



PART 1: BASIC DATA

Title of the experience: <i>Jugar y participar. Cuando los niños y las niñas son protagonistas del planeamiento urbano</i> (Playing and participating. When children are the protagonists of urban planning)	
Name of the city/region: Autonomous City of Buenos Aires	
Country: Argentina	
Institution presenting the candidacy: Dirección General Participación Ciudadana y Cercanía (DGPCyC), part of the Secretaría de Comunicación, Contenidos y Participación Ciudadana del Gobierno de la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires (GCBA)	
Start date of the experience: 26 November 2019	
End date of the experience: 11 February 2020	
Type of candidacy	New experience
Type of experience	Urban planning
	Workshop/meeting for diagnosis, monitoring, etc.
Objective of the experience	To achieve higher levels of equality in terms of participation and to incorporate diversity as a criteria for inclusion
Territorial area	All the territory
Thematic area	Urban management
	Others

PART 2: DESCRIPTION OF THE EXPERIENCE

Objectives

<p>Main objective of the innovative experience:</p> <p>The main objective was to achieve greater levels of equality in participation and to incorporate diversity as a criterion for inclusion. In other words, to guarantee the effective fulfilment of children's right to be heard and to actively participate in the transformation of the city.</p>

How have you achieved this objective?

Although the playground remodelling project is still in progress, many of the goals initially set were achieved.

Firstly, it is important to point out that, from the outset, participatory dynamics were designed with the intention of correcting the adult-centred perspective and incorporating the viewpoint of those who are the most frequent users of the squares and playgrounds, that is, children. In this regard, two dynamics were designed - differentiated by age - with the aim of extracting children's perceptions, opinions and desires with regard to the use of playgrounds.

Dynamic A, called "A Day in the Playground", consisted of a creative drawing activity on lecterns in each square with a playground, with children between the ages of 3 and 5. Each child could draw the playground of their dreams. To do this, they had a lectern, a sheet of paper and coloured pencils. There could be up to 20 children in the space simultaneously. The playground was fenced so that the adults accompanying the children would let them in alone and not interrupt them during the activity. When they entered, they were guided by a facilitator to their lectern, who explained the instructions and encouraged them to create. The objective was for them to express themselves through drawing and, fundamentally, to comment with the coordinators on what they had drawn, why, what they liked about their yard, what they wanted to change, what games were missing, etc. In this sense, the exercise of drawing was a starting point for them to put their imagination to work and thus explore their needs, desires and opinions. For this reason, the task of the facilitators was fundamental: not only did they have to accompany the children and ensure that they had all the necessary materials, but they also had to pay close attention to their words, make subtle inquiries and take notes on an observation sheet.

