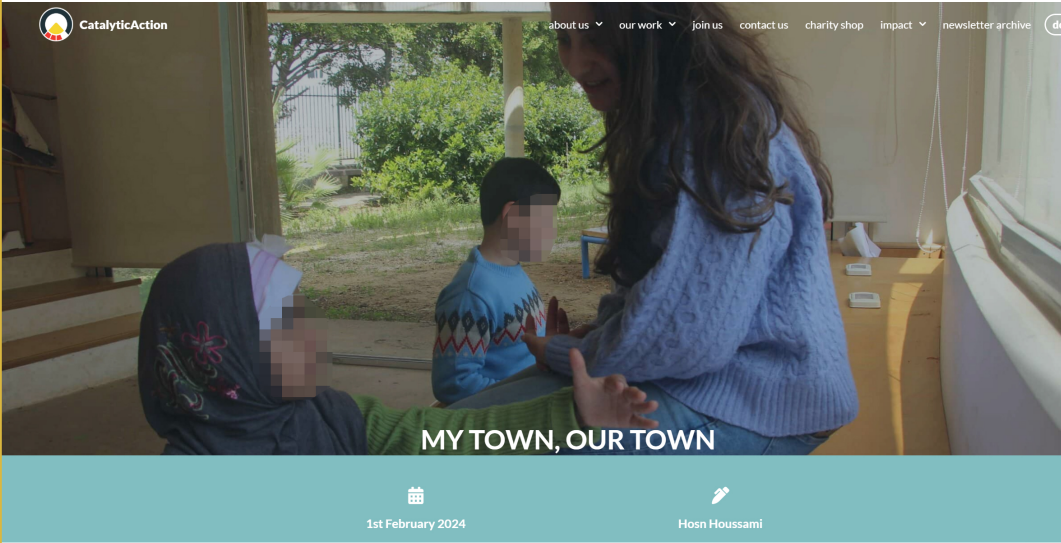
It is a sombre note to end this diary on, however research is not always smooth sailing or pleasant.

... till post-doc...

Hosn

# CATALYTICACTION BLOG POST

*As part of the partnership established with CatalyticAction, they requested that I produce a blog post<sup>21</sup> about my experience running workshops with the children of Karantina.*



Through my studies in architecture at the Part 1 and 2 levels, I found a keen interest in topic of social architecture, especially that pertaining to the design and construction of social infrastructure in developing and overpopulated cities. As part of my current PhD thesis at [London Metropolitan University](#), I have been looking to examine how collaborative mapping and other creative processes can be adapted and developed to explore and represent local topographic and ethnographic context; different spatial and temporal narratives; and shared aspirations at both the local and city scale through an often underrepresented demographic – children.

The topic of architectural co-production and the inclusion of children in such participatory practices is – and will continue to be – a global discourse. Although there are several countries that have systems built into their development models to account for the needs of children, the direct inclusion of children is often limited. Beirut, Lebanon, is a city that has borne significant physical and institutional changes due to its unique topographical landscape and everchanging socio-economic climate. Residents of the city rarely have their aspirations recognised by formal governmental planning, and it is often left to self-actualising local collectives to try to pursue this. I, myself, am Lebanese with parents both from Beirut and have seen these expansive changes and lack of governmental recourse first hand.

While my main research methodology involves extensive first-hand mapping across several scales – analysing not only the physical (topographical) at these scales, but also the individual social and ethnographic narratives embedded within them – I have chosen to cross reference the data produced with empirical research which has included participatory workshops within transitional settlements and certain demographics (particularly children) as the primary forum for narrative exchange.



*Screenshots of  
Blog Post  
Written for  
CatalyticAction's  
Website*

To further situate my research, I chose to look at the two neighbours of Sabra and Karantina. While incredibly different in architecture composition and scales of populations, both neighbourhoods share common histories as well as being home to a range of demographics. In Karantina, I worked with the amazing team at CatalyticAction to provide the running of four workshops with local children.



This Playground Is The Only Thing For Kids Here.

Boy, Age 8

The workshops were each designed to introduce children to fundamental principles of architecture, help them relate that within the context they already know, and then further from this to use their critical thinking and design skills to assess their neighbourhood and allow for conversations on aspirations for their town.

#### The Workshops:

- **Workshop 1 – Child Sized** – An introduction to Architecture, a discussion and activity-based workshop designed to introduce the children to concepts of spatiality, shape, materials, and scale.
- **Workshop 2 – My Town, Our Town** – A group drawing activity where children were given the opportunity to develop their mapping skills by mapping their towns in a collaborative process.
- **Workshop 3 – My Street** – A design activity where children are asked to 'build' different social structures and through collaborative discussions, co-design a street from the individual structures.
- **Workshop 4 – My Dream Ground** – A design activity where children were asked to design a social space.



There were several key steps that needed to be taken before the running of these workshops. Firstly, workshop training with a specific focus on child safeguarding. This was offered to me and ran by the team at CatalyticAction. Not only did this training session reaffirm safeguarding techniques, it also offered me the opportunity to experience how the team at CatalyticAction [engage people in workshops](#). Techniques which offered me clarity of action when running my own workshops. Further from this, the workshops relied heavily of CatalyticAction's thorough database of past participants and the help of local Citizen Scientist, Jana Al Saeed, to seek out interest. In the designing of the workshops, it was also important that the children participating represented the range of demographics within the neighbourhood. For this reason, of the 12 children invited to participate in the workshops, it was decided the list would be composed of an equal number of Lebanese and Syrian children, and also an equal split in gender.

Working with the selected children in Karantina, Beirut was a wonderful and thought provoking experience. While I have previously ran workshops in schools and after school clubs with children that have never previously taken part in such activities, as CatalyticAction have run numerous types of activities in the neighbourhood, I found that I was more easily able to get across the structure and point to of the activity. Additionally, the workshop outputs were more assessed and point driven. This verified for me that children should continuously be offered such activities, whether it be through their education provider or externally. Children have a fundamental grasp on most topics but are rarely ever given chances to hone these thoughts and ideas. I found that working with the children in Karantina, they were able to describe social and structural issues within their neighbourhoods in a much clearer way than I had originally anticipated.

*Screenshots of  
Blog Post  
Written for  
CatalyticAction's  
Website*





In saying this, there are several challenges that can occur when working not only with collaborative place-based research techniques, but with children generally. As with any demographic children are not homogenous, and different workshop groups may resonate with different elements of certain workshops, enjoy and not enjoy parts, even down to the understanding the fundamental asks of a workshop will differ not only between groups but within each individual child, as previously noted.

I found that with this particular focus group, the children enjoyed the workshops that incorporated 3D design elements, more than simple drawings, which meant that by Workshop 3 (which was originally a drawing exercise) I had to adapt my approach to best fit the children. Further from this, during the final workshop it was becoming increasingly evident that the boys understood the word 'playground' to mean 'football pitch', while the girls understood the term more clearly. In discussions with the children, I realised that this was because the majority of the boys' 'play' time was situated on football pitches, whereas the girls, who are often not included in sports games, connoted the term to the playgrounds designed by CatalyticAction.

While this was seemingly a small moment in a singular workshop, it expresses one of many socio-cultural issues that became evident over the course of the workshops. The workshops thus were not only highly engaging and enjoyable, but also thought-provoking in a way I had not previously anticipated.

“

We Can't Put The Hospital Next To The School... The Loud Kids Will Upset The Sick Patients.

Girl, Age 9



*Screenshots of  
Blog Post  
Written for  
CatalyticAction's  
Website*

I also must mention here how fundamental well-established connections to the community are in the smooth-running of such workshops. If not for CatalyticAction's extensive work and links within the community of Karantina, the running of these workshops would have been near impossible. Not only from an administrative perspective but also when looking at the workshops themselves. Having members of the CatalyticAction team and Citizen Scientists from the neighbourhood itself provided a setting in which the children felt more comfortable expressing themselves, as most of the faces present other than mine were ones they were well acquainted with before.

I hope to continue my research by developing a small-scale proposal based on the ideas of the children, and for their use. Further from this continuing to work alongside the wonderful members of CatalyticAction in future endeavours either directly or indirectly in the hopes of providing more community-led proposals in a country that means so much to me.



*Screenshots of  
Blog Post  
Written for  
CatalyticAction's  
Website*



# WORKSHOP OUTPUT ANALYSIS

|                                        |     |
|----------------------------------------|-----|
| INTRODUCTION                           | 84  |
| WORKSHOP 1                             | 86  |
| WORKSHOP 2                             | 92  |
| WORKSHOP 3                             | 96  |
| INTERVIEWS                             | 102 |
| IMPACT - TRANSFORMATIVE LINES APPROACH | 112 |
| POST-DOC WORKSHOP INTENTIONS           | 113 |

## INTRODUCTION

Within the **Transformative Lines** approach, participatory workshops constitute a key component of the CDC process. Engaging local community members directly in the research and data collection process enables the identification of insights related to social, cultural, political, and individual experiences. Additionally, this method serves to validate findings generated through ADC techniques.

The analysis of the workshop outcomes was conducted through a three-step process:

### STEP 1:

Identifying and annotating the elements contained within workshop materials and outputs.

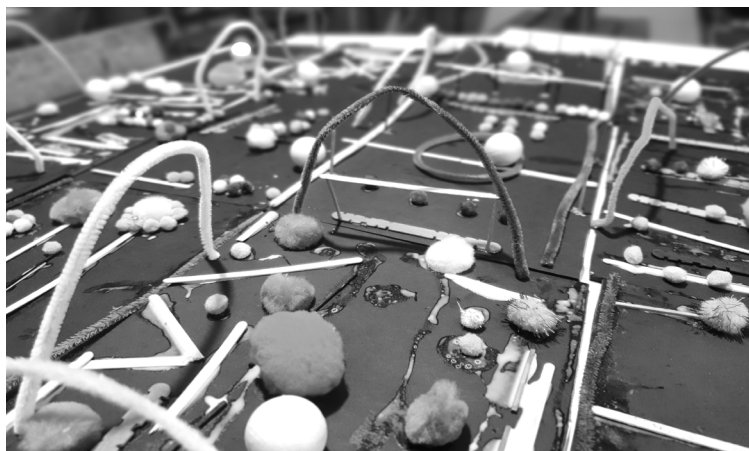
### STEP 2:

Reviewing verbal communications and interview data to capture participants' expressed ideas, reflections, and experiences.

### STEP 3:

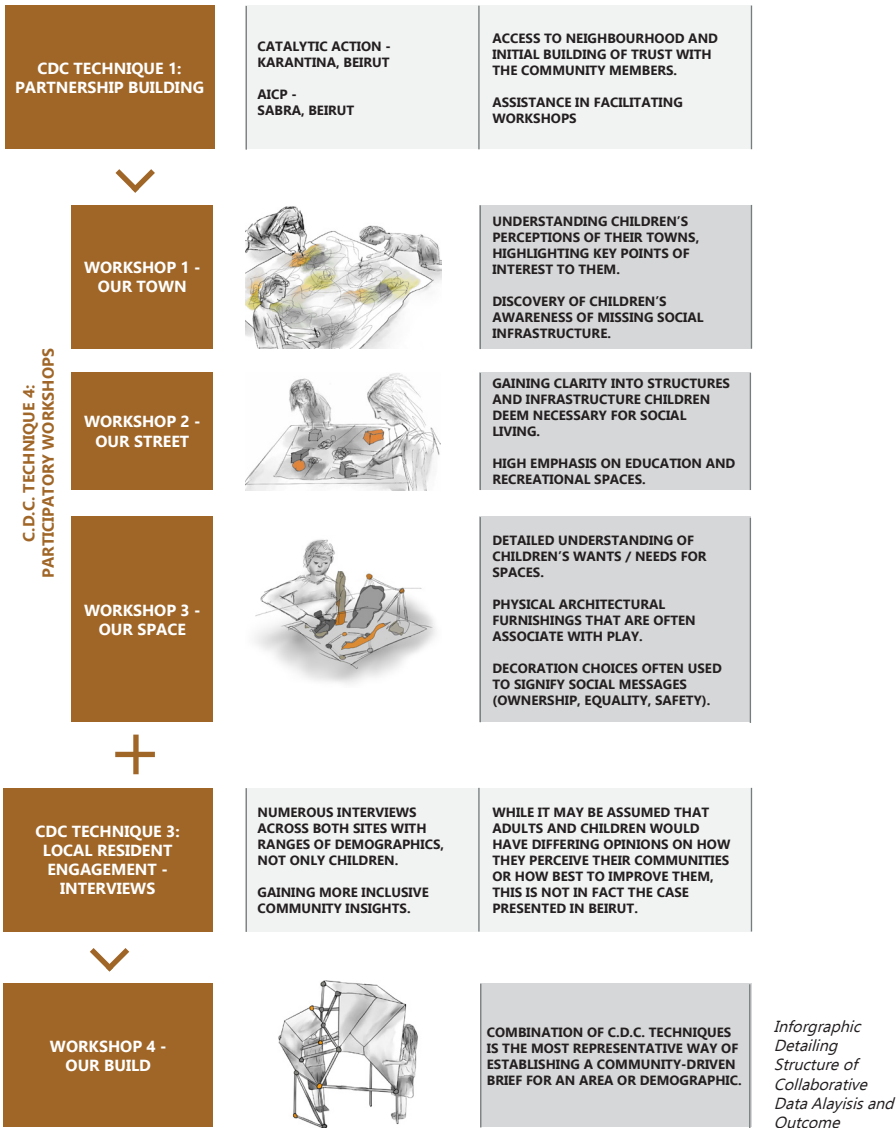
Cross-referencing quotations and material outputs to develop analytical insights or identify potential provocations connected to Physical and Intangible Lines.

This diary primarily documents the process involved in the design and facilitation of the participatory workshops undertaken as part of the CDC methodological approach for the **Transformative Lines** thesis and toolkit<sup>32</sup>, while also presenting the outputs and analyses derived from them.



*Photograph of  
Workshop 3  
Outputs*

Additionally, selected samples of interviews are included, which were used as secondary data to corroborate workshop findings and provide further contextual understanding. Here, the integration of CDC techniques is explored as a methodological approach to inform architectural decision-making, particularly in relation to the proposed co-designed live-build project (Workshop 4).





## WORKSHOP 1 - OUR TOWN

Workshop 1 - Our Town served to confirm points of interest identified through the ADC mappings and to detect initial Intangible Lines based on participants' individual experiences and memories. The workshop also provided an opportunity to begin cross-referencing lived experiences with spatial observations, establishing an initial basis for comparative analysis between the ADC and CDC findings.



*Venn Diagram  
of Workshop  
1 Analysis  
Framework*

### INITIAL NOTES

#### PHYSICAL:

- Daily personal travel routines
- Sites of common interest
- Significant commercial locations
- Social gathering spots (for children or otherwise)
- Religious sites
- Green spaces
- Major roads

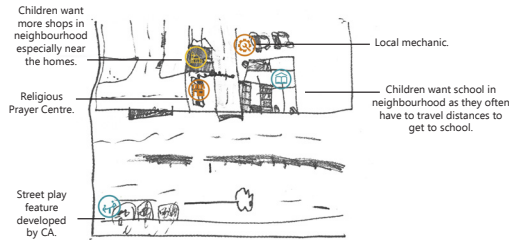
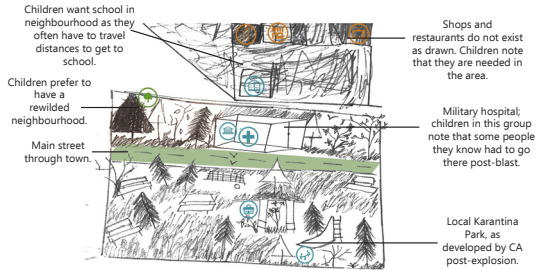
#### INTANGIBLE:

- Narratives involving family and friends related to the mapping process.
- Scale representations reflecting importance.
- Some children's maps indicating perceived absences or missing elements.
- Awareness of socio-political factors influencing their routes.

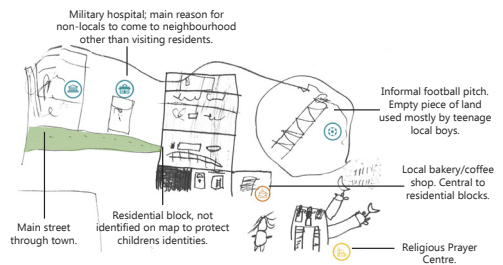
#### ADDITIONAL NOTES:

- Schools serve as central hubs for children's activities.
- Key community figures have been identified.
- Participation was voluntary; some children chose not to participate.

## ANALYSIS - KARANTINA



*\* This groups map is the most spatially accurate to the arrangement of the neighbourhood.*



## ANALYSIS - SABRA

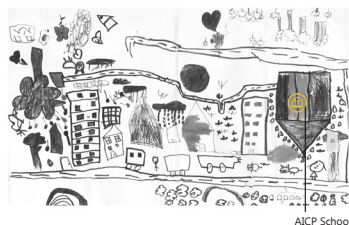
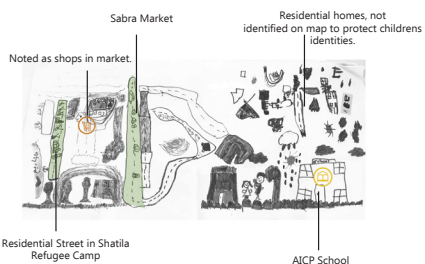
### ANALYSIS OF SAMPLES FROM GROUP S-2B:



Butcher at entrance of Shatila refugee Camp, noted by children as important community figure in camp.

