



UNIVERSIDAD DE CÓRDOBA

**IN-HABIT - INclusive Health And wellbeing
In small and medium size ciTies**

D1.1 - SUMMARY

Inclusive Transformation Plan of Las Palmeras

Cordoba's pilot



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Cordoba is a medium-sized city in the South of Spain with a long historical and cultural tradition dating back to the Roman times. Despite this, the city experiences a high rate of unemployment and includes 5 out of the 15 most marginal and lower income per inhabitant neighbourhoods in Spain, among them, **Las Palmeras**, in which IN-HABIT will concentrate its innovative actions.

Las Palmeras is a small neighbourhood located on the outskirts of Cordoba and characterised by segregation and disconnection, high dependence on social subsidies, unstructured families and gender violence, absence of role models, failure of educational models, robberies, drug traffic, illegal activities, and police raids. Health and well-being levels are well below the city's standards.

In Cordoba, IN-HABIT focuses on **undervalued resources** such as culture and cultural heritage to analyse how related visionary and integrated solutions may boost inhabitants' health and well-being.

The project will investigate the **role of patios**, as sustainable and green socio-ecological systems, in increasing people's health and well-being. Patios are one of Cordoba's most representative elements and are part of the city's cultural and patrimonial value. Las Palmeras is organised around 5 patios. These are dreary spaces with no green, shadowing, or artistic areas. IN-HABIT's visionary and integrated solutions (VIS) aim to re-naturalise and embellish the patios in Las Palmeras, while simultaneously promoting them as spaces of **social and inclusive interactions**.

This Inclusive Transformation Plan (ITP) describes the actions to increase health and well-being in Las Palmeras. The VIS proposed are co-designed, co-deployed, and co-managed by Cordoba's IN-HUB.

IN-HUB establishment: organisation, methods, and achievements

The **Cordoba IN-HUB** (IN: inclusive, HUB: nucleus of interaction) aims to be a **space of interaction**, working with autonomy and continuity over time; activating the human, economic, and social resources of the city; creating synergies among the members, who are all interested parties in the city.

The establishment of the core project team and the stakeholder engagement process

started in October 2020 and has been

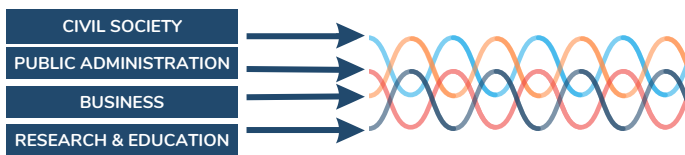
actively steered by the actors involved. However, the activities had to be adapted to the pandemic situation. Virtual activities have not been possible due to the lack of skills and connectivity of the neighbours.



The **first step** for launching the project and creating the IN-HUB was working in Las Palmeras to become familiar with the reality and embed potential actions in the inhabitants' expectations and needs. The engagement process began in October 2020 and continues to be an intense, continuous process. The **second step** was collaborating and working closely with other institutions and NGOs traditionally present in the area. **Finally**, an intense work was developed at city level to disseminate the project, informing different collectives, associations, and institutions about its objectives and activities, and searching for synergies with other local projects, aiming to ground the project's actions in the life of the city and boost its sustainability and legacy beyond the project lifetime.

To involve different stakeholders representing the local community of intervention, but also public and private sectors interested in inclusive

health and well-being through culture, a **first mapping exercise** was carried out following the **4 helixes stakeholder engagement approach**.



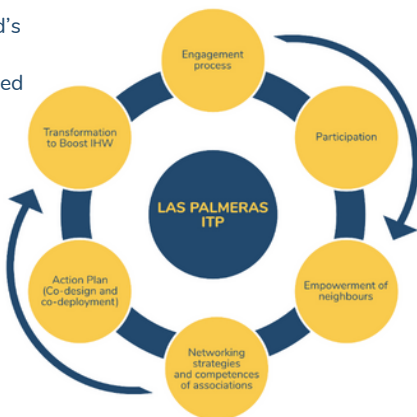
The strategy for identifying stakeholders followed the principles of completeness and inclusiveness, so all potentially relevant components of Las Palmeras community and the city were included.

The Cordoba IN-HUB aims to deliver visionary and integrated solutions through the mobilisation of culture and heritage to improve health and well-being in Las Palmeras and Cordoba. The identified stakeholders were contacted and invited to be part of the Cordoba IN-HUB. The communication campaign of the official IN-HUB launch started in January 2021 through key stakeholder identification and contact establishment, regular mass-media communication, and other communication and dissemination events. The official Cordoba IN-HUB launch took place on the 3rd of November 2021 in a two-session event, the first at the University of Cordoba, the second in Las Palmeras main square.

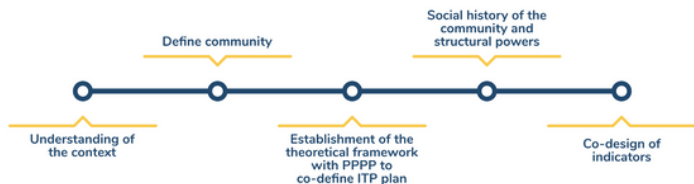
Two **Local Community Activators (LCAs)** were selected based on an open call to support fieldwork activities in Cordoba. After analysing the potential actions proposed at the IN-HUB launch, a first meeting of the thematic groups was held on the 3rd of December 2021 to co-design VIS. In this meeting, the need to create a User Advisory Board was described and a call for representatives of each thematic group with a GDEI perspective opened. Finally, after co-deploying the first VIS in the central square, a committee was created to supervise and boost this ITP.