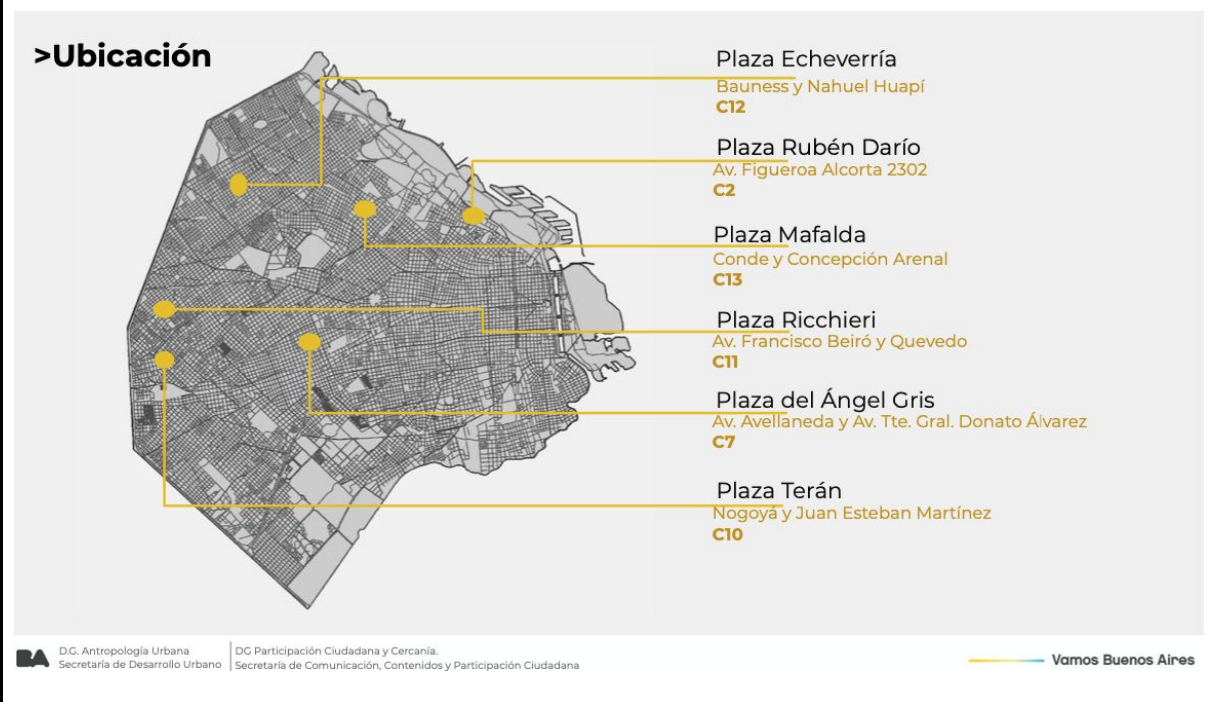
Dynamic B, called "Little Scouts", consisted of a co-creation activity at work tables near the playground with children aged 6 to 10. The proposal was to meet in groups of 7 or 8 children, accompanied by a facilitator and an observer, around a table that had an adapted plan of the playground of the square in the centre. Within the space there were 4 tables, so there could be up to 30 children participating simultaneously. The objective of this activity was to carry out a group diagnosis of the current situation of the playground, emphasising the perceptions, tastes and opinions of children. At the same time, it sought to identify their wishes and expectations for the future playground, so as to be able to offer recommendations to the area in charge of the remodelling. Guided by a facilitator, the children had to indicate on the map the areas of the playground that they liked best and least, that they found dangerous and those that, according to their perception, were the most crowded.

To this end, they all had stickers that referred to each item. For example, they used a smiley to indicate the area they liked the most; to indicate the busiest areas they used the figure of a group of children. Once this first stage was finished, they were given a final instruction to draw or write in sticky notes what they wanted to add to the playground (new games, trees or whatever they could think of).

To what extent has this objective been achieved?

In quantitative terms, the experience was very successful, as it brought together 656 children from the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires to express their views and desires regarding the use of playgrounds. However, this was only the beginning, since the main objective was to generate a report that analyses the information gathered in the observations. A total of 57 observation sheets were completed, in which the children's assessments of the games and their proposals for the future were recorded. This report was submitted as a technical input to the Under-Secretariat for Community Management, the government area responsible for the renovation, one week after the experience was completed. A few weeks later the coronavirus crisis occurred, which is why all the work has been suspended. For this reason, it is not yet possible to evaluate to what extent the findings of the experience with children will be considered.

Likewise, it is worth emphasising the enormous enthusiasm and joy with which most of the children received the proposal, which gives the indication of their need to be heard and taken into account in terms of the public policies that involve them.



Dimensions of the experience

Which is the most innovative aspect of the experience?

The most innovative element is that the real protagonists of the experience were children, and not their parents or the adults through them. This can be seen fundamentally in dynamic B, where they acted as urban designers on a plan of the playground and presented their ideas and opinions.

To what extent is the procedure transferable?

Children's playgrounds or recreational spaces are in every city and are continually being renovated. In this sense, beyond context differences, the methodology is applicable in any of these cases. In addition, the DGPCyC has prepared a document that records the participatory process and can be requested by the institution that requires it. Finally, the dynamics are easily replicable and have appeal to children, while drawing and visual production is a universal practice that immediately appeals to them.

Why do you consider that the experience is feasible?

The experience was feasible as, from the beginning, it was articulated with the Under-Secretary of Communal Management, the area that carries out the management of the city's squares. This linkage made it possible to plan activities with the certainty that their results would be transferred to specific works.