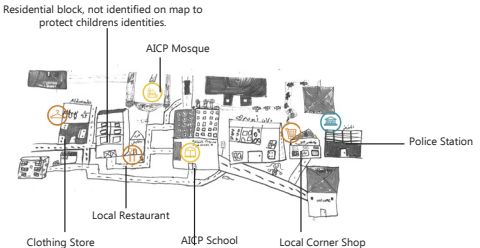
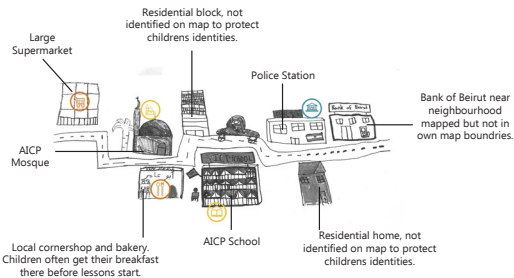


### ANALYSIS OF SAMPLES FROM GROUP S-2C:

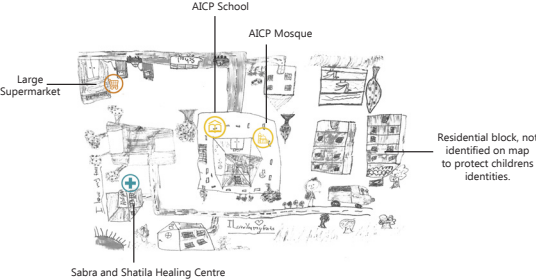
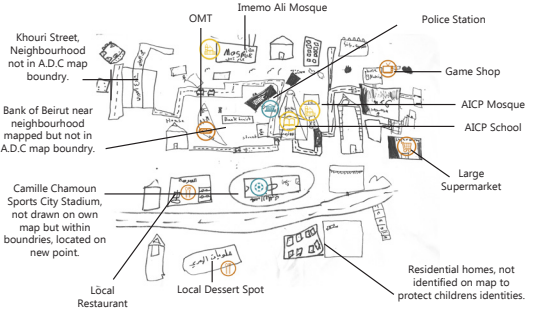


\* This group did not grasp/enjoy concept of task and were given free reign to participate as they wished.

ANALYSIS OF SAMPLES FROM GROUP S-5A:



ANALYSIS OF SAMPLES FROM GROUP S-5C:



## ANALYSIS - CUMULATIVE

### PHYSICAL ANALYTICAL CONCLUSIONS:

- While each child has their own designated route home, key intersections that appear to reveal important social spaces within the community.
- In neighbourhoods with numerous commercial establishments, foot traffic appears to vary considerably; influencing factors include shop pricing, size, and, most notably, reputation.
- Children demonstrate a strong awareness of where local residents physically congregate for social interaction. Unlike more conventional Western adult gathering spaces, such as pubs or cafés, these locations are often informal street corners occupied by residents, serving as symbols of social presence, familiarity, and ownership.
- While children depicted existing green spaces, their drawings often amplified their presence, raising questions regarding children's interest in rewilding or the creation of more natural environments. The majority of participants responded positively to this idea, indicating an expressed desire for increased green space, which is comparatively limited within urban contexts.
- Children possess a strong understanding of key routes within their community. Beyond this, they demonstrate awareness of the spatial relationships between these routes and surrounding places, reflecting a high level of spatial awareness and environmental familiarity.
- The children displayed an intuitive understanding of spatial proportion, as evidenced through their use of scale. Larger drawn features should be cross-referenced with conventional map notations of points of interest to assess spatial emphasis and interpretive significance.
- The children exhibited a clear awareness of the essential physical amenities required for well-functioning neighbourhoods and frequently commented on existing deficiencies, highlighting the impact that these gaps have on both their daily lives and the wider community. This suggests an acute understanding of how deficiencies in local infrastructure and services influence everyday experiences within the neighbourhood.

### INTANGIBLE ANALYTICAL CONCLUSIONS:

- Due to residents' diverse religious and social backgrounds, children identified certain spaces - such as informal gathering points - that may not typically appear on conventional 'points of interest' maps but nevertheless function as vital sites of social cohesion and everyday community interaction.
- Most neighbourhoods in Lebanon are associated with one or more religious sects, and religion plays a significant role in both individual lives and the broader social and political fabric of society. Although Lebanon is a pluralistic country without a state religion, many political groups are aligned with specific religious communities. This form of social segmentation appears to be well recognised,

including by children, who demonstrated awareness of mosques associated with their own sect as well as those linked to others.

- Across all tasks, each group demonstrated a strong awareness of the lifestyles, narratives, and needs of individuals not directly present within the workshop environment. Even when activities were tailored towards their own experiences, participants frequently considered the perspectives of others. This may reflect broader cultural influences relating to collectivism and social responsibility; however, further research involving children of similar ages across different cultural contexts would be beneficial in exploring this interpretation.

- Although political awareness is often understood to emerge more prominently during adolescence, this group demonstrated an awareness of the effects of political circumstances and their influence on everyday life. Participants appeared to balance childhood experiences with an understanding of broader adult challenges that may affect both themselves and their families. This suggests that children's lived experiences within complex socio-political contexts may contribute to earlier forms of political and social awareness than is commonly assumed.

## **MISCELLANEOUS ANALYTICAL CONCLUSIONS**

- Due to the limited availability of designated outdoor spaces for children outside educational facilities, the school serves as the primary gathering point for children in Sabra, functioning as a shared social environment. In contrast, Karantina lacks a formal school facility and instead offers only a playground, which consequently becomes the principal communal space for children. This contrast highlights how differing spatial infrastructures shape opportunities for children's social interaction and collective experience within each neighbourhood.

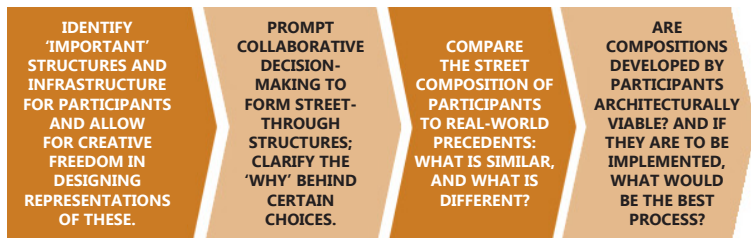
- It is important to note that key adult figures within the community are highly recognisable and generally able to identify other community members, including children. This familiarity may contribute to children feeling more socially integrated within the community, despite the absence of dedicated physical spaces specifically designed for them. Such social recognition may therefore function as an intangible form of community support and belonging, partially compensating for limitations in child-focused physical infrastructure.



## WORKSHOP 2 - OUR STREET

Workshop 2 – Our Street aimed to gather insights into participants’ understanding of architectural street compositions and to identify whether distinct responses or spatial preferences emerged among participants.

*Infographic  
Detailing  
Workshop  
2 Analysis  
Framework*



### INITIAL NOTES

#### PHYSICAL:

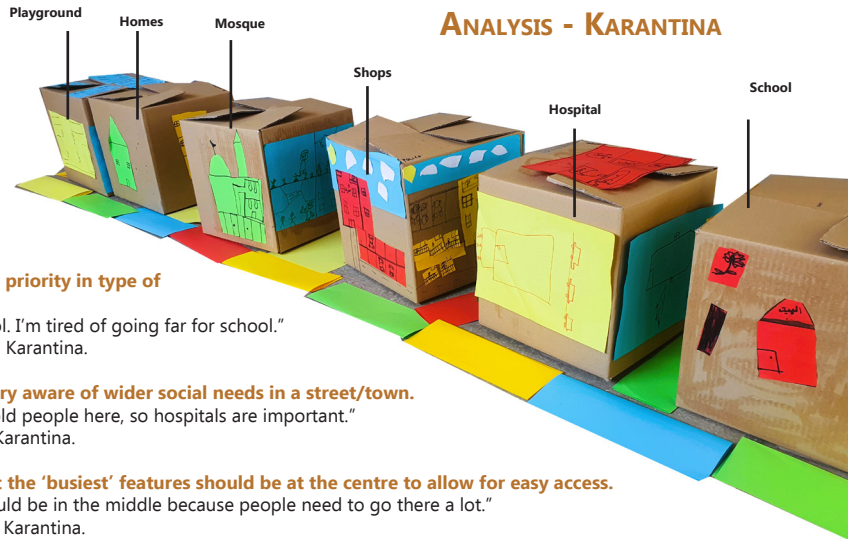
- Key facilities such as schools, residential homes, hospitals, grocery stores, and parks have been identified.
- Social structures are situated in close proximity, near residential areas.
- Amenities are clustered centrally along the main streets.
- Some groups make decisions about which structures to develop based on the missing features in their own neighbourhoods.

#### INTANGIBLE:

- Children demonstrate awareness of how their actions and environments might benefit others in their community.
- Decision-making incorporates non-physical considerations such as noise levels and safety concerns.
- There is an awareness of socio-political issues reflected in the placement and selection of structures within the community.

#### ADDITIONAL NOTES:

- The terms park, playground, and theme park are used interchangeably.



## ANALYSIS - KARANTINA

**'Necessity' was a priority in type of building chosen.**

"We need a school. I'm tired of going far for school."  
Boy, 12 Years Old, Karantina.

**Children were very aware of wider social needs in a street/town.**

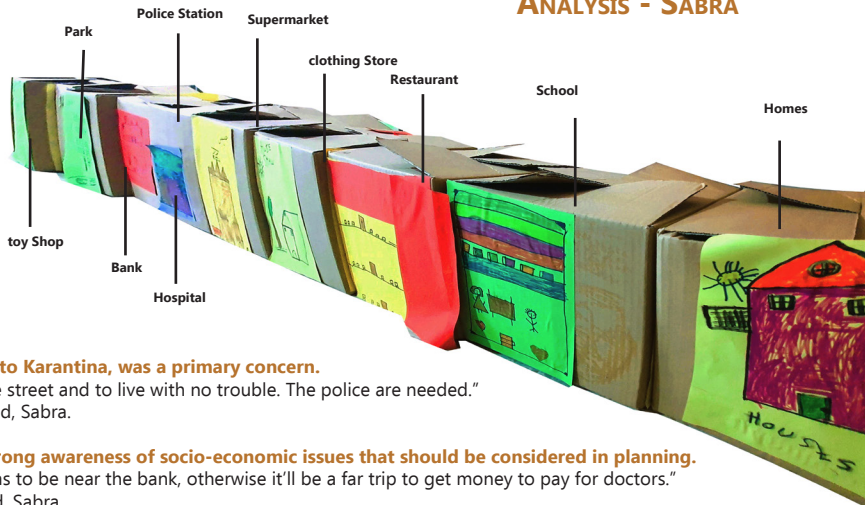
"Theres loads of old people here, so hospitals are important."  
Girl, 9 Years Old, Karantina.

**It was noted that the 'busiest' features should be at the centre to allow for easy access.**

"The mosque should be in the middle because people need to go there a lot."  
Girl, 11 Years Old, Karantina.

**While it was important to have some 'children's' spaces near the home, exceptions were made when safety could be guaranteed via other means.**

"The school can be far because the hospital is there, so it's safe."  
Boy, 8 Years Old, Karantina.



## ANALYSIS - SABRA

**Safety, similar to Karantina, was a primary concern.**

"We want a safe street and to live with no trouble. The police are needed."  
Girl, 10 Years Old, Sabra.

**There was a strong awareness of socio-economic issues that should be considered in planning.**

"The hospital has to be near the bank, otherwise it'll be a far trip to get money to pay for doctors."  
Boy, 9 Years Old, Sabra.

**The first types of spaces chosen were not child-specific; the Park and Play Pit were the last two choices.**

"My mum goes shopping a lot for the family so shops are needed."  
Boy, 7 Years Old, Sabra.

**Parks here mean a 'multi-use' outdoor space. While not necessarily predominantly green space, features such as playgrounds and sports pitches are near the home.**

"We want our spaces to be near home."  
Girl, 7 Years Old, Sabra.

## ANALYSIS - CUMULATIVE

### PHYSICAL ANALYTICAL CONCLUSIONS:

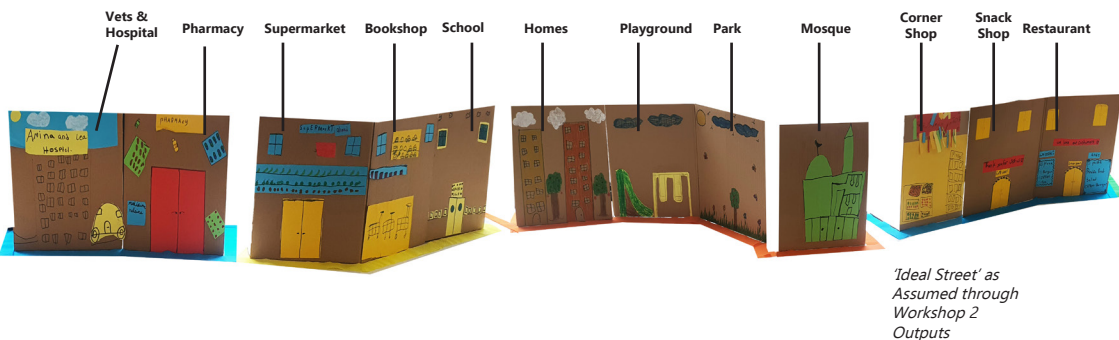
- Children demonstrate a strong awareness of architectural and spatial conditions within neighbourhoods. It is important to distinguish between streets composed of fragmented or incidental structures and those designed with intentional social features that benefit the wider community. Although participants are relatively young, they were able to identify fundamental elements required for effective urban environments. This raises questions regarding whether such awareness is shaped by contextual social responsibilities and early exposure to community challenges, or whether it reflects broader developmental understandings of shared spatial needs.
- Children also demonstrate an awareness of how urban design may benefit others beyond themselves. Exploring how this perspective might inform the development of larger urban environments raises questions concerning whether children possess a broader capacity for collective spatial thinking or whether the smaller scale of their immediate surroundings facilitates this awareness.
- Furthermore, participants demonstrated an understanding of spatial importance through scale and location, for example positioning elements closer to the centre of a street to signify significance. Importantly, this perceived significance often appeared to be considered from the perspective of the broader community rather than solely from children's individual viewpoints.
- Finally, children were highly attentive to the amenities required for well-functioning neighbourhoods. Participants frequently commented on missing facilities and reflected on how these deficiencies affected both their daily lives and those of surrounding community members. This suggests an awareness not only of personal needs but also of wider communal wellbeing and spatial equity.

### INTANGIBLE ANALYTICAL CONCLUSIONS:

- Children in this context demonstrated a perspective that was not solely self-interested, even when opportunities existed to prioritise their own preferences. Instead, participants frequently considered the broader needs of others within the community, reflecting an awareness of collective wellbeing.
- Although the task was primarily physical in nature, children independently began to consider the intangible qualities associated with the structures they selected, reflecting an expanded understanding of architectural considerations. Participants demonstrated awareness of non-physical architectural dimensions, including social function, atmosphere, and communal value.
- While political awareness is often understood to develop more prominently during adolescence, children in this setting demonstrated an awareness of the effects of political circumstances and their wider implications. Participants appeared to navigate the balance between childhood experiences and broader adult challenges that may affect both themselves and their families. This suggests that lived experience within politically complex contexts may contribute to earlier forms of social and political awareness than commonly assumed.

## MISCELLANEOUS ANALYTICAL CONCLUSIONS

- Language constitutes a crucial component of the methodology, both prior to and during fieldwork. It is important to analyse references specific to particular languages and dialects, including Lebanese, Syrian, and Palestinian Arabic. Additionally, consideration should be given to the feasibility and quality of outputs when translation is required, particularly regarding the potential loss, reinterpretation, or cultural specificity of meaning. This highlights translation not simply as a logistical process, but as an analytical and methodological consideration within participatory research.



In analysing the five variations of street configurations devised by participants, with particular attention to overlapping selections across groups, a workshop-specific analytical approach involved establishing a conceptual model of an 'Ideal Street', derived from the average preferences expressed across participants.

This model was subsequently presented as a reflective output of Workshop 2 during the **Transformative Lines Exhibition and Seminar**<sup>33</sup> held in January 2025.

## WORKSHOP 3 - OUR SPACE

This workshop aimed to advance the research methodology from a process focused primarily on documenting and analysing existing socio-architectural conditions within local urban environments to an initial step towards developing a conceptual lines-based urban development framework informed by the shared urban imaginaries of the participatory demographic. In this sense, the workshop marked a transition from reflective analysis towards speculative and aspirational spatial thinking.

### FORMULATING A PARTICIPANT CO-DESIGNED BRIEF

#### A.D.C. IDENTIFIED URBAN DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS:

- Missing infrastructure
- Demographics unrepresented spatially
- Disproportionate scale vs use of facility/space
- Structure not fit for purpose



#### FEATURES IDENTIFIED THROUGH PARTICIPATORY DESIGN WORKSHOP

##### PHYSICAL FEATURES:

- Scale
- Structures
- Furnishing
- Colour
- Texture
- Accessibility

##### INTANGIBLE FEATURES:

- Safety
- Cultural signifiers
- Age dominance



#### LOCAL GOVERNMENT OR ORGANISATION INITIATIVES OR FUNDING CAPABILITIES

##### FACILITATION/ PARTNERSHIP:

Further, from research facilitators, other partnerships may be necessary for funding, land procurement, or planning permission.

*Inforgraphic  
Detailing  
Workshop  
3 Analysis  
Framework*

## INITIAL NOTES

### PHYSICAL:

- Benches
- Traditional playground elements
- Educational games
- Tables
- Trampoline
- Planters
- Ziplines
- Sports pitch
- Ball pit
- Unique climbing frames

### INTANGIBLE:

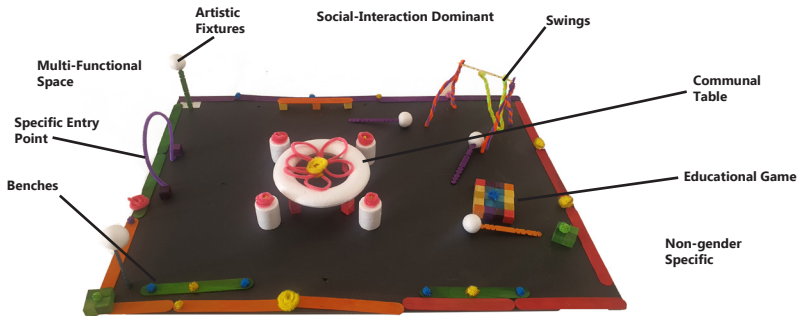
- Gender specific/inclusive designs based on group.
- Artistic features
- Social-interaction dominant.
- Multi-functional
- Different age groups considered.

