

SAFE, VIBRANT AND HEALTHY PUBLIC SPACES (SVHPS) FOR URBAN ADOLESCENTS' HEALTH AND WELLBEING

A PROJECT CASE STUDY

Project Context

Everyday public environments deeply influence the health and wellbeing of its users. Think of streets, open spaces, informal spaces and enclosed facilities in your cities. They shape people's movement and activity, social connection, learning and emotional experience — interactions that have profound impact on the health and wellbeing outcomes of its users.

During adolescence (10-19 years old), when the brain is forging critical developmental neural pathways, such public spaces serve as crucial learning grounds. They provide exposure and opportunities for diverse interactions, while profoundly informing and influencing their personalities and identities. In India, about 20% of the urban population are adolescents, the largest demographic cohort in the world. Yet, urban public spaces essential to their growth are insufficient or inadequately equipped, unsafe and lacks quality.

Problem Statement

Public Space development was not recognised as a determinant of adolescents' health and wellbeing. And there were no institutional mechanisms to record their needs and experiences to inform urban development decisions. Adolescents were not recognised as a distinct social group. So their needs in public spaces were not distinguished from that of children.

Project Objective & Approach

The SVHPS project, anchored in the culturally rich cities of Jaipur and Bhubaneswar, aimed to improve the systems conditions of urban development, to be adolescent-inclusive and adolescent-friendly. **To achieve this, the project identified leverage points across individual (adolescent), community and city systems, and intervened with two key interventions — the Public Spaces Assessment Framework (PSAF) and Tactical Urbanism proof of design concept.** All project activities were adolescent-informed & adolescent-led.

- Design and develop PSAF with adolescents. This acts as data gathering and evidence generation tool.
- Using PSAF, build capacities of city stakeholders on adolescent-friendly public space development.
- Informed by PSAF assessment results, design identified public spaces using Tactical Urbanism. This acts as a proof on concept on the benefits of adolescent-friendly public space design, on everyone's health and wellbeing.



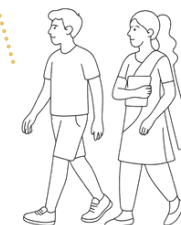
City Governance

- Involve parents, teachers and caretakers of adolescents in the project activities. This helps to build trust with the project, essential for continued adolescents engagement..
- Build knowledge of community members on the impact of public spaces on adolescents' health and wellbeing, and on public space design and development process.



Community

- Build knowledge of adolescents in public space design and development
- Empower them with tools, capabilities and opportunities to present their needs to the city and community stakeholders.



Individual (Adolescents)

[[Inclusion and Equity]]

PROJECT RESULTS

Sample PSAF in use - before, during and after TU intervention

Pre-TU Assessment Results					TU (During Activation) Assessment Results					TU (Post Activation) Assessment Results							
Parameter	Sub-parameter	Quantitative Performance	Qualitative Performance	Sub-parameter Performance	Parameter performance	Parameter	Sub-parameter	Quantitative Performance	Qualitative Performance	Sub-parameter Performance	Parameter performance	Parameter	Sub-parameter	Quantitative Performance	Qualitative Performance	Sub-parameter Performance	Parameter performance
Accessibility	Routes	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Routes	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Routes	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow
	Public Transport	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Red	Public Transport	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Public Transport	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red
	Independent Access	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Independent Access	Red	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Independent Access	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Red
	Cycling	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Cycling	Red	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Cycling	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Red
	Entry/Exit	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Entry/Exit	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Entry/Exit	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
Inclusivity	Age-Friendly	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Age-Friendly	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Age-Friendly	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
	Gender-Friendly	Red	Red	Red	Red	Gender-Friendly	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Gender-Friendly	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow
	Disability-Friendly	Red	Red	Red	Red	Disability-Friendly	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Disability-Friendly	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow
	Sense of belonging	NA	NA	NA	Red	Sense of belonging	NA	Green	Green	Green	Green	Sense of belonging	NA	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
	Free for all	NA	Green	Green	Red	Free for all	NA	Green	Green	Green	Green	Free for all	NA	Green	Green	Green	Yellow
Amenities	Light	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Light	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Light	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
	Shelter	Red	NA	Red	Red	Shelter	Red	NA	Red	Red	Red	Shelter	Yellow	NA	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
	Seating	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Seating	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Seating	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow
	Toilets	Red	NA	Red	Red	Toilets	Red	NA	Red	Red	Red	Toilets	Green	NA	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
	Drinking Water	Red	NA	Red	Red	Drinking Water	Yellow	NA	Yellow	NA	Yellow	Drinking Water	Yellow	NA	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
	Dustbins	Red	NA	Red	Red	Dustbins	Yellow	NA	Green	Green	Green	Dustbins	Green	NA	Green	Green	Yellow
	Medical Facilities	Green	NA	Green	Yellow	Medical Facilities	Green	NA	Green	NA	Green	Medical Facilities	Green	NA	Green	Green	Yellow
	Electricity and Wi-Fi	Red	NA	Red	Red	Electricity and Wi-Fi	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Electricity and Wi-Fi	Green	NA	Green	Green	Yellow
	Security	Red	NA	Red	Red	Security	Red	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Security	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red
	Landscape/Vegetation	Yellow	NA	Yellow	Yellow	Landscape/Vegetation	Yellow	NA	Yellow	NA	Yellow	Landscape/Vegetation	Yellow	NA	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
Activities	Cleanliness and	Yellow	NA	Yellow	Yellow	Cleanliness and	Yellow	NA	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Cleanliness and	Yellow	NA	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
	Safe	NA	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Safe	NA	Green	Green	Green	Green	Safe	NA	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	
	Vibrant	NA	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Vibrant	NA	Green	Green	Green	Green	Vibrant	NA	Green	Green	Yellow	
	Playing and Recreation	Red	Red	Red	Red	Playing and Recreation	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Playing and Recreation	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow
	Culture and Learning	Red	Red	Red	Red	Culture and Learning	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Culture and Learning	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow
Activities	Shops/ vendors	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Shops/ vendors	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Shops/ vendors	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow
	Socializing	NA	Green	Green	Yellow	Socializing	NA	Green	Green	Green	Green	Socializing	NA	Green	Green	Green	Yellow
	Multipurpose	NA	Green	Green	Yellow	Multipurpose	NA	Green	Green	Green	Green	Multipurpose	NA	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	

