SMALL INTERVENTIONS – RESEARCH METHOD FOR [SMALL] PUBLIC SPACES REDESIGN

ABSTRACT

Urban life has to be deprived of unnecessary physical regulations, restrictions and environmental threats in order to enable freedom of social engagement and action in public space. Evidently, present excessive control and fear in public spaces diminish the quality of social relationships. COVID-19 has intensified this phenomenon, calling it the New Normal. This calls for a discussion on new mechanisms through which a city can overcome socio-spatial discrimination in the following ways: creating a platform to advance present understanding of the evolving dynamics between the pandemic and architecture, synthesising the existing knowledge, discussing lessons to be learned, and exploring transformative solutions towards more sustainable and resilient design strategies in the post-COVID era.

As a response to the New Normal, Small Interventions is a model which enables public spaces to gradually improve through a series of small, carefully designed and strategically selected interventions in public spaces with mutual cooperation of the city administration, experts and citizens. The subject of Small Interventions are small spaces realised with a modest budget, short deadlines and accelerated procedures. From a planning perspective, Small Interventions are part of the dynamic, flexible and adaptable urbanism that keeps up with the changes of socio-spatial relationships caused by COVID-19.

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I DEATH OF [SMALL] PUBLIC SPACE + FALL OF PUBLIC MAN

One of the ways citizens get to know the city is through their identification with its public spaces that are used as polygons for establishing a dialogue between citizens and the city. In that way, collective memories are built from which it is possible to read city identity.¹ Public spaces are considered as spaces of diverse and distinctive use, usually owned by the City, that are available, accessible, acceptable and adaptable to all the citizens.² This also includes spaces whose use has previously not been urbanised and officially planned, but which citizens have spontaneously begun using, transforming and appropriating. If “the city is in itself the powerful symbol of a complex society”, in accordance with Lynch, then public spaces are viewed as the driving force behind the development of the city that “not only offers security but also heightens the potential depth and intensity of human experience”.³ As Jacobs stated in her book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, citizens through social relationships, engagement and action in public spaces bring safety to the city by being “eyes upon streets [...] and belonging to those we might call the natural proprietors of the street.”⁴ Safety – eyes upon streets – and collective experience based on sociability and serendipity define freedom of the city where one form of urban freedom cannot be sacrificed by another.⁵ Public spaces, as Ardent said, enable the citizens to be heard and seen by others, assuring them of the existence of the outside world and themselves, otherwise they “would be deprived of things essential to a truly human life”.⁶ However, “what makes mass society so difficult to bear is not the number of people,” according to Arendt, but the fact that the world “lost its power to gather them together.”⁷

Although, in the last few decades, public spaces have shown a lack of true power to gather people together, pandemic measures have shown that right now the reign of fear and security has the power to empty public spaces completely. Under the auspices of security, as part of the imposed COVID-19 experiment, which has been going on for the last two years, the world has united in imposing new security mechanisms and measures to fight the virus. At a time when medicine has not yet come up with an appropriate answer, the basic measure is to maintain physical distancing in public and private spaces. According to Megahed and Ghoneim, all measures adopted during an emergency have become a part of everyday life, changing habits and behaviours that can be a positive or negative intervention in architecture and approach to urban planning.⁸ However, what we could witness in the early stages of the pandemic era is the rigid approach to confining people to homes, ending free movement and the use of urban space. The ban on gatherings, even in open public spaces, has become a basic determinant of the struggle for the security of the *New Normal.*
For about two years now, we have been watching the death and emptiness of public spaces in person, exactly as Bauman predicted by society moving from “solid” modernity to “liquid” phase, analysing the consequence of an unbalanced personal life and empty urban life in which society is under the domination of uncertainty and constant risk. Liquid modernity, as well as the meaning of the word liquid itself, means that society engagement is constantly tested, examined and a subject of scrutiny by enhancing insatiable consumption, unforeseen social relations, temporary solutions, mobility and adaptability to a new era of knowledge and technology. In other words, in his book The Consequence of Modernity, Giddens claims that instead of “entering a period of post-modernity, we are moving into one in which the consequences of modernity are more radicalised and universalised than before.” For Giddens, the consequences of modernity are a result of discontinuities by which modern society is separated from traditional social order and they are: “pace of change”, “scope of change” and “the nature of modern institutions.” These changes in human condition have brought the lack of engagement, participation and action in the production of public spaces that Sennett elaborates on in his book The Fall of Public Man, where “the environment prompts people to think of the public domain as meaningless.”