### ADDITIONAL NOTES:

- 'Playground' can also mean sports pitch.

## ANALYSIS - KARANTINA

### ANALYSIS OF SAMPLES FROM GROUP S-5A:



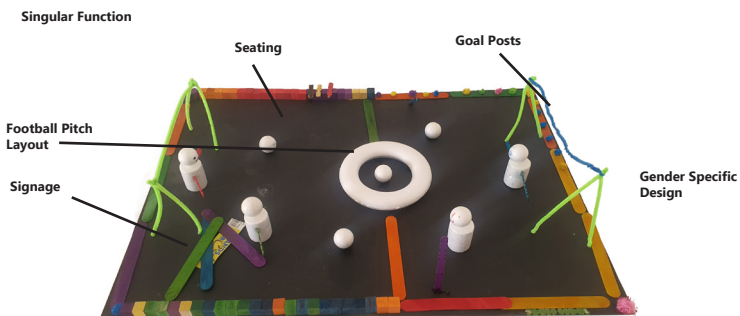
**Designed around a central non-visually shielded gathering space. All other features are secondary in both conversation and design.**

"We want an open place where we can be safe with our friends." Girl, 12 Years Old, Karantina.

**Inclusion of non-interactive design pieces as a form of visual stimulation.**

"Kids and adults should come here. A space for everyone." Girl, 7 Years Old, Karantina

### ANALYSIS OF SAMPLES FROM GROUP S-5C:



**Karantina participants divided in response: benefit of community vs. benefit of a singular demographic.**

"The older boys dont let us play with them. Here we will let all boys play" Boy, 8 Years Old, Karantina.

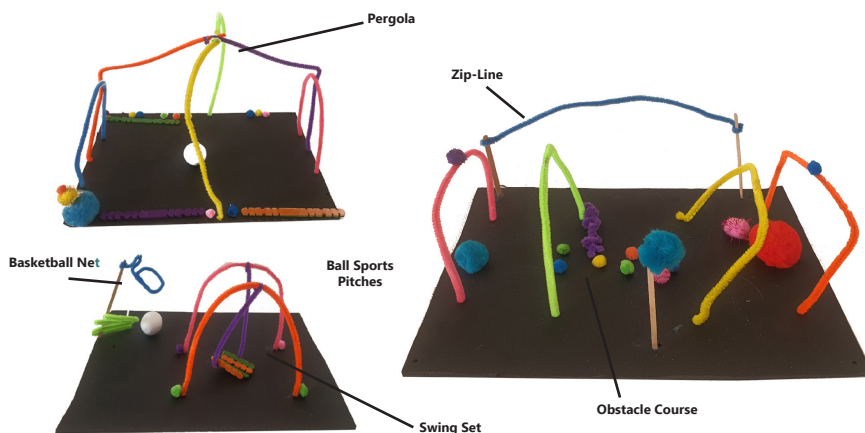
**When prompted about potential inclusive features, signage was added as a possible way of including girls in the space; boys noted that the 'girls could design the game day signs'.**

"Girls don't like football. They can have a different space." Boy, 10 Years Old, Karantina.

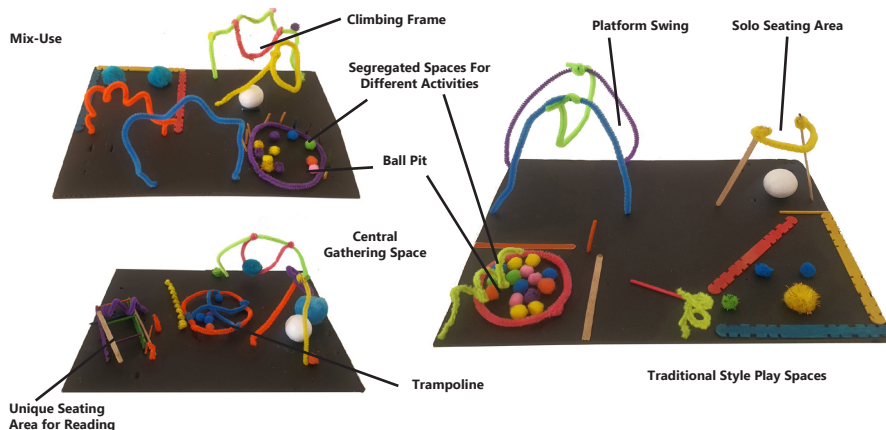


## ANALYSIS - SABRA

### ANALYSIS OF SAMPLES FROM GROUP S-2B:



### ANALYSIS OF SAMPLES FROM GROUP S-2C:



**All Sabra groups place heavy importance on play features.**

"We want a space to play. We don't have one." Boy, 7 Years Old, Sabra.

**Sabra participants are prone to sharing ideas across design groups, resulting in similar design features.**

"Beautiful spaces with colour are better because people will look after it more." Girl, 11 Years Old, Sabra.

**Older participants are more likely to include seating areas.**

"Some kids don't want to be in groups. They need spaces to be alone." Boy, 10 Years Old, Sabra.

## ANALYSIS - CUMULATIVE

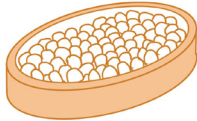
It became evident that, when considering an aspirational space, children were more concerned with the furnishings, atmosphere, and quality of the environment than with the larger architectural structure that contained it. In fact, no group chose to design an enclosed structure, with all participants expressing a preference for outdoor environments. This preference may be related to the climate of Beirut, where weather conditions are generally suitable for outdoor activity for much of the year.

The features selected encompassed a combination of play, seating, decorative elements, and sports facilities. It is within this diversity of uses that spaces may be designed to promote equity and respond to the collective needs and aspirations of children. As children are not a homogenous group, spaces designed for them should similarly accommodate diverse preferences, activities, and experiences.

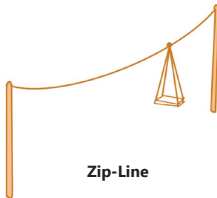
### PLAY FEATURES



Swings



Ball Pit

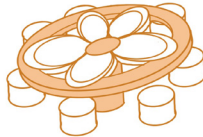


Zip-Line

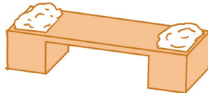


Obstacle Course

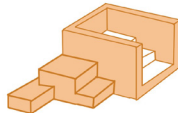
### SEATING FEATURES



Communal Table



Planter Bench



Solo-Seating with Multiple Levels

### DECORATIVE FEATURES

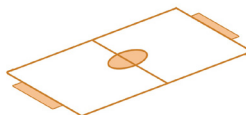


Arches/Pergola



Mural / Sculpture

### SPORTS FEATURES



Football Pitch

*Common Features in Childrens' 'Ideal Space' Across Outputs from Workshop 3*

## ANALYSIS - CUMULATIVE

### PHYSICAL ANALYTICAL CONCLUSIONS:

- Most of the features selected reflected conventional playground elements. This was a recurring observation across all groups, as many children reported having limited access to designated play areas or a general absence of play spaces within Karantina and Sabra. This suggests that participants' aspirations may have been shaped by the scarcity of opportunities for structured outdoor play within their everyday environments.

- It is noteworthy that, despite gendered differences in preferences relating to playgrounds and football fields, all groups perceived outdoor environments as appropriate settings for their activities. This may be attributed to the scarcity or inaccessibility of outdoor spaces, cultural perceptions associated with outdoor freedom, or the city's climate, which supports extended outdoor activity throughout much of the year. Further exploration of these perceptions could provide deeper insight into the social, cultural, and environmental factors shaping children's spatial preferences.

- Additionally, children emphasised the importance of seating and spaces for social interaction, which may be influenced by cultural norms, particularly the association between sitting and socialising. Within these neighbourhoods, informal social spaces frequently consist of chairs positioned along streets where community members, particularly older men, gather. This cultural characteristic appears to influence children's preferences for incorporating seating areas within their ideal spaces.

Regarding greenery, many groups expressed a desire to incorporate planters and vegetation into their ideal environments. Some participants highlighted their appreciation for the visual qualities and pleasant scents of flowers and plants. Given the limited presence of green space within the city, it is understandable that children valued and aspired to include such features in their envisioned environments. This may indicate a broader desire for greater access to natural elements and restorative environments within dense urban contexts.

### INTANGIBLE ANALYTICAL CONCLUSIONS:

- Female children more frequently selected gender-inclusive spaces, while male children often preferred to design more gender-specific areas. Football pitches function as one of the primary free social spaces for children in Beirut, particularly for boys. Traditionally, older Lebanese teenage boys tend to dominate these spaces, limiting access for younger boys, particularly Syrian boys, who expressed a desire to participate in these existing urban environments. Conversely, girls are often socially excluded from football pitches regardless of age, leading them to develop alternative social spaces outside these environments. Rather than seeking access to male-dominated areas, many girls appeared to aspire to the creation of shared spaces designed according to their own needs and preferences. This highlights how social and cultural norms may shape children's access to space in gendered ways, influencing both spatial exclusion and aspirational imaginaries.

- It was important to children that their designated spaces be vibrant and colourful, symbolising a sense of ownership and identity. Participants expressed a preference for lively environments incorporating patterns, contrasts, and expressive visual elements, in contrast to the more restrained designs often associated with adult preferences. This suggests a desire for spaces that reflect playfulness, agency, and personal expression.
- It was observed that children rarely saw friends outside school. When they did, interactions were generally limited to peers living nearby, often involving play in the street. However, participants expressed a preference for spaces that conveyed a sense of safety, allowing parents to feel comfortable permitting visits and social interaction. This highlights broader issues related to social norms, child socialisation, parental perceptions of safety, and the boundaries that influence where children are able to gather freely.
- Multi-functionality was considered essential within these spaces, as children recognised that if they were ever to achieve their ideal 'space', it might constitute their only designated environment. Consequently, participants expressed a preference for spaces capable of accommodating a variety of activities suited to different age groups and, in some cases, different genders, reflecting aspirations for versatility and inclusivity.
- Children also recognised that accessing these spaces would likely require assistance from parents or older siblings. As such, having a conveniently located and easily accessible space was considered highly important. The thoughtful considerations expressed by participants suggest that cultural expectations and everyday practicalities strongly shape how children imagine and evaluate their environments.

## **MISCELLANEOUS ANALYTICAL CONCLUSIONS**

- Children preferred 3D creative activities to 2D drawing activities. This may suggest that tactile, interactive, and spatially immersive methods are more effective in sustaining engagement within participatory architectural workshops involving children.

## INTERVIEW SAMPLES: AGE 6-12

### KARANTINA - FEMALE, LEBANESE, AGE 9

1) What do you like most about your neighbourhood?

**I like all the people. It's full here, not with things, but people. All my cousins are here. And my favourite street. Yeh... that.**

2) What do you like least about your neighbourhood?

**There's nowhere to shop. We have corner shop but not much. I like pretty clothes, there are no clothes here.**

3) Do you feel like your neighbourhood has changed? How and to what extent?

**There are more places for us now, they (CatalyticAction) come and do fun things for us, like the play area near my house.**

4) What is your opinion about the social spaces in your neighbourhood?

**They are very fun, I like them. I want more flowers next time.**

5) Who occupies these social spaces? Why?

**All of us, but there are places better for girl and places better for boys.**

6) Do you think children have a space in the neighbourhood? If yes, where? If no, why do you think this is the case?

**Yes, many! The park, the streets, i mean, a lot.**

7) Do you feel like you have a sense of ownership within your neighbourhood?

**Of course. This is my area.**

8) Would you like to be more involved in the development of your neighbourhood – if not already?

**I would like to make it prettier. It's so ugly sometimes. Either with decorations or flowers. Any colour.**

9) Have you seen any maps of this neighbourhood? If so, do you think they represent the area accurately?

**No, I mean, I've looked at google map. I don't know how to use it.**

10) What is a structural and/or social element that you believe makes this area unique?

**Not sure. I guess the park, my friends at school don't have a park.**

x) Other discussion had:

## SABRA - MALE, PALESTINIAN, AGE 7

1) What do you like most about your neighbourhood?

**I like my home and the shop on my street. They sell my favourite candy.**

2) What do you like least about your neighbourhood?

**It's. If. It's nice but also I have to walk far to get to school. And there is nowhere to play. Mum lets me play on the street near our house, but not all the time. And it's just a street. We always have to stop and move for cars. And auntie \*\*\*\*\* shouts at us.**

3) Do you feel like your neighbourhood has changed? How and to what extent?

**It's dirtier. Where we play we find more rubbish now.**

4) What is your opinion about the social spaces in your neighbourhood?

**I don't know. (Clarification - asks if there are social space) yes, I think, as in place people sit? There are some.**

5) Who occupies these social spaces? Why?

**Everyone. They're always full. Playing, sitting, drinking coffee, playing backgammon.**

6) Do you think children have a space in the neighbourhood? If yes, where? If no, why do you think this is the case?

**I mean.... Not like a playground. We have school. The football pitch it's here but my cousins go there.**

7) Do you feel like you have a sense of ownership within your neighbourhood?

**Not really. They (Lebanese nationals) make me feel like I don't belong. They're not nice sometimes. But in the camp it's different. No one says anything. We're all the same.**

8) Would you like to be more involved in the development of your neighbourhood – if not already?

**I want to help make the camp nicer.**

9) Have you seen any maps of this neighbourhood? If so, do you think they represent the area accurately?

**No. I don't know.**

10) What is a structural and/or social element that you believe makes this area unique?

**Our camp, it's nice. There are camps that aren't nice.**

x) Other discussion had:

Discussion regarding configuration of map. Interviewee listed places and tried to locate them.



## INTERVIEW SAMPLES: AGE 13-16

### KARANTINA - MALE, SYRIAN, AGE 13

1) What do you like most about your neighbourhood?

**It reminds me of home because there are loads of Syrians here.**

2) What do you like least about your neighbourhood?

**There's still racism. And there's not much to do considering how little there is.**

3) Do you feel like your neighbourhood has changed? How and to what extent?

**My family came at the beginning (of the war). It's gotten busier. More of us (Syrians) are now known here.**

4) What is your opinion about the social spaces in your neighbourhood?

**They're good. There's space for everyone. The kids have space. The adults have space. It's a really nice thing.**

5) Who occupies these social spaces? Why?

**As I said, everyone, whoever wants. The women I guess don't like it as much so we don't see them a lot.**

6) Do you think children have a space in the neighbourhood? If yes, where? If no, why do you think this is the case?

**Yes, there are loads. But the park, it's closed a lot and some times the little kids are everywhere. So me and my friends play football there (point to location).**

7) Do you feel like you have a sense of ownership within your neighbourhood?

**Somewhat. I can't remember home (Syria) well, so this is all I know. But as well, I'm Syrian, it's not for us.**

8) Would you like to be more involved in the development of your neighbourhood – if not already?

**Yes, if they let me. I would add so much. We need a gaming room.**

9) Have you seen any maps of this neighbourhood? If so, do you think they represent the area accurately?

**Are there maps of here? I don't know how to read a map. Can you teach me? (Time spent showing basics of arial map reading).**

10) What is a structural and/or social element that you believe makes this area unique?

**I don't know. It all looks the same to me to be honest.**

x) Other discussion had:

## SABRA - FEMALE, LEBANESE, AGE 14

1) What do you like most about your neighbourhood?

**There's something to like? It's ugly.**

2) What do you like least about your neighbourhood?

**Everything, it's busy and smelly, and there's a lot but also nothing. Useless mishmash.**

3) Do you feel like your neighbourhood has changed? How and to what extent?

**No, that's the problem. Nothing changes, and if it does it's for the worse.**

4) What is your opinion about the social spaces in your neighbourhood?

**No use to me. I'm not a boy, us girls we have no 'social space'. Our parents home?**

5) Who occupies these social spaces? Why?

**As I said, boys, men, it's safe for them. If I go there they'll talk about me. It's not proper, they'll talk about my honour.**

6) Do you think children have a space in the neighbourhood? If yes, where? If no, why do you think this is the case?

**Not at all. No one cares about kids.**

7) Do you feel like you have a sense of ownership within your neighbourhood?

**Own what? I mean, this area is mine, I belong here. But not in any visible way. My house? But I guess that's my parent's not mine. When I marry it will be more clear. It will actually be mine (a home).**

8) Would you like to be more involved in the development of your neighbourhood – if not already?

**Development? I guess, I don't know how I'd help.**

9) Have you seen any maps of this neighbourhood? If so, do you think they represent the area accurately?

**Yes i've seen maps. Well one, on google. It's easy to use but not everything is on it.**

10) What is a structural and/or social element that you believe makes this area unique?

**There's everything here, shops restaurants, schools, bakeries. Everything. I guess that is what I like most.**

x) Other discussion had:

Interviewee helped locate important points of interest on map.

## INTERVIEW SAMPLES: AGE 17-25

### KARANTINA - MALE, LEBANESE, AGE 25

1) What do you like most about your neighbourhood?

**It is calm. It is unique for Beirut, everywhere is busy. When I want to go out and have fun I go to my friends' areas. And when I want to relax I know I find that here.**

2) What do you like least about your neighbourhood?

**The stress everyone went through. It's not exactly about the neighbourhood itself but because it happened here (2020 Blast) its hard to not think about that when you think of the bad.**

3) Do you feel like your neighbourhood has changed? How and to what extent?

**Yes of course. The Blast ruined and then the organisations came and fixed. I don't if I would say its better. But it has changed, for sure.**

4) What is your opinion about the social spaces in your neighbourhood?

**They're good. Theres enough without it crowding. And no one complains if we stay up all night, the boys.**

5) Who occupies these social spaces? Why?

**Certainly mostly men like me and older, but kids have spaces too. But its more in the day. Its just safety.**

6) Do you think children have a space in the neighbourhood? If yes, where? If no, why do you think this is the case?

**Yeh the whole neighbourhood. We don't limit our kids here. They can play, they can sit with us. But sometimes at night, its not for their age. So we send them home.**

7) Do you feel like you have a sense of ownership within your neighbourhood?

**Of course. This is my home. Where else would I feel ownership.**

8) Would you like to be more involved in the development of your neighbourhood – if not already?