Co-design of VIS: top-down driven and bottom-up participative processes

To respond to the neighbourhood's needs, various workshops and methodologies have been designed and applied in collaboration with other project members to build a cyclical process (see right) with continuous feedback of the six different phases as a barebone element of the top-down and bottom-up processes. Activating the human and social capital existing in the community boosts the process of engagement, while continuous participation fosters change in the context (attracting new actors) and in the actors (becoming empowered). This process aims to trigger changes in values to motivate action and participation. **Transformation is based on the co-design of a range of innovative solutions.**



Along with understanding and defining the community, it has also been necessary to define a theoretical framework of joint participation with different actors involved in the neighbourhood and the city, to create a PPPP dynamic of joint work, co-define common goals, and collect knowledge and expertise from the people and entities working in the context.



The above steps were followed prior to implementing the top-down process, making it possible to obtain a social and conceptual image of the neighbourhood, the entities that make it up, and the interrelationships that exist, thus facilitating the work of the rest of the IN-HABIT members.

In March-April 2021, a **5-day training programme in project methods** was organised and delivered to LCAs in the IN-HABIT cities. Local activators were trained in co-design, citizen engagement, GDEI, mindset change, communication, and impact assessment methodologies and tools.

A two-way (top-down and bottom-up) co-design process of inclusive health and well-being indicators was employed to embed both researchers' and stakeholders' knowledge, needs, and perspectives in the transformation of the target public spaces with a GDEI perspective. Secondary data at a city level was collected from existing surveys and other administrative sources. A baseline study on the state of health and wellbeing of Cordoba's inhabitants was undertaken in Las Palmeras as the intervention area and Cordoba city as a control area. The following quantitative and qualitative tools were used: a survey, context analysis from secondary data, a focus group, 5 stories collected.

The following **co-design workshops** have been held: Pilot study workshops (May-October 2021), basic gardening training to boost healthy habits and mental wellbeing (May-June 2021), instinctive dance workshop (1st July 2021), from the current state to the desired state workshops (July-September 2021), co-design workshops in Las Palmeras Square

(November-December 2021), co-design workshops with IN-HUB members (3rd November 2021, 3rd December 2021).

Design for Change workshops to promote mindset change also took place between the 6th and 10th of September 2021. Almost 40 educators working in Las Palmeras have been involved and trained in the DFC methodology. This methodology, the I CAN Mindset, uses the principles of design thinking.

City-specific VIS to boost IHW

Hard solutions include nature-based innovations, creative and artistic works, infrastructure, smart lighting, and monitoring devices that should be co-deployed between months 14-36 of the project. **Soft solutions** include cultural, digital, and social innovations that will be co-deployed between months 14-48 of the project and that will support the hard VIS acceptance and maintenance.

The **co-management of the VIS** has been determined horizontally, with the participation and involvement of citizens, actors interested in each VIS, the guidance of professional stakeholders and experts in the field and the mediation of the IN-HABIT team. Once deployed, the VIS will be co-managed and co-monitored by Las Palmeras Committee and other stakeholders.

The ITP is conceived as an open and continuous process. After the first proposal of 44 VIS, a feedback and adjustment process was carried out for each action based on the changing needs of the context and external constraints. For this reason, further co-design workshops have been held to define the implementation of the IN-HUB proposals in a more contextualised way.

Emerging lessons and recommendations

The **first challenge** faced by the Cordoba team was **working in a de-structured neighbourhood in a pandemic context**. The disconnection



with the city and the stigma of the area made it very difficult to build links with and between the inhabitants and between Las Palmeras and the city. **The team worked at two levels**, creating networks in Las Palmeras and disseminating the project among potential stakeholders in the city to attract their interest. It has been necessary to create

bridges for mutual interaction, building spaces where participants feel comfortable. Communication channels need to be strengthened and Las Palmeras inhabitants empowered to interact on a peer-to-peer basis with other IN-HUB members.

The biggest challenge has been the difficulty of **working with the different departments in the City Hall**. There seems to be disconnection among them, and they tend to work in small groups. Hence, linking IN-HABIT co-designed VIS with the actions of the City Hall is complicated. Even if the goals are similar, there are a lack of efficient communication channels that could create synergies.

Another difficulty has been **the inclusion of all the target groups**. The most vulnerable groups are also the most excluded from neighbourhood social networks and the most difficult to reach.

While the toolkit has been an essential starting tool for the development of the ITP, due to the highly vulnerable characteristics of the context in Cordoba, a process of **profound adaptation** of the proposed tools and methodologies has been necessary.

A strong recommendation is that **every process carried out is context specific**: it is necessary to understand the culture, social history, and formal and informal functioning of the systems. This step is essential to adapting the objective to the specific needs and defining the intervention community.

This is an abstract of D1.1 Inclusive Transformation Plan of Las Palmeras (2022), by project partner UCO.

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