In his new research regarding the New Normality, Salama analyses changes in the collective psychology of the society associated with the understanding of human needs in using public spaces by revising the notions of social interaction, assembly of people and simultaneity. An active engagement, representing the direct experience of a person with a place and the people within it, is limited or directed more towards passive engagement, involving the need for gathering and encounter without being actively involved. These questions address the future of public spaces, especially in terms of establishing an active citizen participation in public space. The question is: How to re-establish dialogue between the city and citizens affected by the new form of sociability through redesign of public spaces?

Given that the public space is an essence of the city as well as community constructions, and bearing in mind the challenges the New Normal brings, this paper aims to propose a new spatial grammar i.e., a collaborative urban design method called Small Interventions (Male intervencije) – acronym MI which translates as WE in English. It was developed on the basis of the expansive review of studies and practices dealing with the issue of public space design focusing on the last three decades of liquid modernity, and it was already tested by the implementation of six pilot projects in Banja Luka from 2019 to 2021. Those
experiences were brought together and published in a book *Small Interventions in Public Space/Research Methodology*. The reason for the new research method is the fact that there is no adequate database of public spaces (those that are used as collective spaces and those that are public/city property) that could present their potential and unique values. Data on public space is fragmented and mostly not open to citizens. Analysis of public policies and reports has indicated a lack of programmes and projects of collaborative urban design in public spaces as well as absence of mechanisms and tools for citizens’ participation and engagement in urban design and the decision-making processes. However, there have been several bottom-up events in the last five years in Banja Luka, showing the need for new design approaches in order to create a more liveable future city and to improve a smart community development. Although the idea of Small Interventions was originally created and implemented in the pre-pandemic period, this research method may be the key to re-social interaction of people in public space.

The Small Interventions method explores and facilitates new ways of establishing relationships between public space and citizens through collaborative design processes. Using digital media and tools in combination with massive small design practices, the method allows citizen engagement in public spaces even during the pandemic times, while strengthening social cohesion, and a sense of attachment and identification with public space. When using Small Interventions, the city learns how to overcome socio-spatial discrimination by creating a research method that improves the current understanding of the evolving dynamics between the pandemic and the city, making public spaces as polygons of dialogue for all actors included in the redesign process. The existing knowledge on public spaces, both theoretical approaches and practices, is synthesised in a comprehensive way, making it a part of the Small Interventions – research method. Discussing the lessons and guidelines that can be learned and followed, Small Interventions establish sets of mechanisms, tools and methodological steps for public space transformation towards more sustainable and resilient design strategies in the post-COVID era.

II THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: “MASSIVE SMALL”

New form of sociability described by Bauman (*Liquid Modernity*) and Giddens (*The Consequence of Modernity*) has seen a fundamental shift in the way people identify with the city. According to Bishop and Williams, the shift has brought with itself a number of problems affecting social-spatial relationship such as:
political, economic and environmental uncertainty; vacancy of public spaces caused by the loss of traditional industries; revolution in work, changing the way of living and using public space (alienation, isolation); intensity in the use of public space resulting in multi-use space both for work and free time that is enabled by revolution in information and communication technologies; counterculture and activism for new uses of public spaces; and creative milieus first investing in marginal areas testing and adopting them to change the image of an area. In terms of urban planning, this shift has shown that the main problem of public spaces that are dead is the lack of connection between the top-down and bottom-up approach observed and used separately by urban planners and city authorities, even though both are necessary for the redesign of public spaces.

The top-down approach originally arose from utopian concepts of permanence and was created in a time of intensive urbanisation supported by massive plans, permanent solutions and lasting results – the dream of permanence. It is used in decision-making and planning of urban interventions where initiatives, being solved in the long-term, have started from the city council and authorities. These initiatives refer to large-scale projects without consideration of citizen participation, engagement and action in public spaces, as the focus is only on the results instead of the process of revitalisation and redevelopment of urban spaces. According to Kelvin Campbell, an urban planner and a founder of international project Smart Urbanism, top-down consists of a system that is mostly closed and with high expectations relating to: planning procedures that are complicated, hierarchically regulated and long-term requiring to be successfully implemented, thus stifling freedom, creativity and innovation as well as the progressive development of the city; a strictly regulated model for space design, creating mechanisms, tools and steps that lead directly to final results – complete regulation – where there is no room for experimentation, learning and creation of new approaches, models and ways of thinking; restrictions and limitation typical for planning and design operating system.