**It's not of interest to me to be honest. I like it how it is.**

9) Have you seen any maps of this neighbourhood? If so, do you think they represent the area accurately?

**Yeh.**

10) What is a structural and/or social element that you believe makes this area unique?

**Personally, I think our pool table. Everyone that comes enjoys it.**

x) Other discussion had:

Interviewee pointed out locations deemed safe/time they are safe.

## SABRA - FEMALE, PALESTINIAN, AGE 17

1) What do you like most about your neighbourhood?

**The camp is safe, everyone knows everyone so I can move around as I want.**

2) What do you like least about your neighbourhood?

**It's not home, but I don't know home. I guess they (the Lebanese) make us feel like it's not home.**

3) Do you feel like your neighbourhood has changed? How and to what extent?

**It has always been busier, but even more since the Syrians arrived. There are more of us (non-Lebanese) than there are of them (Lebanese).**

4) What is your opinion about the social spaces in your neighbourhood?

**I don't think there are any. Or any not just for men at least, and even then it's just the streets they sit on.**

5) Who occupies these social spaces? Why?

**Men. Because they can. I would if it was safe. But women, there are many6 levels to it.**

6) Do you think children have a space in the neighbourhood? If yes, where? If no, why do you think this is the case?

**No not really. They play in the streets sometimes. In the camp its safer because there are no cars. But still, no official space. The just physically is no room. Look around, where would you put them?**

7) Do you feel like you have a sense of ownership within your neighbourhood?

**Yes I guess: I know ever street and shop and vendor. And the camp, it's ours.**

8) Would you like to be more involved in the development of your neighbourhood – if not already?

**Yes, I would change so much. Make it cleaners, make it nicer. For everyone.**

9) Have you seen any maps of this neighbourhood? If so, do you think they represent the area accurately?

**No, not really. I can look and tell you if you have one? (shows interviewee map) Yes I guess everything seems right but, it's from above so I can be wrong.**

10) What is a structural and/or social element that you believe makes this area unique?

**The camp? Maybe. It's nicer? It's just well known. Famous.**

x) Other discussion had:

## INTERVIEW SAMPLES: AGE 26-59

### KARANTINA - FEMALE, LEBANESE, AGE 38

1) What do you like most about your neighbourhood?

**It is safe, excluding the things out of our control, the blast, but the people. They are safe and trustworthy. And that is an indicator of a good town.**

2) What do you like least about your neighbourhood?

**It is limited, for many things I have to travel out. With kids, their school, household duties, it is a lot.**

3) Do you feel like your neighbourhood has changed? How and to what extent?

**Of course. The people have changed a lot. It can't be helped this area is made for refugees. It's a nicer camp. But they are good people.**

4) What is your opinion about the social spaces in your neighbourhood?

**There are a lot. And they are only really for the residents. We don't find strangers hanging out here which is good.**

5) Who occupies these social spaces? Why?

**I don't think there is a specific group. All of us. I guess it's just the time. You won't find me or my children hanging out on the street at night.**

6) Do you think children have a space in the neighbourhood? If yes, where? If no, why do you think this is the case?

**Yes, and we're lucky for it. My Daughter is deaf and there is a play space right in front of my house where cars don't come. As a mother it is comforting. I don't think I would find this anywhere else.**

7) Do you feel like you have a sense of ownership within your neighbourhood?

**Yes. We are all family and we all own a part of this place. Even if we go from here.**

8) Would you like to be more involved in the development of your neighbourhood – if not already?

**I have joined some meetings with organisations. I've enjoyed it a lot. I would like to do more. But I struggle with time and doing these things and looking after my kids.**

9) Have you seen any maps of this neighbourhood? If so, do you think they represent the area accurately?

**Yes, in a workshop they showed us some and we had to stick writing on it. I don't know if its correct but it was fun.**

10) What is a structural and/or social element that you believe makes this area unique?

**The park. It's lovely. Especially when we can use it.**

x) Other discussion had:

Discussed issues of safety and experiences of her daughter in the neighbourhood.

## SABRA - MALE, LEBANESE, AGE 53

1) What do you like most about your neighbourhood?

**I think it's the best place to be in Beirut for someone like me. Do you see me on the streets of Achrafieh? No, there's nowhere better than here.**

2) What do you like least about your neighbourhood?

**It's filth. It was much cleaner and nicer when I was a child. Now it just always has a... kind of smell. Its busy and nothing is done right.**

3) Do you feel like your neighbourhood has changed? How and to what extent?

**I was born here. I've seen it all. I was a child in the occupation and I saw it liberated. And now I see it being taken over. Still I don't know where else would be better for me. I like the noise of it all. It wasn't as built. There were trees everywhere that are gone.**

4) What is your opinion about the social spaces in your neighbourhood?

**They could be nicer. Social spaces here are chairs, tables and shisha pipes on the street.**

5) Who occupies these social spaces? Why?

**Men. Who else? Can you imagine a woman hanging out on the street next to us?**

6) Do you think children have a space in the neighbourhood? If yes, where? If no, why do you think this is the case?

**No, there's no need. They can play on the street. We all did. They don't need to be spoiled with thing that get ruined easy.**

7) Do you feel like you have a sense of ownership within your neighbourhood?

**Would I answer no? Definitely not. Of course I feel ownership. This is my town.**

8) Would you like to be more involved in the development of your neighbourhood – if not already?

**No, it would be a headache.**

9) Have you seen any maps of this neighbourhood? If so, do you think they represent the area accurately?

**No, they barely finish maps and then Sabra changes again. What is the point. We who live here know it (the neighbourhood).**

10) What is a structural and/or social element that you believe makes this area unique?

**The excess of buildings. And the camps. They're not unique. But you clearly know it's Sabra.**

x) Other discussion had:

Discussed history of camp, including the violences around it.



## INTERVIEW SAMPLES: AGE 60+

### KARANTINA - MALE, LEBANESE, AGE 78

1) What do you like most about your neighbourhood?

**What should I tell you? I don't know. There's so many things. This seat. I like sitting here. Watching people come and go.**

2) What do you like least about your neighbourhood?

**Now, it's not the neighbourhoods fault, but my friends, they're nearly all gone. They used to fill this place.**

3) Do you feel like your neighbourhood has changed? How and to what extent?

**Oh how much. All of it I guess. The buildings were not as nice, the streets too. We could work to the river and play and go see the ocean. They (the government) stopped us from doing that. I don't know what they turned it into but that's no river.**

4) What is your opinion about the social spaces in your neighbourhood?

**They are passable. They were nicer.**

5) Who occupies these social spaces? Why?

**Everyone, us elders we chitchat and the kids they play.**

6) Do you think children have a space in the neighbourhood? If yes, where? If no, why do you think this is the case?

**Yeh, look there's loads of things for them (point to CatalyticAction's streetscape).**

7) Do you feel like you have a sense of ownership within your neighbourhood?

**Of course. If it comes down to just this chair I have a space here. More than most.**

8) Would you like to be more involved in the development of your neighbourhood – if not already?

**No, let the young people do that. I'm tired and I have seen enough change and it is never good.**

9) Have you seen any maps of this neighbourhood? If so, do you think they represent the area accurately?

**How would I know? I guess. You tell me.**

10) What is a structural and/or social element that you believe makes this area unique?

**It used to be the river. Now I don't know. The port? That horrible thing.**

x) Other discussion had:

Further conversation regarding the neighbourhood prior to buildup and river before canalisation.

## SABRA - FEMALE, LEBANESE, AGE 65

1) What do you like most about your neighbourhood?

**The shops, I never am in need of anything. I find anything I need. The market is one of the best in the country.**

2) What do you like least about your neighbourhood?

**I think everyone will say the same things. It's too busy, and there are too many strangers.**

3) Do you feel like your neighbourhood has changed? How and to what extent?

**What hasn't change. They keep building and I don't know for what. And the people keep changing. It's good the shops I go to are still here.**

4) What is your opinion about the social spaces in your neighbourhood?

**I mean there are not any. We women, we socialise at home or in front of our homes. Where else would we go? I would like space. Maybe with benches and a fountain.**

5) Who occupies these social spaces? Why?

**I mean I don't know. What are you counting as social space? (explains) Ah ok, men. They sit in the streets, in cafes, in front of shops. Everywhere they want is a social space for them.**

6) Do you think children have a space in the neighbourhood? If yes, where? If no, why do you think this is the case?

**No poor things. We let them play in front of us on our streets but its not safe. What if they go somewhere else and someone takes them. Or they get hurt and we don't know. Now my kids are big. But it was safer when they were young here.**

7) Do you feel like you have a sense of ownership within your neighbourhood?

**As much as I can as a normal person.**

8) Would you like to be more involved in the development of your neighbourhood – if not already?

**If they would listen, yes. I would make it much nicer. Much safer. And put these social space you describe but for everyone. And maybe fix the streets and buildings, my mum is in her 80's these streets are dangerous for her to walk on.**

9) Have you seen any maps of this neighbourhood? If so, do you think they represent the area accurately?

**No.**

10) What is a structural and/or social element that you believe makes this area unique?

**The souk (market), for certain. Souk Sabra is known everywhere.**

x) Other discussion had:

Further conversation regarding street safety and play in relation to public social spaces.

# IMPACT - TRANSFORMATIVE LINES APPROACH

As previously described, this workshop diary aims to summarise the intentions, development, outputs, and foundational analysis of the participatory workshops facilitated with research participants as a key component of the CDC strategy within the **Transformative Lines** approach.

The **Transformative Lines** approach proposesthat ‘data gathered through various Collaborative Data Collection techniques, when systematically organised and analysed, will facilitate the identification of Intangible Lines within the socio-cultural fabric of a community. Similar to Physical Lines, these may represent spatially significant links or conceptual elements of community composition. [...] Intangible Lines are those that necessitate firsthand experience within a specific location to recognise. Through engagement in various collaborative processes, these connections can be effectively identified and understood.’ (Houssami, 2025) <sup>34</sup>

C.D.C Driving  
Process Diagram



These workshops aimed to establish a collection of participatory maps capable of identifying not only physical locations but also spatial social practices, lived experiences, and shared aspirations. Without this component, the aspirations identified through the CDC would remain primarily verbal constructs, lacking tangible visual representations of the imaginaries expressed by local participants. The impact of this process therefore lies in its capacity to support the architectural analysis of co-produced outputs, enabling participatory insights to inform reflective and context-sensitive design responses. In this sense, the workshops function not only as a data collection mechanism but also as an intermediary step between lived experience and spatial intervention within the broader **Transformative Lines** framework.



Please refer to  
**‘Transformative  
Lines - The  
Toolkit’**

## POST-DOCTORAL WORKSHOP INTENTIONS

One of the primary objectives of the Transformative Lines thesis was to develop a small-scale, temporary structural proposal for a child-designed space. However, due to a significant reduction in the fieldwork period caused by regional conflict, CDC Workshop 4 – Our Build was indefinitely postponed.

In the future, when appropriate, I plan to revisit the research sites of Sabra and Karantina to fulfil the original objective of constructing a small-scale, temporary structure informed by children's designs developed through Workshop 3 – Our Space. I aim to facilitate this process through a co-creative approach involving local residents and participants, ensuring that implementation remains grounded in community collaboration and context-specific needs.

Furthermore, I hope to host a future exhibition in Beirut, building upon the **Transformative Lines Exhibition and Seminar**<sup>35</sup> held in London in January 2025. This would provide local community members with an opportunity to engage directly with the research and offer feedback on the conclusions and interpretations derived from the study. Such engagement would also contribute to further reflection on the applicability, limitations, and future development of the **Transformative Lines** approach within the communities that informed its creation.



Cover Image  
for the 'AAD  
Sessions:  
Transformative  
Lines, Exhibition  
and Seminar'  
Youtube Video



# REFERENCES



# REFERENCE LIST

## ILLUSTRATIONS

*All photographs, infographics and illustrations presented in this **Workshop Diary** are my own.*

## THE WORKSHOP DESIGN DIARY - INTRODUCTION

1 Houssami, H (2025) Transformative Lines Toolkit. [London]: LMU.  
2 United Nations (2009) Convention on the Rights of the Child – Article 12. [New York]: UN  
3 Norwegian Refugee Council (2024) Legal Guide to Child’s Rights in Lebanon.  
[Switzerland]: Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation  
4 Houssami, H (2025) Transformative Lines Thesis - The Phoenix City. [London]: LMU.

## CHILD-FOCUSED PARTICIPATORY PRACTICES

5 Smith, L. T (2021) Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples. (3rd  
Ed.) [London]: Zed Books, Bloomsbury Publishing.  
6 Groundwater-Smith, S., Dockett, S., & Bottrell, D. (2015) Participatory Research with  
Children and Young People. [London]: SAGE.  
7 Collins, J., & Foley, P. (2008). Promoting Children’s Wellbeing. Policy and Practice. [Milton  
Keynes]: The Open University.  
8 Dudek, M. (2005). Children’s Spaces. [Oxford]: Architectural Press  
9 Eyck, A., Ligtelijn, V. and Strauven, F. (2008). The child, the city and the artist.  
[Amsterdam]: SUN  
10 Houssami, H (2025) Transformative Lines Thesis. [London]: LMU.  
11 CatalyticAction (2023) ‘CA Design Workshop – 2023’ Workshop, Karantina Community  
Centre, [Beirut], August 2-6.  
12 Woodcraft Folk (1925) Woodcraft Folk - Our History. Available at: [https://woodcraft.org.  
uk/about-woodcraft-folk/our-history/](https://woodcraft.org.uk/about-woodcraft-folk/our-history/) (Accessed 17 November 2022)  
13 CatalyticAction (2014) CatalyticAction - About Us. Available at: [https://catalyticaction.org/  
about-us/](https://catalyticaction.org/about-us/) (Accessed 29 July 2022)  
14 Al Jazeera (2022) Infographic: How big was the Beirut explosion? [Online] At: [https://  
www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/8/4/infographic-how-big-was-the-beirut-explosion](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/8/4/infographic-how-big-was-the-beirut-explosion)  
(Accessed 22/08/2022)  
15 AICP (1930) AICP - About the AICP. Available at: [https://www.aicp.org.uk/index.php/  
about-the-aicp](https://www.aicp.org.uk/index.php/about-the-aicp) (Accessed 11 August 2022)  
16 Frost, N (1991) ‘The Pyramid’ Workshop, [London].  
17 RIBA (2022) ‘Design Quest: Deeper Underground’ Workshop, Royal Institute of British  
Architects, [London], August 22.  
18 Matt+Fiona (2019) ‘Let’s Build’ Workshop, Brixton House, [London], March.  
19 Open City (2018) ‘Architecture in Schools’ Workshops, [London].  
20 RIBA (2022) ‘Family fun Day: Power Dressing’ Workshop, Royal Institute of British  
Architects, [London], July 30.  
21 CUBE (2011) ‘Box City’ Workshop.  
22 DesignTinkers (2022) ‘Re-imagining Communal Play + Space’ Workshop, Goodman Arts  
Centre, [Singapore], July.  
23 ARUP (2018) ‘Reclaiming Play in Cities’ Workshops.  
24 LearnByDesign (2017) ‘Place to Learn’ Workshops, [Birmingham].  
25 Sørensen, C. T. (1943) ‘Emdrup Junk Playground’, Workers’ Cooperative Housing  
Association, [Copenhagen].  
26 Houssami, H (2025) Transformative Lines Thesis - Adaptive Methodological Approach  
[London]: LMU.

## TRANSFORMATIVE LINES: PARTICIPATORY DESIGN

- 27 Arab News (2023) Lebanon rocked by deadly quake in Turkiye, Syria [Online] at: <https://www.arabnews.com/node/2245911/middle-east> (Accessed 05/04/2023)
- 28 Amnesty International (2024) Amnesty International investigation concludes Israel is committing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza [Online] at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/12/amnesty-international-concludes-israel-is-committing-genocide-against-palestinians-in-gaza/> (Accessed 26/03/2025)
- 29 National Council for Scientific Research (2016) Charter of ethics and guiding principles of Scientific Research in Lebanon (1st Ed) [Lebanon]

## TRANSFORMATIVE LINES: THE WORKSHOPS

- 30 Houssami, H (2025) Transformative Lines Thesis - Adaptive Methodological Approach [London]: LMU.
- 31 Houssami, H (2023) My Town, Our Town. Available at: <https://catalyticaction.org/my-town-our-town/> (Accessed 28 December 2024)

## WORKSHOP OUTPUT ANALYSIS

- 32 Houssami, H (2025) Transformative Lines Toolkit. [London]: LMU
- 33 Houssami, H (2025) 'Transformative Lines' Exhibiton and Seminar. [London] January 22
- 34 Houssami, H (2025) Transformative Lines Toolkit. [London]: LMU
- 35 Houssami, H (2025) 'Transformative Lines' Exhibiton and Seminar. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-7NllzD1VF0> (Accessed 23 June 2025)





# TRANSFORMATIVE LINES

## Exhibition & Seminar Report

**Hosn Houssami**

### Appendix D

**Transformative Lines** is a PhD-by-Project comprising of a 40,000 word **Thesis** and accompanying **Project Portfolio**, submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of London Metropolitan University in August 2025.

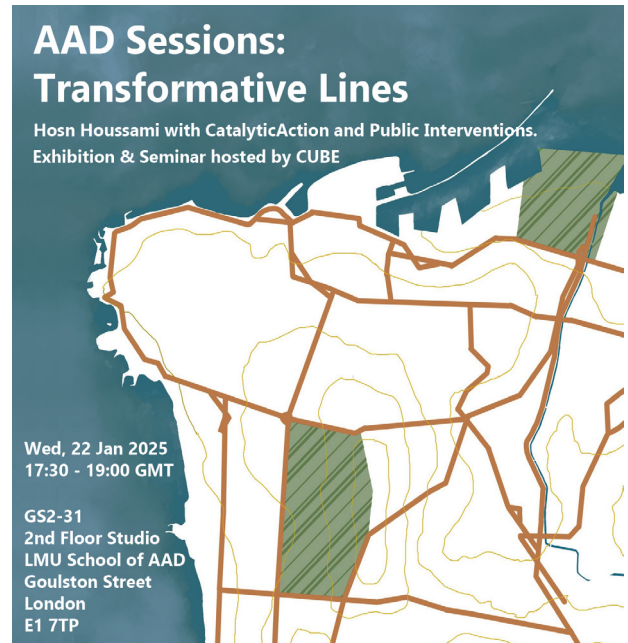
This document presents Appendix D of the **Transformative Lines - Project Portfolio**.