In addition, the DGPCyC carried out an observational study in all six squares in order to confirm that the participatory dynamics could be developed there.

In this study, carried out during the same hours as the activities were scheduled (from 6-7:30 pm), the following points were analysed:

- Characteristics of the square (size, how much green space there is, etc.)
- Characteristics of the playground (what the games are like, which are the most and least used, whether there are games for specific ages, etc.)
- What they do and what the interaction between children is like on the playground.
- What they do and how adults interact on the playground.
- Peculiarities of space.



"Si venís solo está bueno jugar en la hamaca, si venís con amigos está bueno jugar en la casita." (Victoria, 6 años)

"En el sube y baja si le das duro te caés fuerte, se rompe y salís volando." (Facundo, 7 años)

How has the experience been coordinated with other actors and processes?

The experience was articulated with different areas of government in order to join efforts, capitalise on experiences and enhance the expertise of each area. In the first place, work was carried out jointly with the Undersecretariat of Community Management. This area not only proposed to carry out citizen participation activities with children regarding the remodelling of playgrounds, but also guaranteed access to the squares. Once the activities were completed, it coordinated with the General Directorate of Urban Anthropology and the Child Friendly City Programme (both belonging to the Secretariat of Urban Development) to analyse the results obtained. The success of this coordination is demonstrated by the fact that the process has been completed, in spite of results implementation having been temporarily suspended for the above-mentioned reasons.

What has been the level of co-responsibility?

The Community Management Secretariat guaranteed access to the squares and provided the plans for the playgrounds to adapt them in order to develop Dynamic B with the children. It also supervised the deployment of the activities. The Urban Anthropology Department provided its expertise in the layout and visualisation of the final report that was submitted to the Community Management Secretariat. Finally, the Child Friendly City Programme contributed its knowledge of the historical demands of children in order to strengthen the report.

Which evaluation and accountability mechanisms were used?

The initiative was documented through two reports. The first one was technical and was addressed to the competent area, in which the assessment of the games and playground equipment made by the children, the main findings and recommendations for the remodelling of each square were detailed. The second report aimed at systematising the methodological process and analysing results in depth, taking into account the participatory process in a comprehensive way.

Among the results obtained, the following can be mentioned:

- The activities took place in 6 places: Mafalda, Echeverría, Ricchieri, Ángel Gris, Terán and Rúben Darío.
- 656 children participated
- 7,472 children were registered through an open call made in the territory and by e-mail.
- Fifty-seven observations were made, which served as input for the preparation of the reports.
- 180 adults accompanying children were interviewed to find out their perception of the use of playgrounds.
- More than 30 DGPCyC employees participated in the entire process, carrying out design, coordination, facilitation, observation, logistics and dissemination functions, among others.

Finally, as already mentioned, the renovation of the playgrounds has been suspended due to the current health crisis. For this reason, a full assessment of the implementation of the findings made through this participatory process cannot yet be made.

>Valoración de juegos / equipamientos



Hamacas

Es el juego preferido y más ponderado por la mayoría. Se valora la velocidad, altura y adrenalina que genera.



Casita

Es valorada como un espacio para jugar entre muchos, aunque las/os más grandes a veces se golpean porque tiene baja altura.



Sube y Baja

Percibidos como uno de los juegos más peligrosos por las posibles caídas.



Juegos inclusivos

Si bien saben que es para que los usen niños/as con diversidad funcional, en muchos casos son utilizadas para jugar de manera colectiva. Por ejemplo, la hamaca.



Tobogán

Juego muy ponderado, especialmente por las/os más grandes. Mientras más alto y veloz, mejor.



Calesita

Valorado positivamente en tanto espacio de juego colectivo, que suma velocidad y adrenalina.



Trepador

Reconocen que su uso puede ser riesgoso pero disfrutan particularmente de los juegos que les implica una exigencia física: trepar, colgarse, escalar.



Tambores y Memotest

Considerados como los juegos más aburridos por las/os más grandes. Son utilizados principalmente por los más pequeños.



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DG Participación Ciudadana y Cercanía.
Secretaría de Comunicación, Contenidos y Participación Ciudadana

Vamos Buenos Aires

Annex:

[Jornadas Participativas: Patios de juego](#)