For Campbell, the consequence of this approach is reflected primarily in the term of size referring to large-scale spaces, hierarchy involved participants, long-term processes and plans that require equally massive results. Such an approach is related to large-scale urban renewal projects, and it is not appropriate to “liquid modernity” and the current changes in society imposed by COVID-19 measures. This approach, affected by the loss of traditional industries, has contributed to vacancy of public space that over time has become abandoned, unsecured and degraded by excessive fear and excessive control due to lack of resources and power for their redesign caused by economic, political and environmental
uncertainty. There is a lack of public spaces but, above all, lack of well-designed and comfortable spaces as “public life has also become a matter of formal obligation.”\textsuperscript{16} It is closed to citizen participation abolishing their right to the city and its highest forms: “liberty, individualisation in socialization, environs (habitat) and way of living (habiter),”\textsuperscript{17} as Lefebvre stated.

The \textit{bottom-up} approach is based on the “The Theory of Communicative Action”, German philosopher and sociologist Jürgen Habermas, producing the term collaborative planning. The importance is in dialogue as “the fundamental human need to share, to communicate, to connect with other living beings, and to leave a deep impression on them.”\textsuperscript{18} In a world created from the \textit{bottom-up}, the focus is on the process in urban planning. Initiatives have started from small actors, organisations or individuals, taking themes from everyday life and working on local projects as a way of responding to economic, environmental, political and social issues. In that way, an activism for new uses of public spaces supported by creative milieus has been initiated, giving an opportunity for the interested public to participate in the decision-making and design processes of the city. For Campbell, the \textit{bottom-up} approach consists of a system that refers to: simplifying process and procedures resulted from the activities of interest groups or individuals, with an aim of loosening their strict regulations and rules; spontaneous design solutions which are the result of experimentation, trial and error where only the best and sustainable solutions have survived; collective action as a way individuals or groups are organised in the planning process.

The challenge of the Small Interventions method has been how to connect these two approaches (\textit{top-down} and \textit{bottom-up}) to work simultaneously during the redesign process of public space. In order to respond to this challenge, a new concept “massive small”\textsuperscript{19} created by Campbell is used as a base for the method development. Massive small is a simultaneous principle focusing not on the result – design – but the process that has led to the redesign of public spaces of “small” scale in a way that there is always a dialogue between the city and citizens. In order to respond to the lack of resources, power and control in the world of economic and political uncertainty, the dream of performance in urban planning is shifting to the concept of “temporary city” proposed by Bishop and Williams, where it is necessary “to unlock the potential of sites now, rather than in 10 years’ time.”\textsuperscript{20} By experimenting with looser planning visions and adaptable design frameworks, the focus is on short-term projects for redesigning public spaces whose temporary initiatives and activities may be refined, modified, developed or implemented in phases over time responding to society’s requirement to be efficient, cheap and economical. The challenge of
identifying the points of conflict and tension that have to be improved, modified, transformed, rehabilitated and assigned new meaning and sense (sense of place) creating a feeling of the identity and affiliation they lacked is defined by using the experience of the Barcelona model and Urban Acupuncture. In order to understand the participation of all actors engaged in the redesign of public spaces seen as another challenge, Lefebvre’s theoretical approach of democracy where a man is a social being who interacts with “others” and “different” is primarily achieved in a “social space” that is a “social product.” Lefebvre’s right to the city is like a “cry and a demand.” On the one hand, it is a cry against the intensification and extension of the urban that pushed to the extreme “division of labour, social segregation and material and spiritual separation.” On the other hand, it is a demand for renewal of urban society that not only passively inhabits the city but makes the city as an œuvre by participating in producing urban spaces as “places of encounter, the assemblage of difference and priority of use over exchange value.” Thus, the right to the city formulated by Lefebvre is actually “transformed and renewed right to urban life” suggesting gatherings, meetings and confrontation of differences. The lack of diversity and urban life
in public spaces represents a challenge of activating and reconnecting human needs with public space that relies on creativity and imagination already present in everyday life is understood by Crawford’s concept of *everyday urbanism*.\(^\text{27}\)

By analysing all the problems and challenges in urban planning presented in theoretical approaches and practices (Figure 1), Small Intervention has a role of a mediator between two worlds (*top-down* and *bottom-up*), using them simultaneously and managing a dialogue between the city administration and citizens but, at the same time, including professionals in the redesign process of public spaces. It is, on the one hand, based on the terms derived from above-mentioned principles directly involved in the processes of redesign of public spaces (democratically, temporary, adaptability and everyday), and on the other hand, there are terms that are only linked to the improvement of public spaces calling them results of the process (massive small and identity).