# TRANSFORMATIVE LINES

## Exhibition & Seminar An Introduction

As part of the practice element of my research, I curated an exhibition and seminar as a forum to discuss my findings. Due to numerous volatile events in the region, the original plan to host an exhibition in Beirut, Lebanon, with the child participants as co-curators, was abandoned. To test the communicability of the research, I believed it was still important to present the findings through a 'test' exhibit, it remained important to present the findings through an exploratory exhibition format. This opportunity was extended to me as part of the public research seminar programme *AAD Sessions* run by the School of Art, Architecture and Design at London Metropolitan University.

I combined findings from my place-based research conducted in Beirut, Lebanon, which explored co-productive and participatory mapping techniques in Sabra and Karantina, with previous research conducted in the migrant cities of Athens, Greece, and Freetown, Sierra Leone.



With a primary focus on child-led participation, the presented work aimed to articulate urban imaginaries that may not otherwise be visible within dominant collective narratives, as identified through the fieldwork. Throughout the exhibition, these findings were considered through two distinct themes: 'Physical Lines,' referring to the physical composition and spatial connections within neighbourhoods, and 'Intangible Lines,' pertaining to the socio-cultural and political dimensions of communities. These 'Lines' provided an analytical framework through which connections between the three cities could be examined and compared.

This exhibition was supported by an inaugural seminar featuring guest speakers Joana Dabaj (CatalyticAction) and Catalina Pollak Williamson (Public Interventions), who discussed their own participant-led architectural research, which has resulted in several successful live projects across diverse urban and rural contexts.



**CatalyticAction** is an organisation that empowers vulnerable children, youth, and their communities through participatory design and architecture. The organisation delivers both built and research projects that actively engage local communities, developing safe and inclusive spaces through collaborative design processes that extend from early conceptualisation to co-designed implementation.

**Public Interventions** is a collaborative platform founded by Catalina Pollak that focuses on participatory art and design-research practices concerned with the social production of public space and temporary practices of commoning that connect communities with their built environment. Public Interventions' work spans several geographical contexts, including projects undertaken in Spain, Turkey, Chile, Italy, and England.

# TRANSFORMATIVE LINES

## Exhibition & Seminar The Exhibition

This multimedia exhibition included visually driven data panels, physical outputs produced by the child participants during the Beirut fieldwork, and an additional interactive participatory map-making feature. The exhibition was designed to communicate the methodological and analytical dimensions of the research in an accessible and spatially engaging format.



The exhibition included panels based on the following themes, with each topic panel leading to the next:

### **Transformative Lines:**

Exploring participatory mapping techniques and the role of children's spatial experiences within shared urban imaginaries and socially sustainable development planning in Beirut, Lebanon.

### **LINES THROUGH THE CITY:**

Interpretive mapping of the Freetown Peninsula, Sierra Leone, as an early precedent for understanding place-based spatial relationships through 'Lines'.

### **THE PHOENIX CITY:**

Situating Beirut, Lebanon, as the primary research context through its historical, political, and socio-spatial conditions.

### **PHYSICAL LINES:**

Examining the structural composition of the neighbourhoods of Sabra and Karantina, Beirut, through material and spatial relationships.

### **Collaborative Methodological Design:**

Exploring the dual data collection strategy and the methodological importance of participatory and researcher-led approaches in Sabra and Karantina, Beirut.

### **CHILD VISION:**

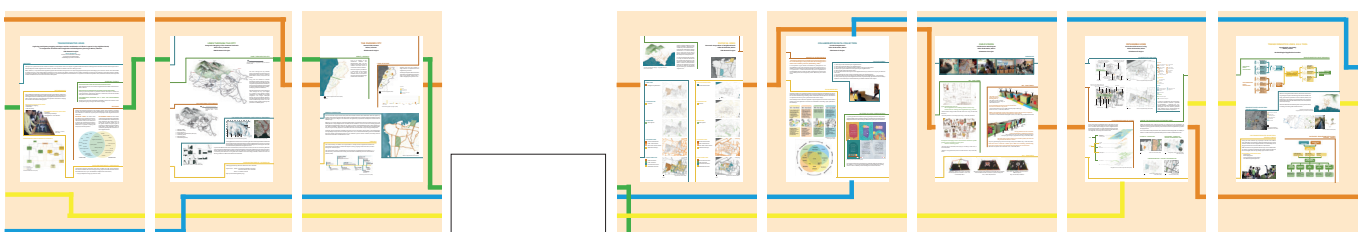
Presenting collaborative data outputs developed with children in Sabra and Karantina, highlighting lived experience and spatial aspiration.

### **INTANGIBLE LINES:**

Examining the socio-cultural and political dynamics of Beirut, Lebanon, as experienced through lived spatial practices.

### **TRANSFORMATIVE LINES - AS A TOOL:**

An exploratory application of the *Transformative Lines* approach in Athens, Greece, demonstrating the potential transferability and limitations of the framework across contexts.





A mapping approach to explore urban imaginaries and opportunities for socially sustainable change in Beirut, Lebanon.

PhD Research Project  
Hosn Houssami

School of Art Architecture & Design  
Architecture & Spatial Design  
hoh0094@my.londonmet.ac.uk

ABSTRACT

The topics of co-production and the inclusion of children in participatory architectural practices continue to form part of global architectural discourse. Although several countries have policy frameworks and participatory mechanisms intended to support children's inclusion in development processes, the direct inclusion of children in decision-making often remains constrained. Within rapidly changing urban contexts, children's spatial experiences are frequently overlooked despite their meaningful contribution to understanding everyday urban life.

Beirut, Lebanon, is a city that has undergone significant physical, social, and institutional transformation due to its unique topographical landscape and shifting socio-economic and political conditions. This thesis develops and applies a 'Lines'-based participatory mapping framework to identify matters of spatial concern and urban aspiration among Beirut's inhabitants. Furthermore, the research adopts a dual data collection strategy comprising 'Architectural' and 'Collaborative' data collection to examine the aspirations of local residents. Particular attention is given to children as active contributors to participatory processes, recognising the value of their lived experiences and spatial knowledge within development discourse.

RESEARCH THEMES

PARTICIPATORY PRACTICES IN DEVELOPING CITIES.

With a particular attention to the distinct neighbourhoods of Sabra and Karantina in Beirut, Lebanon, examining participatory practices within contexts of urban precarity, displacement, and rapid socio-spatial change.

INCLUSION OF CHILDREN IN ARCHITECTURAL PROCESSES.

Examining historical and contemporary participatory and co-productive research practices to understand both the value of children's inclusion in architectural processes and the contributions children make through their lived experiences, local knowledge, and spatial imaginaries.

COLLABORATIVE MAPPING AS A TOOL FOR DEVELOPMENT PLANNING.

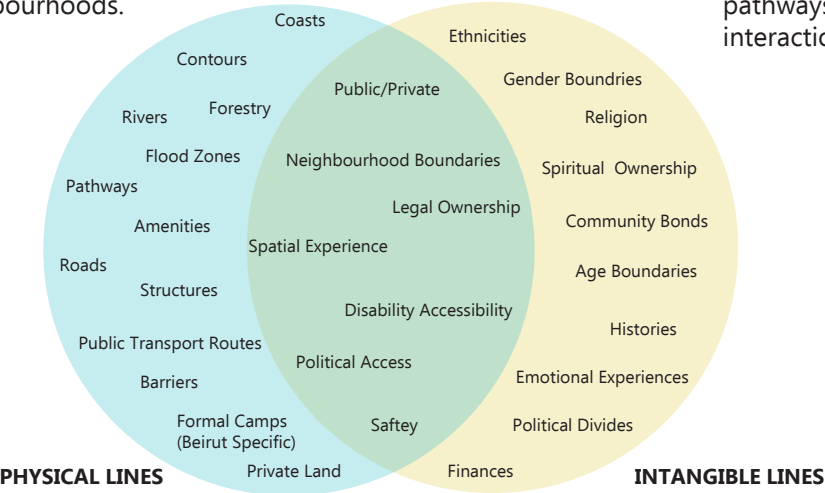
Examining the outcomes of fieldwork undertaken in Beirut through a 'Lines'-based participatory mapping framework, with children positioned as a primary participant group in identifying local spatial concerns, aspirations, and shared urban imaginaries.

THE LINES

Several data categories emerged through the mapping process, leading to the development of the umbrella concept of 'Lines' as an analytical framework for interpreting spatial, social, and cultural relationships. Physical and Intangible Lines were subsequently analysed to examine the ways in which people, places, and everyday spatial practices intersect within neighbourhood contexts.

**PHYSICAL LINES** refer to the material and spatial dimensions of the urban environment. They may be naturally occurring, such as contours and coasts, or human-made, such as streets, pathways, and architectural boundaries. These Lines are typically identifiable through observation, mapping, and specialist surveying, and provide insight into the structural composition and spatial organisation of neighbourhoods.

**INTANGIBLE LINES** refer to socio-cultural, political, and experiential dimensions of space that cannot be understood through observation alone. Their identification requires lived experience, situated knowledge, and varying forms of access and belonging. Examples include gendered divisions of space, age-related rights of occupation, perceptions of safety, racial or social exclusions, and the everyday pathways & interactions.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS / REFERENCES

I would like to acknowledge the guidance and support of my supervisors, Dr Bo Tang and Dr Beatrice De Carli, former supervisor Professor Maurice Mitchell, and Shamoon Patwari. I also extend my gratitude to my on-site facilitators, CatalyticAction and the Association of Islamic Charitable Projects (AICP), whose support contributed significantly to the facilitation of the fieldwork.

METHODOLOGY

Using collaborative workshops as the primary qualitative data collection method, four distinct workshops were designed to identify children's lived experiences of their neighbourhoods and the forms of architectural and spatial intervention they considered meaningful for their communities. The resulting outputs were cross-referenced with architectural surveys, observational mapping, and interviews undertaken across different demographic groups to support a cross-sectional analysis of Physical and Intangible Lines and their intersections as Transformative Junctions.

ARCHITECTURAL DATA COLLECTION:

- Researcher-led mapping.
- Observation.
- Fieldwork diary.

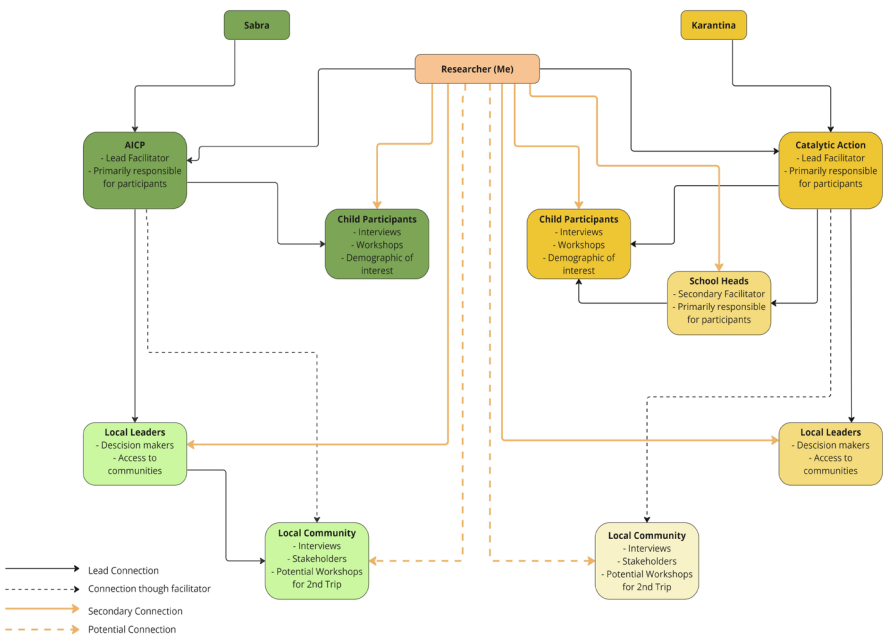
COLLABORATIVE DATA COLLECTION:

- Interviews.
- Participatory workshops.
- Participation in local initiatives.



Workshop 3 - Karantina, Beirut (2023)

SHAREHOLDERS/STAKEHOLDERS OF RESEARCH



Shareholder/Stakeholder Chart (2022)

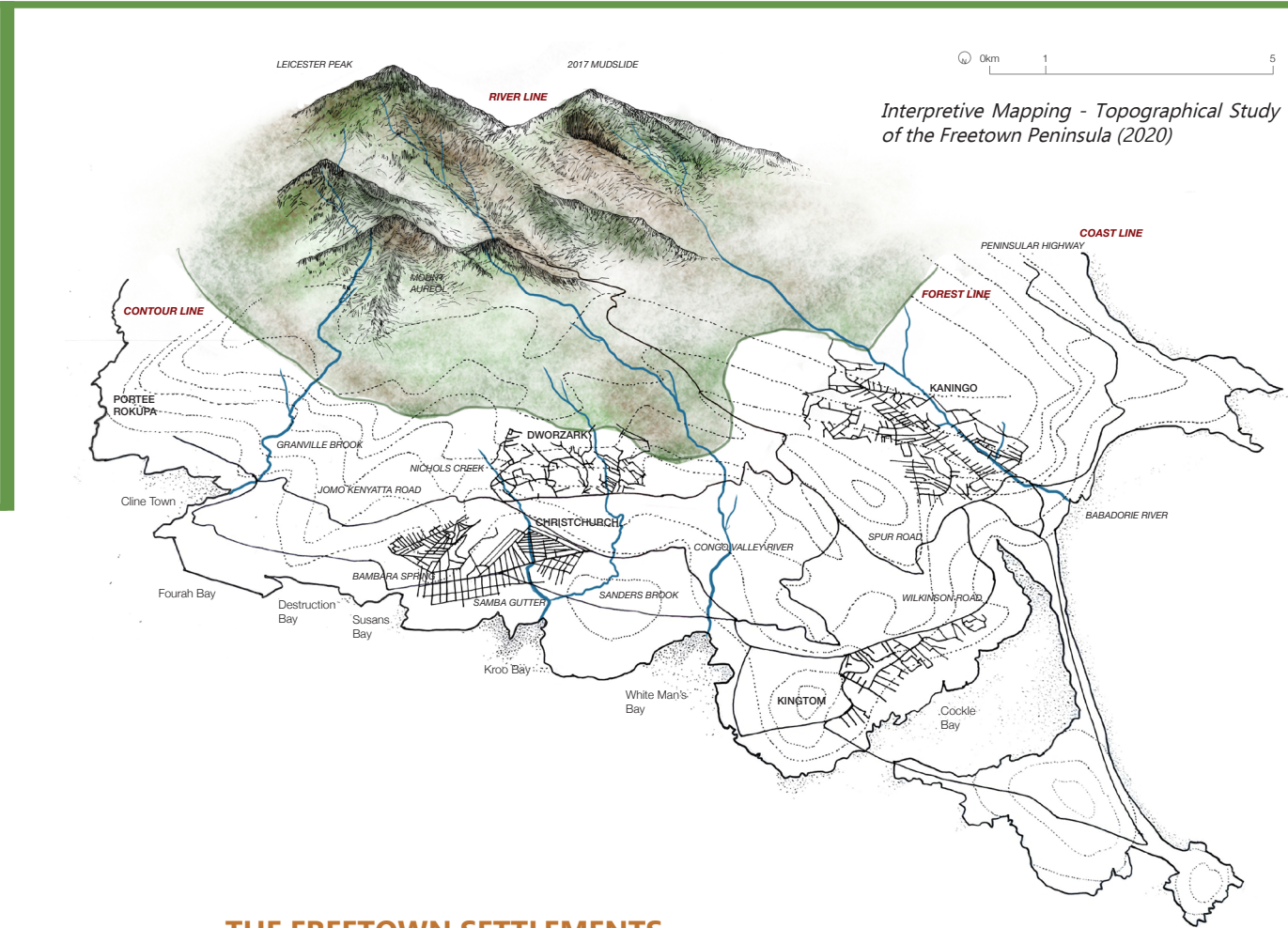


LINES THROUGH THE CITY

Interpretive Mapping of the Freetown Peninsula  
Freetown, Sierra Leone

ARCSR Research Project

LINES THROUGH THE CITY

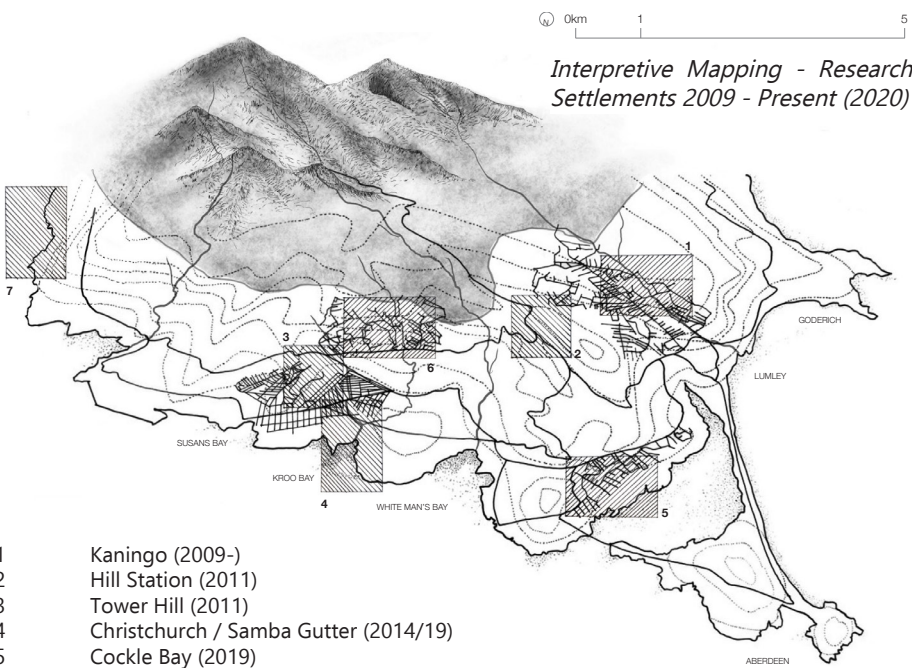


The *Lines Through the City* research project introduced the concept of four key topographical lines present in Freetown, Sierra Leone: Contour, Coast, River, and Forest.

