

GOLD VI

**Case-Based Contribution
to Chapter 9: Democratizing**
*GOLD VI Report on Pathways
to urban and territorial equality*

Democratic planning and urban

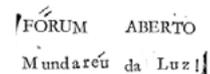
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CHAPTER

9: Democratizing

SUMMARY

Democratic planning and urban governance can be considered catalysts in the pursuit of the right to the city and the disruption of oppression within society through urban planning processes. In that sense, participatory budgeting, participatory action-research processes, and counter-hegemonic urban planning initiatives can be seen as essential initiatives to assert the right to the city and advance urban and regional territorial equality. Responding to that, several civil society organizations have developed a series of projects to enhance the political agency of human settlement dwellers and the right to appropriate, shape and transform the living environment. This paper presents initiatives from different organisations worldwide. Fostering the promotion of participatory budgeting as a pathway to advance urban equality, organisations such as Kota Kita, Participation Center, the Centre for Women’s Studies in Zhejiang University and INESC, have developed powerful initiatives to make the participatory budgeting processes more impactful and inclusive for marginalised groups. At the same time, organisations such as Avina Foundation and PlanAct have developed programmes to support settlement dwellers and civil society organisations and their innovative democratic practices, in order to strengthen their voices in policy-making processes. On the other hand, while reframing cities as a common good, organisations such as Arkom-Jogja and the Open Forum Mundaréu da Luz have fostered a more socially and spatially just material distribution, materializing city and settlements dwellers needs and aspirations through bottom-up and counter-hegemonic projects. Finally, by taking a right to the city approach, it can be said that these experiences stand out as compelling initiatives to foster spatially just resource and power distribution, which is fundamental to advance urban and regional territorial equality.

Democratic planning and urban governance refer to the pursuit of right to the city and the disruption of oppression within society through urban planning processes.

This comprehension also borrows from Harvey's¹ concept of the right to the city as our collective right to change ourselves by changing the city. Aligned with the right to the city pillars, it is important to acknowledge that democratic planning and urban governance calls for the recognition of diverse communities, their intersectional needs, aspirations and their coexistence, which also involves processes of political agency. The political agency can be further achieved when government structures, processes and policies enable city and settlement dwellers to exercise the full potential of their citizenship and it can also be expressed through the inhabitants' possibility to shape urban spaces. In this sense, democratic planning and urban governance pursuit to enhance popular participation in the development, monitoring and budgeting of spatial interventions. Besides participation in decision-making, it also fosters transparency and accountability. **Participatory budgeting, participatory action-research processes, bottom-up approaches and initiatives of counter-hegemonic urban planning constitute relevant initiatives to build pathways for advance territorial equality and the localization of the SDGs led by the communities.** In particular, SDG 11 which aims to make cities and human settlements more inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

By taking a right to the city approach, Kota Kita² is a non-profit organisation that has been working for years to promote participatory budgeting - Musrenbang - and democratic urban planning



in Indonesia. In its report called "Making all Voices Count - Improving the Transparency, Inclusivity and Impact of Participatory Budgeting in Indonesian Cities",³ Kota Kita explores how participatory budgeting has engaged citizens and has discussed community priorities within a formal forum (see Figure 01). Kota Kita research analyses the main enablers and barriers to the implementation of participatory budgeting in six cities and designs recommendations to city governments and civil society organisations to make the process more impactful and inclusive for marginalised groups. The findings demonstrated that there is a gap between the implementation of national regulation due to lack of capacity-building at the local level. Also, it describes how the engagement depends on the communities' participatory culture and how people perceive institutional spaces, revealing the role of partnerships between civil society and Local Governments to engage communities, promote capacity-building, provide technical support, and monitor the process. In order to achieve transparency and trust, Kota Kita highlights the importance of monitoring mechanisms and governmental feedback to inform the communities about

Community Participation for Neighbourhood Development
Source: Making all Voices Count - Improving the Transparency, Inclusivity and Impact of Participatory Budgeting in Indonesian Cities (2016). <https://www.kotakita.org/> [Assessed at 26 January 2022]

1. Harvey, 2008

2. More information available at: <https://www.kotakita.org>

3. Kota Kita, 2016. More information available at: <https://www.makingallvoicescount.org/project/kota-kita/>

the proposals accepted. During its experience, Kota Kita also developed several digital tools to improve participatory budgeting processes. For instance, after identifying some challenges regarding the participatory budgeting process in Solo city, including the communities' lack of information for project prioritisation and the control of the process by local elites, Kota Kita developed digital tools to include neighbourhoods' profiles and a tracker to share information about the implementation of selected projects.