Small Interventions is seen as a new urban grammar as it develops an original research method for the redesign of public spaces by using a multi-sector and collaborative approach to public spaces that is *massively small*, efficient, flexible, transparent, democratic, dynamic, adaptable and temporary. Innovation is evident in connecting of theoretical urban design approaches and practices in a way that the research method is tested in a real environment adapting its tools and mechanism to the cultural context. It combines both the *top-down* and *bottom-up* approaches in urban design in order to create *massive small* spatial interventions limited by resources, budget and time considering the local context and human resources, legislative and the lack of funds. It works as a creative hub for developing and sharing ideas, knowledge and experience about public spaces, strengthening the power of community engagement.

By using different, adaptable and collaborative mechanisms and tools, the Small Interventions method includes citizen direct enrolment in all stages of the design process as well as the maintenance and upgrade of the place after it is *finished*. Public spaces are seen as a tool for community building in which the city belongs to its citizens, elevating levels of participation up to the point where citizens can actually design and govern their own public spaces.
III SMALL INTERVENTION METHOD: THE RIGHT TO URBAN LIFE

Small Interventions is a research method for redesign of public spaces that are small in terms of budget, size and implementation time and can be efficiently transformed within limited funds and resources with engagement and contribution of a large number of different types of actors. The research method comes from the position that punctual small interventions in public spaces has an effect in transforming not only the specific public space but a wider urban area, making a grid of potential events and polygons essential for interconnection of the City (as City administration), Professionals and Citizens and their engagement with public spaces enhancing their participation in urban design processes.

The Small Interventions research method has three strategic objectives:

1. Strengthening awareness of public spaces through its systematic revalorisation and its collaborative urban design based on small interventions; consequently, enhancing living environment and sense of community belonging.
2. Strengthening the common language and dialogue between the professional, scientific communities and citizens in the processes of design and management of public spaces.
3. Proposing and introducing novel procedures and tools for public space design and management that would facilitate small interventions and overcome the gap between the bottom-up and top-down processes; and that could easily be implemented in other cities in the region adapting it to the cultural context.

The research approach is a systematic overview, considering problems of small public spaces, analysing their potentials and offering programme guidelines for the redesign of public spaces, instead of proposing only design solutions. The principal task of the Small Interventions research method is to systematically and comprehensively observe, map and redesign public spaces, creating a strategic and vibrant network of Small Interventions projects in a defined city location. The aim is to create a socio-spatial system that enables guided co-design processes in urban space through an organised set of mechanisms and tools facilitating the implementation of new urban space, but also behavioural patterns.

The Small Interventions method consists of three main research processes and related groups of activities, which are called components, implementation and testing. These processes are focusing on different types of specific results and outputs and are also targeting different types of actors.
Components is about a professional study and assessment of public space aimed at defining guidelines for their redesign. The existing public spaces represent future polygons for small intervention implementations that have to be detected, classified according to size and a type of morphological characteristics, themes, and programmatically directed and mapped in order to be further implemented in practice. Implementation is about defining mechanisms, tools and actors that enable collaborative redesign processes and transfer of components into the spatial framework of the city. Testing is the final development process that refers to its verification of both components and implementation through a placement in a real physical and social context. Testing is an opportunity to summarise the expected and achieved results of the Small Interventions research method, define the benefits of pilot projects through comparative analysis and discussion and guidelines and recommendations for future projects of small interventions.

Even though they are developed gradually over time, components, implementation and testing are mutually connected and interfering and they form a part of a unique whole. For instance, components are defined by specific spatial and social context to which they adapt according to the preliminary result of testing. On the other hand, to perform testing and define components, it is necessary to establish implementation mechanisms and actors. The relationship between components, implementation and testing can be followed through 10 methodological steps that should be understood and followed in order to apply the Small Interventions method.

### III.1 Methodological steps

This paper presents methodological steps of the Small Interventions method that lead to the whole process of redesigning public space in the city in an integrative, collaborative, and, after all, meaningful and innovative direction. This means that the outline and the subject of the research area are defined in advance.

MS1/DETECTION/duration: 15 days; main actors: Small Interventions team, Professionals, City: The research process begins with the public spaces problem of DETECTION in the defined research area of the city that can be significantly improved with minimal intervention raising the vitality of a city to a higher level. The problem of detection of public spaces not only refers to their sizes, morphological types and functions, but also focuses on places of conflict and vitality loss. It is also related to their relationship with users/citizens and vice versa, their integration with other public spaces, their role in the society, procedures and mechanisms of their maintenance, management and design as well as the question of engagement of actors in their redesign process. It depends on the social and cultural context of each city and can be changed,
subtracted and added in relation to the discussed problems in the example of Banja Luka. Through field work, the creation of public/online surveys in which citizens can propose their space of conflict and research of available studies, strategies, design projects and planning documents, the Small Interventions team (in the case of Banja Luka) worked together with Professionals and the City, transforming problems into potential places where Small Interventions can be implemented. The result of this process is the creation of a network of detected locations recorded on existing city maps, giving insight into the public spaces in the city where it is necessary to intervene.