Drawing upon over two decades of research derived from ARCSR's and ASF-UK's firsthand physical and cultural data, documented through reports and publications focused on Freetown, Sierra Leone, the project explored shared experiences across seven rapidly developing settlements.

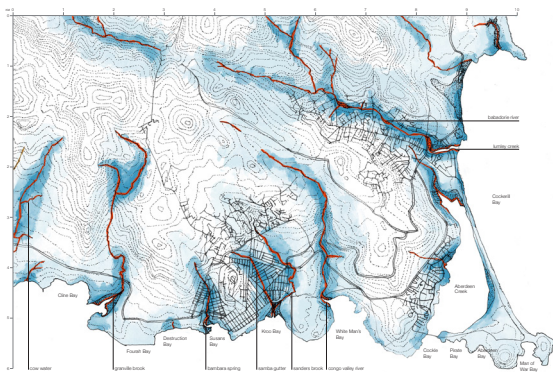
ARCSR adopted the concept of physical 'Lines through the City' as a vehicle through which the qualities of these settlements could be mapped and local shared imaginaries identified. The insights generated through this process enabled ARCSR to identify both physical and social conditions simultaneously across civic and domestic scales, facilitating a more nuanced understanding of how spatial and social relationships intersect.

THE FREETOWN SETTLEMENTS



- 1 Kiningo (2009-)
- 2 Hill Station (2011)
- 3 Tower Hill (2011)
- 4 Christchurch / Samba Gutter (2014/19)
- 5 Cackle Bay (2019)
- 6 Dworzark (2019)
- 7 Portee Rokupa (2021)

THE RIVER LINE THROUGH CHRISTCHURCH, FREETOWN



Urban Topography - Rivers & Coastal Flooding (2020)

Downtown Settlement Map (2020)

The neighbourhood of Christchurch is situated within the triangular area bounded by Pademba Road, Dandas Street, and Sanders Street. The large neighbourhood is home to a range of demographics, comprising residents of varied socio-economic backgrounds and religious beliefs, with churches and mosques located throughout the area.

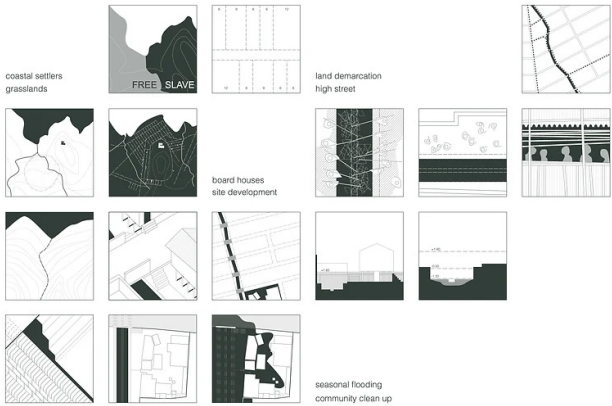
A prominent feature of the town is Samba Gutter, which runs from south to north and acts as an informal pedestrian route through the neighbourhood. With increasing deforestation and heavier rainfall during the monsoon season, Samba Gutter, along with other waterways in the city, experiences recurring annual flooding. After each monsoon, there is a community-wide clearance of the gutter, which overflows with thick sludge, boulders, rubbish, and even cars, allowing residents to rebuild their homes and businesses.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS / REFERENCES

Drawings produced by Shamoan Patwari and Hosn Houssami

Project Team: ARCSR Prof. Maurice Mitchell, Dr Bo Tang,  
Shamoan Patwari, Hosn Houssami  
ASF-UK Dr Beatrice de Carli

2 - <https://www.linesthroughthecity.org/>



Spatial Narrative - River Line / Samba Gutter (2020)



THE PHOENIX CITY

Research Site Context  
Beirut, Lebanon

PhD Research Project

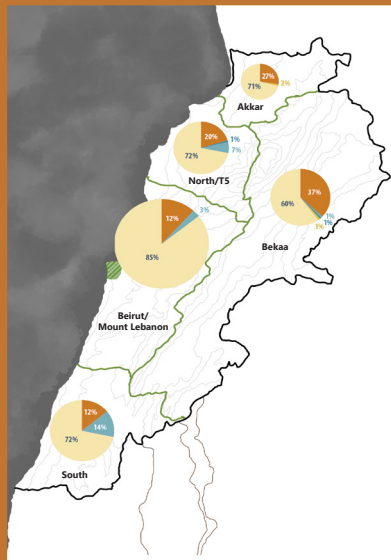
BEIRUT, LEBANON



Due to its location at the intersection of the Mediterranean Basin and the Arabian Peninsula, the territory of present-day Lebanon has historically been home to some of the world's oldest civilisations.

Beirut, the capital city of Lebanon, is often hailed as 'The Phoenix City'. As one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world, it has undergone repeated periods of destruction, reconstruction, and socio-political transformation.

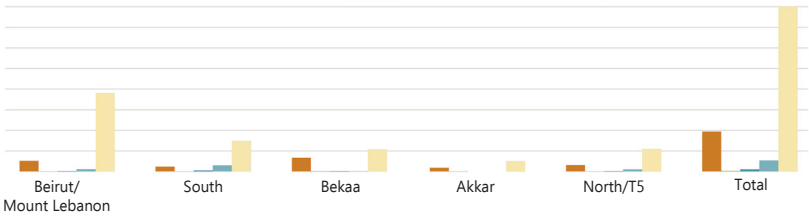
LAND OF REFUGE



Regional conflicts have further contributed to significant patterns of displacement from neighbouring countries, shaping Beirut's demographic and socio-spatial landscape.

Over the past two decades, Lebanon has experienced significant demographic shifts, particularly following the Syrian Civil War, during which the country hosted over one million displaced Syrians.

- Nationalities
- Lebanese
  - Lebanese (Returnees)
  - Palestinian Refugees
  - Palestinian Refugees (from Syria)
  - Syrian Refugees



SABRA & KARANTINA

Located approximately 6 km apart, Sabra and Karantina are two urban neighbourhoods within Beirut that formed the primary sites of this research. Both areas have historically been shaped by refugee settlement and continue to accommodate Palestinian and Syrian refugee populations. This shared history of displacement has influenced the social, spatial, and infrastructural development of each neighbourhood in distinct ways.

Originally centred around a street named after the Sabra family, the area gradually expanded into a densely populated urban district. Today, Sabra is one of Beirut's most densely populated south-central neighbourhoods. Sabra is directly adjacent to the Shatila Refugee Camp and is frequently referred to collectively as 'Sabra and Shatila'. Although distinct spaces, access to Shatila is primarily mediated through Sabra, reinforcing their interconnected socio-spatial relationship.

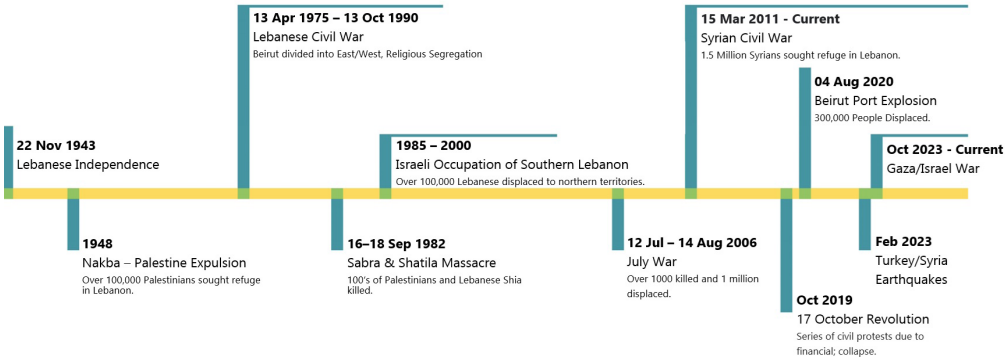
Previously church-owned land, Karantina became one of the earliest contemporary refugee settlement sites in the region, hosting displaced populations from the Armenian Genocide of 1915, Palestinians displaced following the 1948 Nakba, and, more recently, Syrian refugees fleeing civil war. Situated adjacent to the Port of Beirut, Karantina is characterised by industrial land uses alongside a comparatively small residential population.



TIMELINE

The contemporary borders of Lebanon were formally established under the French Mandate in 1920. This colonial history has contributed to ongoing territorial disputes, political instability, conflict, and enduring socio-cultural consequences.

As noted by Hourani (2005), Beirut's contemporary history of repeated displacement and urban transformation has contributed to 'a new kind of city, a new kind of urban society with a new kind of relationship with the rural hinterland'.





EXHIBITION BOARD 4



Recreation of Interpretive Mapping - Topographical Study of Beirut, Lebanon (2024)

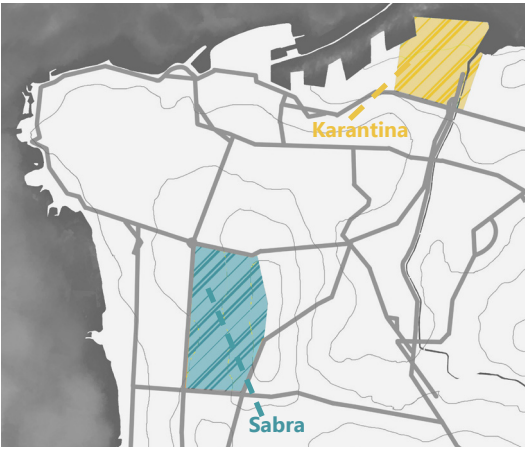
The four originally defined lines proved effective in responding to the contextual conditions of Freetown, where the presence of contour, coast, river, and forest remains materially significant. However, in urban contexts where one or more of these natural Lines are absent or less spatially significant, relying solely upon them limits the scope of spatial analysis.

Mapping the physicality of urban space requires consideration of both natural and human-made transformations. The inclusion of human-made spatial elements provides a counterpoint to naturally occurring Lines, enabling the researcher to adapt the framework to context-specific conditions. These material and spatial relationships were consolidated under the category of 'Physical Lines'.

PHYSICAL LINES

Structural Composition of Neighbourhoods Sabra & Karantina, Beirut

PhD Research Project



BOUNDARIES LINE

Refugee Camp Boundries



CONTOUR LINE

Contours



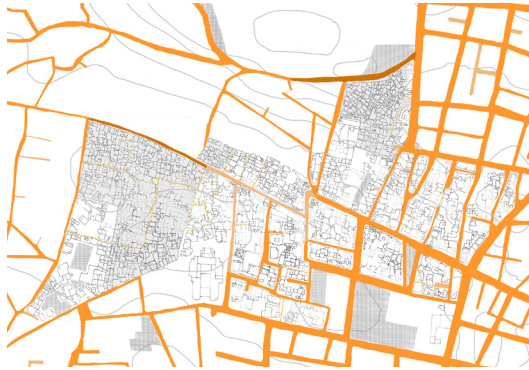
GREEN LINE

Green Spaces



ROUTES LINE

Private Vehicle Routes  
Public Vehicle Routes  
Semi-Public Vehicle Routes  
Pedestrian Pathways



STRUCTURES LINE

Shatila Structures  
Public Structures  
Commercial Structures  
Residential Structures



Physical Lines: Sabra (2024)

COAST & RIVER LINES

Waterways



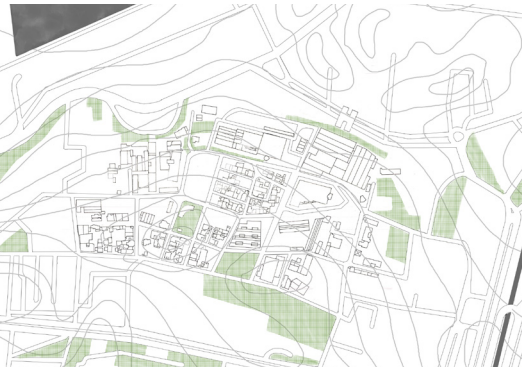
CONTOUR LINE

Contours



GREEN LINE

Green Spaces



ROUTES LINE

Private Vehicle Routes  
Public Vehicle Routes  
Semi-Public Vehicle Routes  
Pedestrian Pathways



STRUCTURES LINE

Government Structures  
Public Structures  
Commercial Structures  
Residential Structures



Physical Lines: Karantina (2024)



BENEFIT OF PARTICIPATION

*'Participatory design is now considered as a critical requirement for successful design, on the premise that the resulting product will be more usable by all users' (Goldenberg, 1995).*

Providing children with meaningful opportunities to participate was considered essential, not only because they are frequently overlooked in co-productive processes, but also because of the distinct perspectives they contribute through their lived experiences and everyday spatial interactions. Although children are often positioned as insufficiently experienced to contribute to urban discourse, they remain directly affected by the spatial and architectural decisions made within their neighbourhoods.

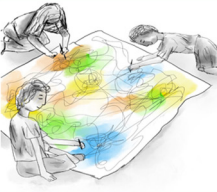
THE WORKSHOPS

The four workshops were designed to introduce children to key architectural principles, encouraging them to relate these concepts to familiar environments and apply critical thinking to evaluate their neighbourhoods. This process facilitated conversations about their aspirations for their city and a potential live build of their designs.

The workshops served as a vehicle for both creative and verbal expression, enabling participants to communicate experiences, concerns, and aspirations through designed outputs and facilitated discussion.

**W1 – Our Town**

Group drawing activity where children were given the opportunity to develop their mapping skills by mapping their towns in a collaborative process.



Narrative based mapping, test for co-production and insight to what 'local demographic' perceive as locations of importance.

**W2 – Our Street**

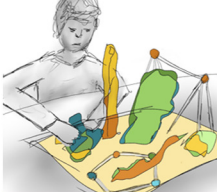
Design activity where children are asked to 'build' different social structures and through collaborative discussions, co-design a street from the individual structures.



Participatory assessment of local needs by chosen demographic, considering which structures and spaces children justify as essential.

**W3 – Our Space**

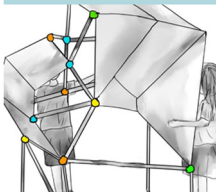
Design activity where children were asked to design a social space.



To offer children opportunity to create and establish preferences with co-production as the primary method of creation.

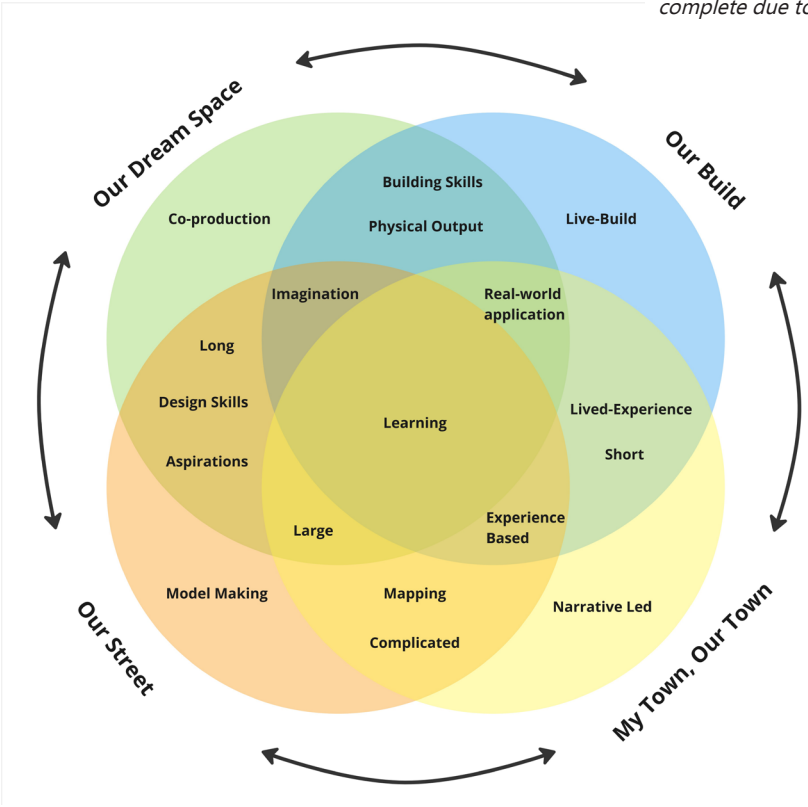
**W4 – Our Build**

Design and build activity based around either Workshop 1&2, or Workshop 3, to create a community space through the lens of the children.



Live build aimed at promoting the children's own desires for their neighbourhoods, realised in a physical form.

Workshop 4 not complete due to region conflict.



THE INTERVIEWS

- 1) What do you like most about your neighbourhood?
- 2) What do you like least about your neighbourhood?
- 3) Do you feel like your neighbourhood has changed? How and to what extent?
- 4) What is your opinion about the social spaces in your neighbourhood?
- 5) Who occupies these social spaces? Why?
- 6) Do you think children have a space in the neighbourhood? If yes, where? If no, why do you think this is the case?
- 7) Do you feel like you have a sense of ownership within your neighbourhood?
- 8) Would you like to be more involved in the development of your neighbourhood – if not already?
- 9) Have you seen any maps of this neighbourhood? If so, do you think they represent the area accurately?
- 10) What is a structural and/or social element that you believe makes this area unique?

Conversation with Children - Karantina, Beirut (2024)



MATTERS OF CHILD PARTICIPATION

Research involving children necessarily requires careful consideration of safety, ethics, and methodological design. Accordingly, interviews and workshops were designed to encourage accessible and open dialogue between participants and the researcher.