Fostering the promotion of participatory budgeting as a pathway to advance urban equality, both the Participation Center⁴ and the Centre for Women's Studies from Zhejiang University explore the process in the context of China.

Documenting the participatory budgeting in Chengdu, research from the Participation Center describes how it has covered more than 4,300 villages and neighbourhoods in 2019 and how it enables each household to participate in decision-making. To advocate for gender equality, one of the components of the right to the city, the Centre for Women's Studies from Zhejiang University has developed research that leads to a Participatory Gender Budget in Wenling of Zhejiang Province⁵ (see Figure 02). The Centre designed a new procedure where the budget is discussed based on gender disaggregated data to enhance gender budget programmes. In doing so, training sections focused on improving citizens capability in reviewing government budgeting from a gender perspective were organised.⁶ Its remarkable accomplishment was to ensure women presence into the government's budgeting and to ensure women-specific projects. Besides that, it is worth mentioning that Brazil is globally well-known as a reference of participatory municipal budgeting. **A recent innovation has been the**

Hybrid Participatory Budgeting of Volta Redonda.⁷ Led by the Local Government, the proposal combines face-to-face and digital tools to reduce urban and political inequalities. It innovates by making neighbourhood associations and urban social movements responsible for proposing new tools and ways of involving the population in decisions about the public budget.



Aligned with the right to the city political dimension to enhance citizens' voice and political engagement, the Avina Foundation's Pulsante - Cidadania Ativa⁹ programme and the PlanAct's Participatory Governance Programme¹⁰ stands out as compelling initiatives to this report. The Avina's programme supports organisations and social movements that have developed innovative practices on citizen participation and collective action in Latin America in order to expand spaces of popular participation and to cope with the crisis of representation in Latin American governments. Also fostering city and settlement dwellers political agency, Planact's Participatory Governance Programme focuses on developing the capacity of low-income communities to effectively voice their needs in local

Gender-Responsive Participatory Budgeting in Wenling, China
Source: <https://participedia.net/case/5248>
[Assessed at 25 January 2022]

4. More information available at: <http://www.participation.cn/>

5. More information available at: <https://oidp.net/en/practice.php?id=957>

6. More information available at: <https://www.oidp.net/docs/repo/doc15.pdf>

7. More information available at: <https://www.oidp.net/docs/repo/doc691.pdf>

8. <https://www.avina.net/pt/home-por/>

9. More information available at: <https://pulsante.org/pt-br/>

10. More information available at: <https://planact.org.za/>

government planning and development processes in order to influence policy-making and guarantee the implementation of the Integrated Development Plan and Municipal Budget in South Africa. **Also, the INESC' Wave (Onda) programme¹¹ is an interesting experience of inclusive citizenship that focuses on teenagers.** The programme aims to introduce topics such as human rights and public budget in public schools in Brazil, through educational and cultural actions.

Regarding participatory data collection, with UNESCO support, Kota Kita has developed a project and guideline for Participatory Data Collection Methodology for Disability-Inclusive City Profile,¹² defining the best methodologies and analysis frameworks. Kota Kita also developed a Disability-Inclusive City Profile¹³ for the city of Solo and a toolbox of practices and programmes ideas¹⁴ to serve as scalable models that create reliable and disaggregated data to address barriers and challenges faced by persons with disabilities in the city of Banjarmasin. The Solo pilot project is based on the Local Government commitment to disability rights and the mayor's motivation in using innovative approaches to the issue, and it has the potential to be replicated in other Indonesian cities by the Network of Mayors for Inclusive Cities.¹⁵

As the right to the city also fosters a socially and spatially just material distribution and settlements dwellers participation in the development of the living environment, Kota Kita, ArkomJogja¹⁶ and the Open Forum Mundaréu da Luz bottom-up projects also stand out as important experiences to reflect the intention of reframing cities as common goods through counter-hegemonic approaches.