MS2/CLASSIFICATION/duration: 15 days; main actors: Small Interventions team, Professionals: The second research activity is the CLASSIFICATION by which the network of detected public spaces is linked to components relying on dimensions of public space: temporal, spatial, and functional, and actors. Time refers to the preparation period and implementation of small intervention projects depending on the available budget and resources. Space represents a place – an acupuncture point that needs to be reactivated, and the function serves to create programmatic guidelines for reactivation of public spaces. Actors are users of public spaces and without them public space does not exist, so they are integrated in all three components and they are not observed individually in this research.

By putting these dimensions in relation, three components are created of which two are related to classification: size (created of temporal and spatial dimensions) and typo-morphological pattern (composed of spatial and functional dimensions). Size refers to the dimension of the subject polygons, the estimated value of the small intervention implementation and the time required for its preparation and implementation, while the typo-morphological pattern defines the significance and position of the subject polygons in the urban matrix of the city. That way, the detected public spaces are classified according to their sizes (in terms of dimension (XS, S, M, L, XL), time (30, 45, 60, 90 and 180 days) and value (ranging from 1,500 to 50,000 euros)) and typo-morphological pattern (urban point, urban pocket, urban capillary, urban rooms, urban field and urban corridor), and developed in relation to the programme guidelines – themes (greenery, traffic infrastructure, water management, small forms and urban patterns), forming these three components together.

MS3/THEMATIC/duration: 15 days; main actors: Small Interventions team, Professionals, Citizens: The third component is a theme created with functional dimensions that determines the function, programmatic guidelines, character and manner of using the subject polygons for small interventions. This component
is related to the next research activity called THEMATIC which implies the recognition of open public spaces through dominant themes i.e., whether they are predominantly green, traffic or water supplied spaces, small forms or urban areas. Each theme according to size can be an XS, S, M, L or XL intervention, as well as an urban point, pocket, capillary, room, field and corridor according to the type-morphological pattern.

MS4/REFERENCING/: After the detection, classification and thematic of public spaces, the next activity is REFERENCING, necessary for defining programme guidelines for the public space redesign and it is achieved by making a comparative analysis of detected locations and examples of good practices. This actually means that every detected, classified and thematic location in the city is joined by an equivalent example of good practice taken from the contemporary architectural and urban world scene (Figure 2). The illustration of a specific example itself is not a quick design solution for a specific location, but only one of the possible ways to redesign the location.

Fig. 2. Referencing is achieved by assigning examples of good practices to detected city locations
MS5/MATRIX/duration: 10 days; main actors: Small Interventions team, Professionals, Citizens: After all the activities have been carried out, the detected components of small urban spaces have to be banded together into one operating system in order to define programme guidelines for their redesign, making this complex multi-layered process MATRIX pattern. The process of making a matrix pattern implies multidimensional unification of components of size (including dimension, the implementation deadline and value), typo-morphological pattern, theme and examples of good practice in relation to each individual detected public space. The matrix pattern of each detected location contains four main elements: 1) location of the small intervention (a map or a photograph); 2) programme guideline as a proposal for location improvement based on an adequate example from contemporary practice (a photograph, an illustration, a map); 3) description of the small intervention indicating implementation deadline and estimated financial resources required for implementation; 4) location description and application of small interventions at the location. The interconnection of the matrix pattern of individual spatial polygons with the above-mentioned components creates a matrix pattern of all detected locations within one theme. In that way, instead of an instant solution, the programme guidelines for the redesign of public spaces are proposed by making a Thematic Catalogue obtained from the matrix patterns that elaborate programme themes separately: greenery, water management, traffic infrastructure, small forms and urban areas. Each theme is a result of one thematic catalogue, giving transparency and an overview of all the locations of possible small intervention implementations to the city, significantly improving readability for citizens and facilitating professionals in the application process for new design solutions.