Workshop Consent Forms in Arabic (2023)

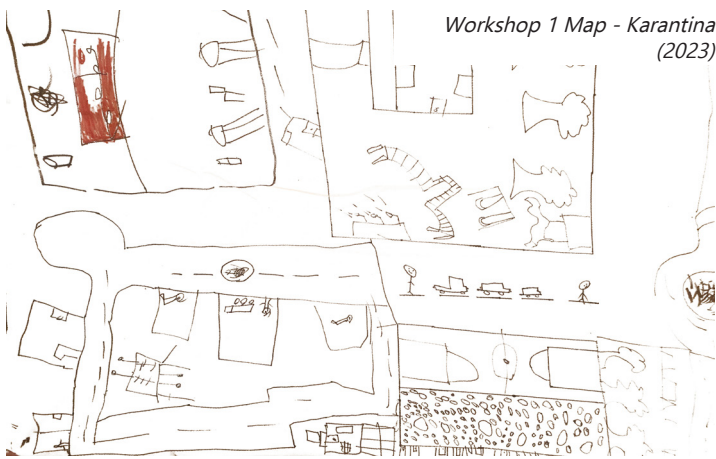
The consent/assent form was designed to positively capture the children's attention in a way that was meaningful and considerate of their learning needs, so that they would be intrigued to interact with it.





Photographs from Workshops - Sabra & Karantina, Beirut (2023)

W1 - OUR TOWN



**Quite Spatially/Scale Accurate**  
Due to significant time remaining children chose to map features that are 'missing' from neighbourhood; eg. Schools.

"Theres loads of empty streets here. We need more." Boy, 10 Years Old, Karantina.

"I like the park but it's not always open." Boy, 7 Years Old, Karantina.

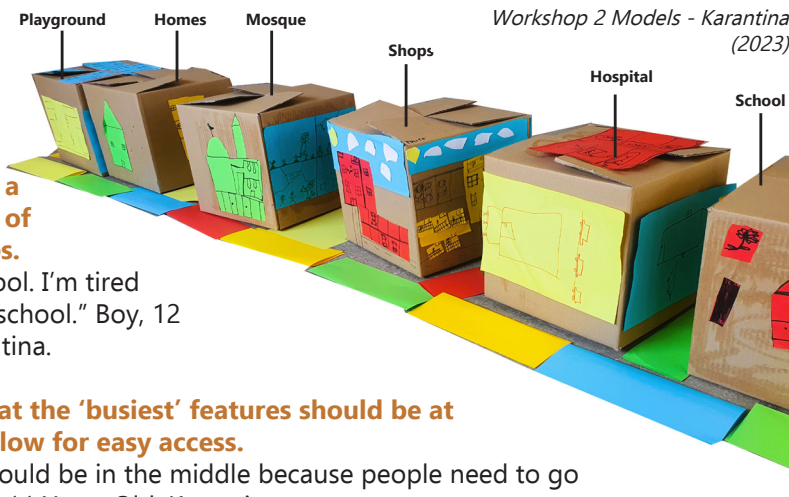


**Participants were highly aware of the freedoms afforded to specific genders in the occupation of social spaces.**  
**Homes as boundary points.**

"The boys play on the streets, and we play in our family's home." Girl, 8 Years Old, Sabra.

"We don't many places here; home to school to home." Girl, 8 Years Old, Sabra.

W2 - OUR STREET



**'Necessity' was a priority in type of building choices.**  
"We need a school. I'm tired of going far for school." Boy, 12 Years Old, Karantina.

**It was noted that the 'busiest' features should be at the centre to allow for easy access.**  
"The mosque should be in the middle because people need to go there a lot." Girl, 11 Years Old, Karantina.

**While it was important to have some 'children's' spaces near the home, exceptions were made when safety could be guaranteed via other means.**  
"The school can be far because the hospital is there, so it's safe." Boy, 8 Years Old, Workshop 2 Models - Sabra (2023)



**Strong awareness of socio-economic issues that should be considered in planning.**  
"The hospital has to be near the bank, otherwise it'll be a far trip to get money to pay for doctors." Boy, 9 Years Old, Sabra.

**The first types of spaces chosen were not child specific; the Park and Play Pit were the last two choices.**  
"My mum goes shopping a lot for the family so shops are needed." Boy, 7 Years Old, Sabra.

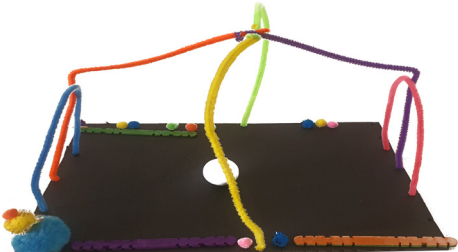
**Parks here mean a 'multi-use' outdoor space. While not necessarily predominantly green space, features such as playgrounds & sports pitches are near the home.**  
"We want our spaces to be near home." Girl, 7 Years Old, Sabra.

W3 - OUR SPACE

Workshop 3 Models - Sabra & Karantina, Beirut (2023)



"We want an open place where we can be safe with our friends. Kids and adults should come here. A space for everyone."  
Girl, 7 Years Old, Karantina.



"Beautiful spaces with colour are better because people will look after it more."  
Girl, 11 Years Old, Sabra.



"Girls don't like football. They can have a different space."  
Boy, 10 Years Old, Karantina.

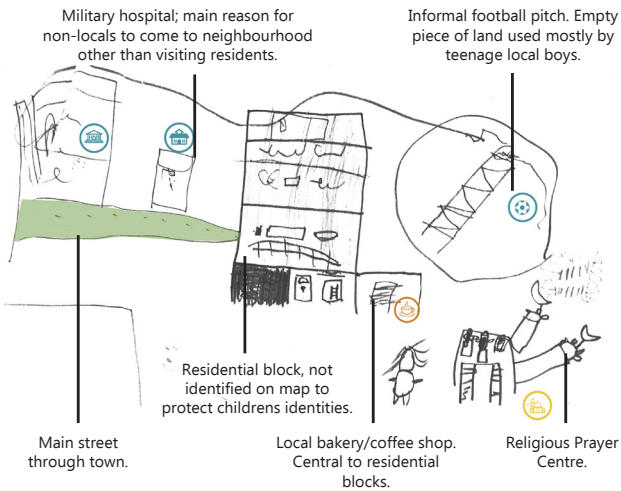


INTANGIBLE LINES

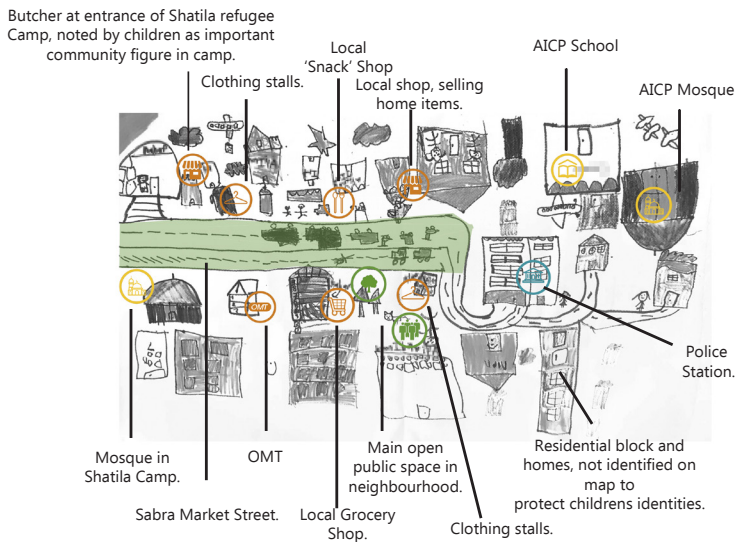
Sociocultural Nuances of a City  
Sabra & Karantina, Beirut

PhD Research Project

CROSS-COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS



Post-W1 Comparative Maps: Sabra (2024)



Post-W1 Comparative Maps: Sabra (2024)

Private

- Health Care Facilities
- Electronic Stores
- Money Exchange
- Mechanics
- Legal Advice
- Clothing Stores
- Playgrounds
- Electricity Distributors
- Clothing Stores
- Cafes
- Generic Shops
- Water Distributors
- Petrol Stations
- Groceries
- Pharmacies

Semi-Public

- Places of Worship
- Cemeteries
- Schools
- Sports Pitches

Public

- Government Buildings
- Community Centres
- Schools
- Sports Pitches
- Health Care Facilities
- Playgrounds

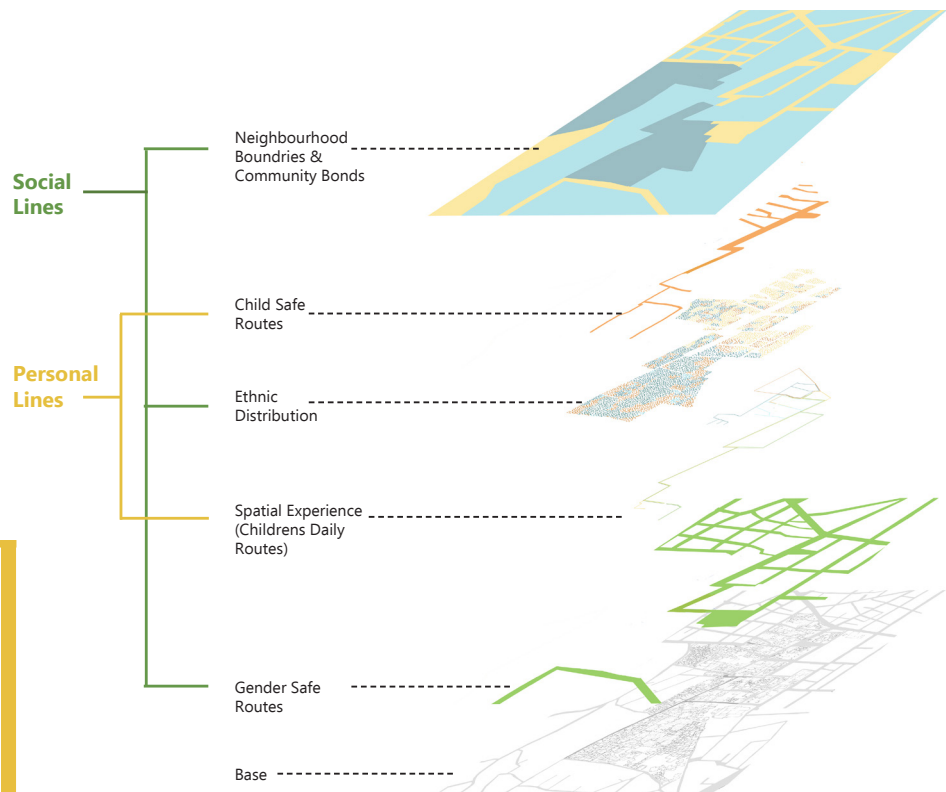
Informal

- Informal Green Spaces
- Public/Informal Social Spaces

To compare datasets produced through the Architectural and Collaborative data collection methods, non-spatially accurate outputs generated by child participants were overlaid with researcher-produced maps. This process enabled the identification of key points of spatial significance related to lived experience, perception, and everyday interaction.

A NEIGHBOURHOOD IN LAYERS

Due to their experiential and socio-cultural nature, Intangible Lines are better understood as temporal 'snapshots' of prevailing neighbourhood dynamics rather than fixed or permanent conditions within Sabra and Karantina. As neighbourhood demographics, political conditions, and everyday practices shift, these Lines may evolve, transform, or cease to exist entirely.



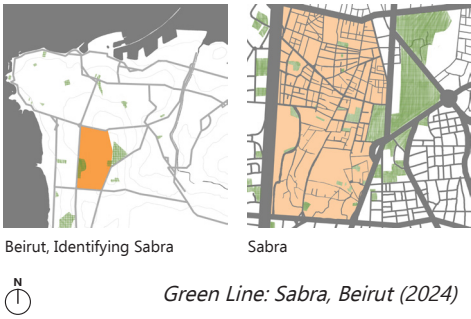
'Intangible Lines' Axonometric Map: Sabra, Beirut (2024)

WHERE THE PHYSICAL AND INTANGIBLE MEET

While the Architectural Data Collection (A.D.C.) focused on surveying and identifying Physical Lines across Sabra and Karantina, the Collaborative Data Collection's (C.D.C.) prioritised the identification of socio-cultural experiences and lived spatial realities, conceptualised as Intangible Lines.

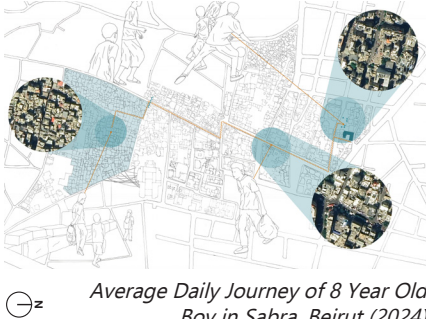
The cross-sectional analysis of Physical and Intangible Lines enabled the identification of Transformative Junctions, understood as analytical hinge points where material conditions, socio-cultural practices, and shared urban imaginaries intersect. These Junctions highlight sites of spatial significance and reveal opportunities through which socially sustainable interventions may be considered.

PHYSICAL - GREEN LINE



Green Line: Sabra, Beirut (2024)

INTANGIBLE - RADIUS OF SPATIAL EXPERIENCES LINE



Average Daily Journey of 8 Year Old Boy in Sabra, Beirut (2024)

TRANSFORMATIVE - ACTIVITY TRANSFER LINE



Transformative Overlay of Lines: Sabra, Beirut (2024)

Proposed Location for Activity Transfer (2024)

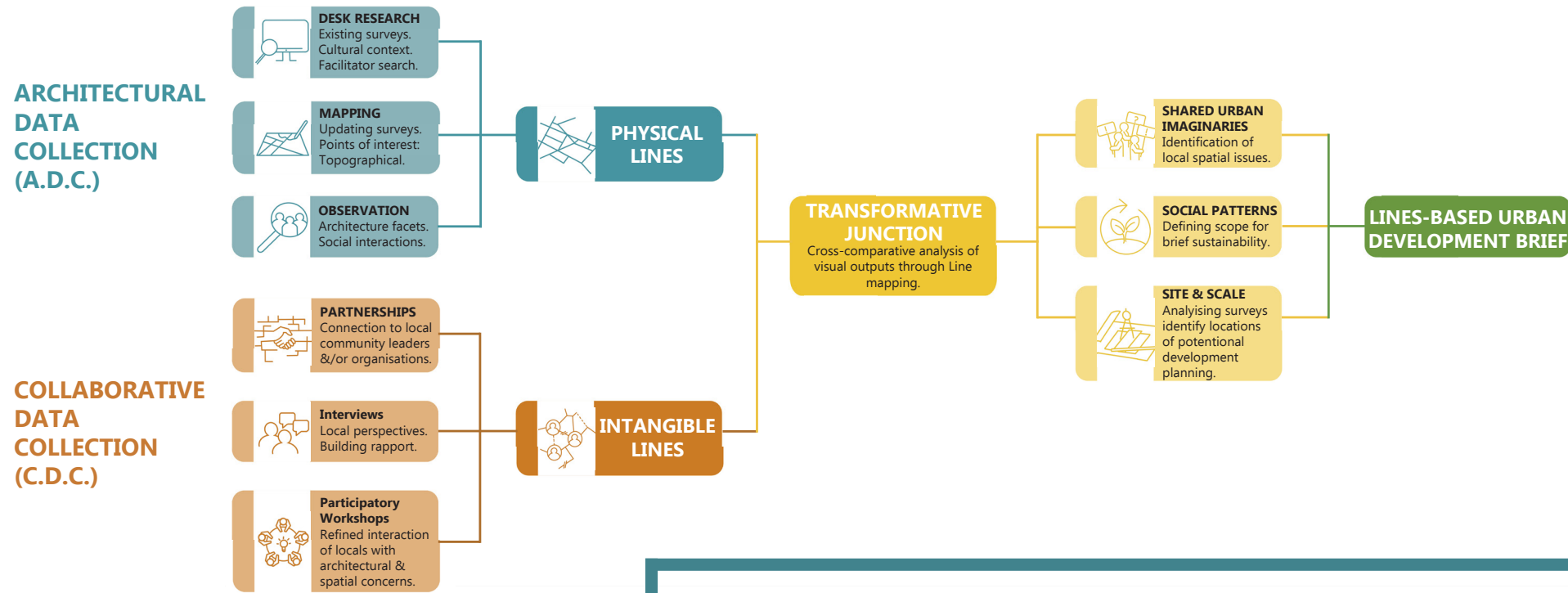


TRANSFORMATIVE LINES: AS A TOOL

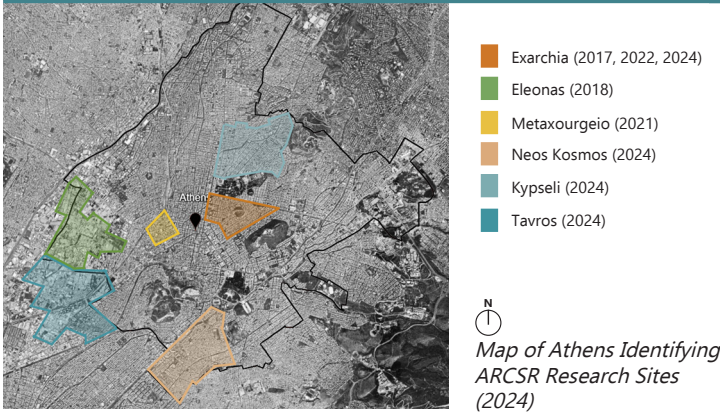
Hypothetical Case Study  
Athens, Greece

Methodological Application Post-Doc

TRANSFORMATIVE LINES APPROACH



ARCHITECTURAL DATA COLLECTION: ATHENS, GREECE



Eleonas, a neighbourhood in Athens, Greece, previously hosted a large refugee camp accommodating displaced populations from Africa and the Middle East.

Drawing upon research conducted in Eleonas in 2018, an exploratory application of the Transformative Lines framework suggests the presence of several potential Physical Lines, including River, Farmland, Contour, Structures, and Pathways.