Red : 16 sub-parameters
Yellow: 08 sub-parameters
Green : 05 sub-parameters

Public Space Rating **Red**

Red : 04 sub-parameters
Yellow: 10 sub-parameters
Green : 15 sub-parameters

Public Space Rating **Yellow**

Red : 06 sub-parameters
Yellow: 14 sub-parameters
Green : 09 sub-parameters

Public Space Rating **Yellow**

Public Park Before TU, Bhubaneswar



Public Park Before TU, Jaipur



Public Park After TU, Jaipur



Public Park After TU, Bhubaneswar



LEARNINGS AND TAKEAWAYS

Key Enablers & Challenges

- Involving and engaging community members helped build trust with the initiative. This enabled increased and sustained adolescent participation.
- Facilitating opportunities for adolescents to represent themselves, their peers and their community, at city, state and national level forums, enabled stakeholders to perceive adolescents as active civic contributors.
- The PSAF in simple language and easy to use assessment format, helped translate the lived experiences of adolescents into actionable data. This built credibility to adolescents needs in city systems.
- Tactical Urbanism helped the city and community stakeholders visualise and experience the potential of an adolescent-friendly public space design. It was low cost, reduced effort and time, but vastly playful and creative.
- Without institutional support in the form of policies of permanent infrastructure installation, upkeeping the TU designs was a challenge. But the frustration served as a segue for the community to discuss about civic roles and responsibilities to maintain public spaces.

What Worked & Didn't?

- A consortium model of project delivery, partnering with city-level Local Partners helped ground the project to contextual realities.
- Data-based monitoring of adolescent participation across age, ability, gender and socio-economic status helped sustain balanced inclusion.
- Inclusion of Adolescents with Disabilities (AwDs) required navigating social stigma and conserved practices, specialised skills and additional time to develop universally accessible communication materials. Without detailed planning for such contingencies, their inclusion was restricted.
- City systems differed sharply in governance maturity. Bhubaneswar showed greater institutional readiness for participatory governance. But Jaipur governance context was facing frequent leadership transfer, strong political influence and limited resources. So, a common city engagement strategy for differing governance maturity didn't work.

What could have been done differently?

- Plan comprehensive implementation for increased inclusion of AwDs.
- Implement more context-specific engagement strategies from the outset, based on a deeper understanding of city governance maturity.
- Implement formal pathways for adolescent participation, earlier

Key Takeaways

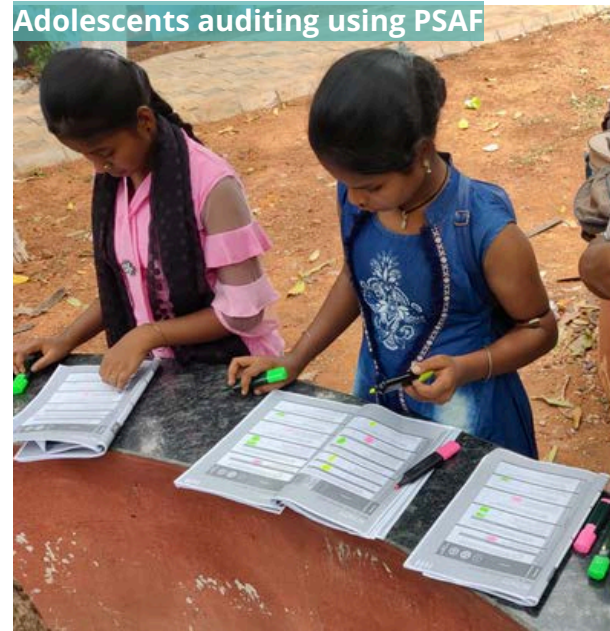
- Participatory approach must be data-driven.
- Representative demonstration accelerates change.
- Taking time to understand the context is crucial to implement effective context-specific strategies.
- Inclusion requires capability, not just intent.

CONNECT

Adolescents at a state conclave



Adolescents auditing using PSAF



TU designs in use



Adolescents engaging in a discussion with community leaders, advocating for their participation in decision-making



Reach out to us at:
PS4Adolescents@wri.org



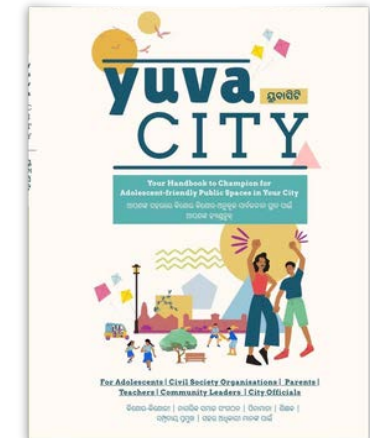
Scan this QR code to know more about the project



Scan this QR code to access PSAF and YuvaCity Handbook



Public Spaces Assessment Framework (PSAF) - An easy to implement framework to audit public spaces in your city



YuvaCity - A concise handbook adolescents, community members, civil society and city stakeholders