MS6/MAPPING/duration: 10 days; main actors: Small Interventions team, Professionals: Placing the matrix pattern in the city spatial framework and georeferencing the catalogues is done through the MAPPING process and uses the method of urban acupuncture with the aim of curing the disease of urban degradation and the decline of social integration already present in public spaces. Based on the urban acupuncture method, acupuncture points are selected and mapped in a way that each has the potential to become a vibrant place with a rich public life preventing divisions, encouraging citizen interaction and helping with development of social cohesion. These interventions have a predominant functional dimension (theme) in relation to the spatial dimension, which implies that they are not related only to a specific location, but have the possibility of multiplication to a certain number of points in the city.
The focus is on careful selection of detected acupuncture points in which urban interventions are implemented, which with their coordination and symbiosis produce large-scale effects, building a capillary network – a cardiogram, which is subsequently expanded and supplemented with new interventions. The term cardiogram is analogous to the heartbeat and is the original name used by the Small Interventions team for networking public spaces in Banja Luka. In the case of Banja Luka, due to the lack of updated plans and maps, the mapping process includes the production of a new map that is also used to record all the planning assumptions taken from spatial planning documents and urban development programmes. The result is the map that records all the architecture points that are connected parallel with major pedestrian communications, through passages, hinterlands and inactive by the cardiogram, making a database for future projects. Each architecture point represents potential pilot project.

MS7/SELECTION/duration: 10 days; main actors: Small Interventions team, Citizens, Professionals, the City: The project database of Small Interventions is formed by combining the results of the method of components including the projects georeferenced through the thematic catalogues, mapping acupuncture points and the production of the cardiogram, and projects nominated by different actors through an open and online application form. It implies the next step: pilot project evaluation and selection. According to the principles of Small Interventions (democratically, temporary, adaptability, everyday use, massively small and identity) and relying on the steps, mechanisms and tools of the research method, a set of five criteria for the evaluation and selection of projects is defined. The main evaluation criteria are: 1) the City requirements, theme popularity (effect) and citizens’ needs; 2) location; 3) mechanisms and actors; 4) steps and procedures; 5) financing. The criteria is used for the verification of potential feasibility for a number of candidate projects in order to select a smaller number of sustainable and resilient projects of interest to the city and citizens. In the selection process, the projects are sorted by description, size and budget and presented through an interactive table linked to online application forms containing basic information (the project name and description) and research method components (size, type-morphological pattern, themes of public space and location) and mechanisms and tools of co-design/ construction/financing / participation, actors, specific procedures, budget and implementation time.

MS8/ PILOT PROJECT DESIGN/duration: 20 days; main actors: Small Interventions team, Professionals/: Projects must pass all the phases of detailed planning and design to be considered for selection. Here project proposals need to be elaborated, referring to the revision and determination of specific project
UP: Fig. 3. Constructive Workshop with students - Small Scale project

DOWN: Fig. 4. Citizen Work Actions: Cleaning the City - Small Intervention pilot project
goals such as: defining a dynamic plan of activities of the actors and their roles; defining the mechanisms of co-design, construction and participation; defining an indicative budget, plan and mechanisms; defining a project communication plan of activities and expected results among citizens and other target groups.

Co-design mechanisms refer to a set of activities and tools leading to a common solution of urban design for a particular space through design and decision-making processes. They use digital participation tools and open new forms of communication between Cities, Professionals and Citizens in accordance with today’s way of living and current trends in the use of digital technologies. The design solution is performed within one or more of the proposed mechanisms: Creative Workshop, Studio Project, Competition and Small Design Intervention.

In terms of selecting the best design solution, there are steps of selection: by jury experts, online public voting by jury experts and citizens, and the first level of selection is made by jury experts, while citizens make the final selection.

MS9/PILOT PROJECT CONSTRUCTION/duration: 1-7 days; main actors: Small Intervention team, Professionals, Citizens, the City: This step refers to a set of the urban design activities or scenario that improve public spaces, referring to its realisation in a real spatial framework by which it gets its physical form. This includes the physical engagement and direct interaction of all the participants by use of the performance incentive mechanisms accompanying the activities of operational character (such as materials procurement and field preparation) and procedural character (such as signing the contracts, obtaining permits and approvals, etc.). Its primary mechanism is called Constructive Workshop with students and citizens where they physically participate in the construction activities, while at the same time gaining practical knowledge of traditional and/or specific types of construction (Figure 3).