Given further longitudinal engagement, additional Physical Lines may be identified, while existing Lin



Recreation of Interpretive Mapping - Topographical Study of Athens, Greece (2025)



River Line: Eleonas, Athens (2018)

COLLABORATIVE DATA COLLECTION: ATHENS, GREECE

During the 2018 research visit, several informal participatory activities with children were undertaken, including a drawing workshop exploring aspirations for neighbourhood futures and a collaborative playground renovation project.

Although this data was not originally produced through the Transformative Lines framework, revisiting interviews and participatory outputs through the lens of Intangible Lines offers an exploratory means of identifying themes of social concern.

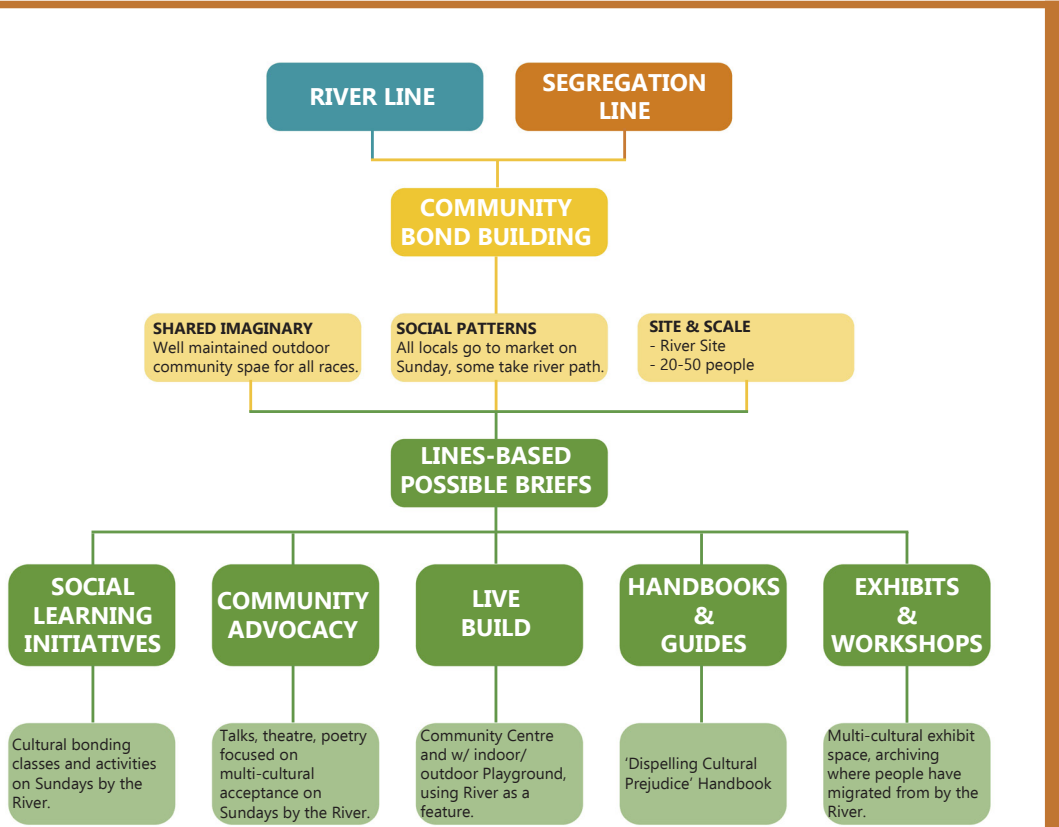
INTANGIBLE LINES IDENTIFIED:

- Public/Private
- Racial Segregation
- Community Bonds and Diversities
- The Radius of Spatial Experience

This exploratory application should be understood as a preliminary demonstration of the Transformative Lines framework rather than validation of its broad transferability. As a context-specific methodological prototype, the framework requires adaptation to local socio-spatial conditions and further testing before wider implementation may be considered.



POTENTIAL TRANSFORMATIVE JUNCTIONS: ATHENS, GREECE



# TRANSFORMATIVE LINES

## Exhibition & Seminar The Seminar



*Please click link above to view Transformative Lines Recording.  
Alternatively please find at: <https://youtu.be/-7NllzD1VF0>*

Following my presentation, guest speakers Catalina Pollak Williamson of PublicInterventions and Joana Dabaj of CatalyticAction presented their respective participatory architectural practices within contexts of urban transition and social change.

Catalina presented a series of participatory research projects undertaken across Navarra, Spain; Santiago, Chile; and Ankara, Turkey. She reflected upon her experiences within each locality and outlined methods used to identify social and cultural practices as vehicles for engagement and integration. Her work highlighted everyday cultural practices, including the exchange of bread, local proverbs, and the occupation of balconies, as mechanisms through which spaces of 'encounter' could be fostered.

Joana concluded the presentations by providing an in-depth overview of CatalyticAction's participatory design and research projects across Lebanon. Her presentation traced the growing international recognition of participatory and child-inclusive design practices, with particular emphasis on inclusive public-space interventions. As one of the facilitators involved in this doctoral research, Joana further reflected upon the impact of participatory projects within neighbourhoods such as Karantina, Beirut, and their implications for local communities.

The panel discussion developed into a valuable forum for debate regarding participatory research at different stages of implementation: during the research process (myself), post-research engagement (Catalina), and realised live projects emerging from research (Joana).





# TRANSFORMATIVE LINES

## Exhibition & Seminar A Reflection

While this thesis engages critically with existing literature, drawing upon relevant precedents in participatory design, child-inclusive research, and urban imaginaries, this engagement is primarily mediated through written analysis. The seminar created an opportunity for the research to be discussed, scrutinised, and contextualised by practitioners actively engaged in participatory architectural discourse.

This process contributed to a clearer understanding of how the thesis may position itself within contemporary participatory design discourse, enabling critical engagement with both the methodological approach and wider research contribution. Although aspects of this exchange had previously occurred through conference and symposium presentations, such opportunities were often constrained by time, thematic focus, or the developmental stage of the research.

Because the exhibition and seminar were structured specifically around the doctoral research, it was possible to present the full trajectory of the thesis, facilitating more detailed discussion regarding its methodology, findings, and broader contribution.

Subject to future safety and ethical considerations, it is intended that the exhibition will be repeated within the two research sites. A key aspiration would be to involve participating children in the curation process, further extending the participatory ethos underpinning the research. It is also hoped that both participating and wider community members may be invited to contribute, creating opportunities for collective exchange surrounding shared urban imaginaries and future neighbourhood aspirations.





# TRANSFORMATIVE LINES

## Situated Precedent Studies

**Hosn Houssami**

### Appendix E

**Transformative Lines** is a PhD-by-Project comprising of a 40,000 word **Thesis** and accompanying **Project Portfolio**, submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of London Metropolitan University in August 2025.

This document presents Appendix E of the **Transformative Lines - Project Portfolio**.

## 3.5 SITUATED PRECEDENT STUDIES

This appendix presents the detailed analysis of two situated precedent studies referenced in Chapter 3 – ‘The Pheonix City’. These studies examine participatory architectural and urban initiatives implemented within the neighbourhoods of Sabra and Karantina, Beirut. They were reviewed to contextualise the methodological approach adopted in this research and to understand how community engagement processes have previously been applied within these specific urban environments. While Chapter 3 provides a brief overview of their relevance to the research context, the extended discussion of their methodologies, findings, and critical reflections is included here for reference.

### 3.5.1 SABRA: PUBLIC SPACE EXPLORATIONS

Due to the architectural density of the Sabra neighbourhood and the constantly changing population resulting from refugee influxes, participatory architectural projects are uncommon. The availability of space is a fundamental challenge in pursuing such initiatives, as nearly all undeveloped public areas are utilised used for vehicle storage. Securing permission from the local government or residents to develop these open spaces is extremely difficult. ‘Space in postwar Beirut was and remains sharply contested [...] conflicts over space touched every level of society: family members, neighbours, religious or political groups, militia members, the postwar government, and the investors and developers’ (Sawalha, 2010:108).

Moreover, funding for projects in Sabra from external organisations is typically directed towards the Shatila Refugee Camp, as access is generally facilitated through UNRWA or other international bodies rather than local government. Consequently, it is unsurprising that theoretical projects often serve as the main primary avenue for participatory research.

#### **Exploring Qualities of Child Friendly Outdoor Spaces: Sabra by Farah Ahmad Mefleh, Hiba Mohsen & Baher Farahat (2021)**

In a paper exploring play areas in low-income populations, researchers Farah Ahmad Mefleh, Hiba Mohsen, and Baher Farahat employed a field methodology to explore the principles of safe public play and address the barriers to these spaces in Sabra, Beirut. The findings of this research resulted in a hypothetical proposal for an empty car parking lot in Sabra,



as well as informed recommendations for creating safe, child-oriented spaces.

The study utilised a questionnaire as the main participatory data collection method, whereby 60 children were surveyed, evenly divided by gender and aged between 5 and 11 years old (Mefleh, Mohsen, & Farahat, 2021). Based on the responses to the questionnaires, suggestions were made regarding the promotion of the *Right to Play* (UN, 2022) as well as reaffirming the municipality's responsibility 'to prepare accessible and safe recreational areas for children to play' (Mefleh, Mohsen & Farahat, 2021:18).

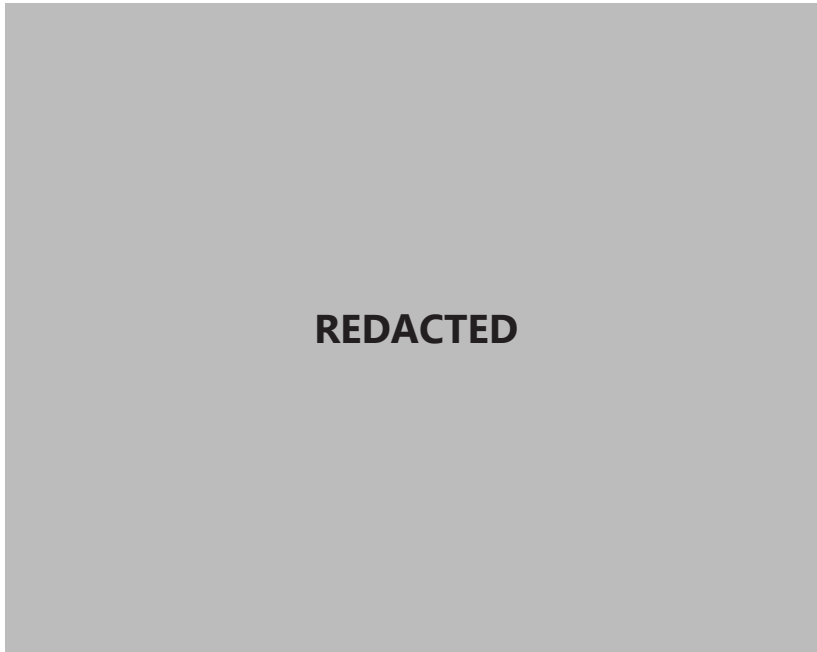
While this case study is particularly relevant, as it concerns the experience of children and the establishment of their wants as related to space and architecture in Sabra, the points on gender inequality established in this research required evaluation. It is accurately conveyed that Sabra's child population experiences gender disparities in access to public space, noting that 'boys can go outside, are responsible for their work, and can do whatever they want, but girls are inclusive and they do not have the permission to go outside far from their house' (Mefleh, Mohsen & Farahat, 2021:11). However, the researchers chose to use two different sets of questions based on the gender of the interviewee. While the questions posed to boys are open and address the use of space, "Is the region where you play far from your home?" (Mefleh, Mohsen, & Farahat, 2021:11), the questions posed to girls focused more on emotional responses and may be considered leading: 'What makes you fear and scared from playing with others?' (Mefleh, Mohsen, & Farahat, 2021:11).

Recognising that gender disparities are a well-documented issue within the neighbourhood, a single gender-neutral set of questions for this research's data collection was considered more appropriate and would aim to improve inclusive data production. This style of questionnaire aims to assess whether the responses demonstrate similar gender-related patterns to those identified in this study.

### **Fostering Hope in El Jazzar Street, Sabra by UN-Habitat (2021)**

One of the rare physically established participatory projects in Sabra was a 2021 architectural rehabilitation project by UN-Habitat. UN-Habitat selected El Jazzar Street, Sabra, as their primary intervention site as part of its *Improving Access to Basic Services for Refugee and Host Populations in Sabra, Beirut* plan (2018-2020). Due to the standing of UN programs in Lebanon, this project was possible. Through active community engagement, the project resulted in the revitalisation of public-facing infrastructure,

including the restoration of 22 building facades and walkways, as well as additional public awareness campaigns. Although this project was limited to a single street within the larger context of one of the chosen sites, it was important to consider the participatory approaches used by UN-Habitat to ensure the project's viability.



Screenshot from Online Video '*Fostering hope in El Jazzar street, Sabra*' (2021). [Source: UN-Habitat Lebanon]

UN-Habitat describes a process in which a 'local committee consisting of the area's residents and community leaders was formed with women and men of different ages and nationalities including Lebanese, Palestinian and Syrian residents, to share inputs into to the design, implementation, and sustainability of the project's interventions' (UN Habitat, 2021). The choice to establish a committee, rather than conducting one-time focus groups, contributes to the success of the project, as locals were given more opportunities for their points of view to be considered by the design team.

This method also facilitates individual and communal reflection between meetings, allowing issues that may not have emerged in earlier discussions to be addressed over time. As Daudeline M. Wood notes, 'Like many other cognitive activities, reflection is often spontaneous, and, at times, outside an individual's awareness' (Wood, 1996:39). As a practitioner or researcher, allowing for moments of reflection – such as those that occur between committee meetings on El Jazzar Street – is fundamental.

### **3.5.2 KARANTINA: A PARTICIPATORY NEIGHBOURHOOD**

The tragic event of the 2020 Beirut Port Explosion ushered in a wave of nationally and internationally funded regeneration projects aimed at revitalising the communities most heavily impacted by the explosion, particularly Karantina, which was located adjacent to the blast site. A 2023 document published by the Bartlett Development Planning Unit, *Rebuilding Communities through Public Space Interventions*, detailed 51 public space projects in Beirut post-explosion, compiled through a participatory analysis. These included parks, streets, public stairs, community centres, libraries, art installations, and road fixtures.

Of these participatory reconstruction projects, 11 were specifically located in Karantina. While it could be argued that testing participatory methodologies in Karantina might not offer significant new insights, participation for the purpose of development is not a singular social event. Karantina serves as a valuable comparative site for comparison with Sabra due to its recent involvement in participatory projects. Furthermore, the neighbourhoods share similar histories and demographic compositions. The implementation of these types of projects in only one site allows for the evaluation of the efficacy of participatory practices through the lens of two distinct focus groups: those with experience of such initiatives and those without.

#### **Karantina Projects by CatalyticAction (2020 – Present)**

One of the main organisations to successfully implement participatory projects in Karantina following the blast is CatalyticAction (CA, 2014), the *Transformative Lines* research project's own facilitator in the area. CatalyticAction, an architectural charity, has completed numerous projects across Lebanon, often focusing on children as the primary users. Their approach is based on the 'co-production of built environments where everyone can take part in the creation of equitable, inclusive and sustainable communities' (CA, n.d.).

Since 2020, its projects in Karantina have included the *Karantina Park Rehabilitation* (2020–2021), the *Karantina Main Streetscape* (2021), the *Karantina Makani Streetscape* (2021), and the *Karantina Child-Friendly Community Centre* (2022). These projects respond to various access challenges in the area. The park and community centre occasionally face accessibility issues due to local governance regulations and funding constraints. The streetscapes, however, are always open to the public. This was observed firsthand during the fieldwork, as the park was often closed,

limiting children's play activities to the streetscapes. These different interventions have ensured that children always have access to a safe, designed space to socialise and play.

**REDACTED**

**Karantina Park Rehabilitation (2020-2021)**

**Location:** Enclosed Park, Central Karantina

**Accessibility:** Limited Access - Lack of Government funding for maintenance and running.



(Not to Scale)

**REDACTED**

**Karantina Streetscape (2021)**

**Location:** Public Walkway, Central Karantina

**Accessibility:** Fully Accessible - Open site on public street.

**REDACTED**

**Karantina Makani (2021)**

**Location:** Public Walkway, Central Karantina

**Accessibility:** Fully Accessible - Open site on public street.

**REDACTED**

**Karantina Child-Friendly Community Centre (2022)**

**Location:** Government Compound, South-East Karantina

**Accessibility:** Limited Access - Needs reservation for use.

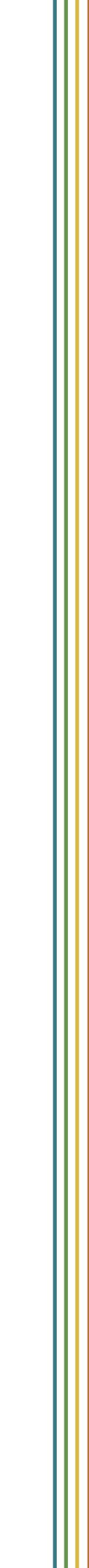


Compilation of CA's 'Karantina Projects 2020 to 2022'. (2020-2022)  
[Source: CatalyticAction]

CatalyticAction's project aims to 'engage each community in context-specific participatory processes [... which] encourage collaboration between diverse groups of people [and] fosters a sense of ownership and belonging' (CA, n.d.). This has been achieved through various strategies, including the employment of Citizen Scientists, community advocacy efforts, community-consulted research, participatory workshops with locals and professionals, and even co-productive builds.

Through participatory methods, CatalyticAction has achieved several outcomes:

- Live Builds
- Social Space Activation
- Community Engagement Programmes
- Indexes, Handbooks, and Guides
- Advocacy Initiatives



To address the project's chosen methodological approach alongside CatalyticAction's, I participated in the organisation's *2023 Design Workshop* (CA, 2023) in Karantina, which focused on gender inequalities in the built environment. During this week-long workshop, participants from diverse professional backgrounds explored spatial solutions to this issue in public spaces. This workshop, organised by CatalyticAction, provided me with a valuable opportunity to shift from the role of 'researcher' to that of 'participant', offering new insights into the organisation's projects at sites such as Karantina Park and the Community Centre, as I became an active user rather than a visitor.