Among other initiatives, Kota Kita project Co-design Ngampon: Community Driven Development in Poor

Urban Settlement¹⁷ (see Figure 03) demonstrates an interesting experience of participatory planning. With the active participation and expertise of the Ngampon residents, the organisation co-designed a series of spaces, such as playground areas, social meeting places and urban farming in an urban poor settlement in Surakarta, Central Java Indonesia.



Also in Indonesia, the community architects from Arkomjodja have developed diverse projects through people-centred approaches to crisis and disaster response for several years (See Figure 04). These projects usually involve processes of co-production of knowledge, participatory mapping, participatory planning and co-design during the conception, implementation and evaluation phases. For instance, in the city of Solo, Arkomjodja partnered with Surakarta Local Government, and architecture students from a local university (Sebelas Maret University) to develop a participatory programme¹⁸ in Kali Pepe communities that included participatory mapping, training for students and the implementation of a pilot project. The programme was conceived inside the scope of the main informal settlements upgrading governmental programme, 100-0-100 (100% sanitation, 0% slum, 100% clean water access). Recently, working

Co-design Ngampon
Source: <https://www.kotakita.org/project-ngampon.html>. [Assessed at 25 January 2022]

11. <https://www.inesc.org.br/acoos/onda/>

12. More information available at: https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1pUfoYEG0UkzstYGTcx91N-OxBxpSE_S8

13. The city profile tackles issues such as number of people, spatial distribution, types of disabilities, livelihoods, etc.

14. More information available at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000371043>

15. More information available at: <https://en.unesco.org/inclusivepolicylab/news/disability-inclusive-cities-indonesia>

16. More information available at: <https://arkomjogja.or.id>

17. More information available at: https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1HDvyge_xV9TsYx3fZOH3H15EAKM5c2V1

18. More information available at: <https://arkomjogja.or.id/kali-pepe/>

with Paguyuban Kalijawi, a network of riverside women saving¹⁹ groups, Arkomjogja has developed strategies to solve collective issues of insecure tenure, sanitation, economy, health, and waste management in the informal settlement communities.

Lastly, the experience developed by Polis Institute within the Open Forum Mundaréu da Luz - Campos Elíseos Vivo²⁰ urban and social project - presents a provoking example of an initiative of counter-hegemonic planning that offers possibilities towards a more just, democratic and inclusive city.

The project was developed by a group of urban planners, informal workers, architects, health professionals, local residents and groups working in the Campos Elíseos neighbourhood, in downtown São Paulo, the region known as Cra-colândia. The project articulates housing and health care programs, commercial and income-generating spaces, public spaces and facilities, addressing the needs of an often-discriminated population by stigmas related to drug abuse in the region. Public authorities have been implementing beautification and hygienist initiatives in the area, trying to promote a gentrification process that could force those people out of the neighbourhood, located at a central and infrastructured area of the city. They also forced evicted hundreds of low-income families. The Campos Elíseos Vivo plan was an important political instrument for those families to negotiate with public authorities, showing that another approach to the area was possible, feasible and could fulfil their human rights.

Finally, by taking a right to the city approach, it can be said that these experiences stand out as compelling initiatives to foster spatially just resource and power distribution, which is fundamental to advance urban and regional territorial equality. Thus, these participatory budgeting, action-research processes, and counter-hegemonic urban planning initiatives build pathways to produce human settlements based on the dweller's agency, strengthening their voices in decision-making processes and challenging processes of marginalisation, exclusion and discrimination. Through promoting effective and equal political participation, they enable the fulfillment of the right to inhabit, produce, appropriate, shape and benefitting from the living environment based on dwellers' diverse interests, needs and aspirations.



Campos Elíseos
Source: <https://mundareudaluz.org>.
[Assessed at 27 January 2022]

19. More information available at: <https://www.arkomindonesia.id/>

20. More information available at: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RbScRLaUGadLoGuY0C1xpK-PvkR4yvtw/view>

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In particular, the present paper has contributed to Chapter 9 on “Democratizing”, which focuses on the challenges and opportunities for local and regional governments in implementing meaningful participatory processes, and democratizing decision-making, unpacking asymmetries of power and the underpinning trends affecting processes of democratization. The chapter explores how local and regional governments can promote more egalitarian, participatory and democratic processes, giving voice to marginalized groups of society, minorities and other groups, and thus contribute to urban and territorial equality.

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