The mechanism called Citizen Work Actions implies one-day mass citizens’ physical participation in public space where through physical activities, the citizens conquer the spaces, contributing to their more intensive use and maintenance in the future (Figure 4). Small Interventions projects encourage the application of performance incentive mechanisms that refer to non-standard ways of building and performing outside the established urban practices, raising awareness of the themes and issues associated with public space. Besides the funds provided by the City for the implementation of Small Interventions through different construction mechanisms, it is usually necessary to raise a portion of funds from other sources. In this regard, the following financing mechanisms are proposed, referring to non-standard forms of different actors’ participation in the project financing process: collective financing (crowdfunding), endowment
and the inclusion of socially responsible companies. These actors involved in the financing process form the network of Small Interventions partners i.e., making a base of active financiers. Through the preparation of the adequate contracting procedures, at the same time there is a need to check the possibilities of simplifying the existing legal procedures by shortening the construction time.

MS10/ EVALUATION/duration: project lifetime and at least 6 months after; main actors: Small Interventions team, Small Interventions partners: Small Interventions means the continuous and engaged work on improving public spaces and raising citizens’ inclusion in the processes of their transformation. The Small Interventions model is being continuously monitored, improved by experience based on learning, and adaptable to the dynamic structure of everyday life and the latest trends and technologies. During the implementation of each of the projects, it is necessary to perform the following: an internal evaluation of defined steps and mechanisms in relation to the criteria of their efficiency, adaptability and innovation (Small Interventions team); the projects evaluation based on the participants reactions and experiences (the City, citizens and experts) and monitored via direct contacts and specially designed questionnaires; the evaluation of the project’s impact on the community measured by monitoring the users number of a particular public space (Small Interventions sites) and the evaluation of the public reactions on social networks. It implies questionnaires for the participants distributed before the action and monitoring the intensity/frequency of pilot site users during and after the action. The Small Interventions method, presented in this set of methodological steps, can be adapted to each social context, initiating positive changes in public spaces and communities by turning problems into potentials.

These methodological steps could be monitored in two ways:

1. Chronologically – from the detection of problems and potentials of public space to the small intervention realizations – in relation to mechanisms and tools that are specific to each type and size of small interventions.
2. Diagonally following the engagement of the certain actors engaged in the redesign process of public spaces that is related to specific steps.

All the methodological steps were carried out through intense communication and dissemination activities which were strongly supported by digital tools and social media. Communication relied on digital technologies, used in order to facilitate dialogue between citizens, the city and professionals, to enhance the
process of collective learning, support participatory pilot project implementation and to engage citizens with project activities. The use of digital technologies is also aimed at raising awareness of the digital shift in decision-making processes among both the city and citizens, promoting decision-making and making public space management transparent and open.

By establishing new communication models between the city and citizens using existing digital tools, available and widely used among local communities (e.g., the Viber community, online application forms, etc.), the method allows citizens to participate in decision-making processes, but also to propose design solutions. It initiates the identification of stakeholders who will be invited by the city council to provide design and/or funding modifying existing legislation and accelerating legal procedures. The redesign of public space design is conducted by Small Interventions on original, design-conscious and engagement principles. It envisages sustainable /circular approach requiring constant citizen feedback on which every step and activity in redesign process is built (e.g., Propose location, Propose project idea, Apply your project, Apply to participate, Apply for design solution, Apply for donation, Vote for the best design solution, Share your story, Vote for the most successful Small Interventions project for this year, etc.). The advantage of this approach is reaching out to more citizens and reducing the cost and human resources.

IV THE FUTURE IS IN SMALL

Public spaces have the power to bring together the city and its citizens by initiating the engagement of both. On the one hand, the city allows the citizens to belong to the city by allowing them to act in organised and spontaneous actions in the public space. On the other hand, citizens, through active participation and engagement in the production of public spaces, identify with the city and make the city belong to the citizen. This implies that urban life has to be free and deprived of unnecessary physical regulations and restrictions and environmental threats in order to enable a freedom of social relationships, engagement and action of both the city and citizens in public space. In the light of the New Normal, public spaces carry the potential for reconnection. Unlike closed and private spaces, open public spaces offer the possibility of the urgent redesign in terms of creating a network of small interventions, integratively affecting the new interactions between the city and citizens.
The engagement of both is accomplished through collective power of Small Interventions that make *massive small* changes in the process of public space redesign, raising public awareness of public spaces that reflects the intensity of their use, significantly improving the dialogue between the city and citizens by activating local community, re-establishing local community spirit, and improving open public spaces management. In the whole process, Small Interventions include professionals that are urban activators, mediators, moderators and catalysts for the whole process of urban planning and management of open public spaces. The experience of Small Interventions testing in Banja Luka has envisaged and evidenced behaviour changes of all the actors involved in the redesign process of public spaces who learn to work together through project engagement. The city administration and its communication with citizens and professionals is significantly improved through invitations for cooperation, open source database, simplification and acceleration of administrative procedures, creation of potential open public space network owned by the City. Professionals have developed co-creative skills in terms of providing critical thinking and design solutions based on a common strategy and through engaging and inviting young local talents. That has opened new opportunities for young talents and strongly supported a collective design scene. The citizens, who were involved in all the project phases and most of the activities, have reflected and accepted the initial premise that the city belongs to their citizens. The fact they were able to experience the method directly and to see the result of the pilot project that they were involved in has eventually triggered change in their behaviour towards being more involved in maintaining and using the place. In other words, the Small Interventions method has encouraged the citizens to get involved in other similar projects and motivated them to create, use, maintain and upgrade their own public space environment.

By introducing collaborative design approaches into existing planning procedures and novel tools and guidelines for open public space redesign and management, Small Interventions could contribute to a wider and systematic change in urban design practices, after all, in regions passing through transitions and with lack of planning tradition or bottom-up movements in urban space. Given that the method consists of three main interrelated processes (components, implementation, and testing), it can be easily and partly adapted to different cultural contexts, local specificities, and applied in other cities in the region. In the case of Banja Luka, the Small Interventions project has contributed to establishing a knowledge base of public spaces in the city that brought together both tangible (e.g., physical features, accessibility, etc.) and intangible (e.g., a sense of place, memory), features of urban space, and identified public space problems and potentials. Through the method application, new data and knowledge is generated.
Small Interventions can set in motion the future activities related to changes in existing regulations and policies, standards and protocols: a systematic form for open public space management; procedure acceleration and simplification; detection, selection and programme guidelines for open public spaces; citizen and professionals engagement in all project phases from location detection to applying, participating, selecting and evaluating design project and form of direct communication between the city and citizens.

The urban dynamics and the dynamic structure of everyday life are becoming more and more fluid every day, more uncertain and unpredictable, which implies that we should act small, act continuously and act together. Time of megaproject implementations in urban space that we evidenced in the second half of the 20th century is already passing, and new, more dynamic, adaptable and open processes of public space design are coming. The Small Interventions method is an experimental platform that enables different types of small and collaborative projects to emerge, triggering wider change and innovation in design practices.
NOTES


13. Link: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_F_tICFGLcyPUxpTICPJHYHUxSchoVcH/view


15. Link: https://smarturbanism.org.uk/


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NOVA UDOBNOST: KA ŽIVOTU NAKON PANDEMIJE
Jelena Atanacković Jeličić, Milan Rapaić, Igor Maraš, Dejan Ecet


ključne reči: postpandemijska arhitektura, metoda projektov anja, algoritam, sa vremena arhitektura

MALE INTERVENCIJE – METOD ISTRAŽIVANJA ZA REDIZAJN [MALIH] JAVNIH PROSTORA
Jelena Stanković, Diana Stupar, Isidora Karan

Urbani život mora biti lišen nepotrebnih fizičkih propisa, ograničenja i ugrožavanja životne sredine kako bi se omogućila sloboda društvenog angažovanja i delovanja u javnom prostoru. Očigledno, prisutna preterana kontrola kontrola i strah u javnim prostorima umanjuju kvalitet društvenih odnosa. COVID-19 je intenzivirao ovu pojavu, nazvavši je Nova normala. Ovo zahteva diskusiju o novim mehanizmima pomoću kojih grad može da prevaziđe društveno-prostornu diskriminaciju na sledeće načine: stvaranje platforme za unapređenje sadašnjeg razumevanja dinamike koja se razvija između pandemije i arhitekture, sinteza postojećeg znanja, diskusija o lekcijama koje treba naučiti i istraživanje transformativnih rešenja ka održivijim i otpornijim strategijama dizajna u post-COVID eri.

Kao odgovor na Novu normalu, Male intervencije su model koji omogućava da se javni prostori postepeno unapređuju nizom malih, pažljivo osmišljenih i strateški odabranih intervencija u javnim prostorima uz međusobnu saradnju gradske uprave, stručnjaka i građana. Predmet Malih intervencija su mali prostori realizovani sa skromnim budžetom, kratkim rokovima i ubrzanim procedurama. Iz perspektive planiranja, Male intervencije su deo dinamičnog, fleksibilnog i prilagodljivog urbanizma koji ide u korak sa promenama društveno-prostornih odnosa izazvanih COVID-19.

ključne reči: javni prostor, male intervencije, dizajn, dinamičan, fleksibilan, prilagodljiv urbanizam