



CÓRDOBA'S VISIONARY AND INTEGRATED SOLUTIONS FOR INCLUSIVE HEALTH AND WELLBEING



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Weekly workshops to enhance participation and empowerment

The weekly workshops are at the core of the engagement process. They are designed to create social skills and well-being opportunities among the participants, fostering participation and social inclusion, strengthening the sense of belonging, and promoting teamwork. The workshops addressed the five main lines included in the Inclusive Transformation Plan - Health and Wellbeing; Culture, Heritage and Art; Gender, Diversity, Inclusion, and Social Innovation; Naturalisation and Environment, and Infrastructure, Technology, and Digitalisation. Through them, a core working nucleus of residents is formed, responsible for guiding and channelling all subsequent actions. By addressing overarching and cross-cutting themes, participants collaborate to shape a cohesive, inclusive vision for the community.



Challenges

- Dynamising a neighbourhood with limited social and civic engagement.
- Creating environments that welcome diverse cultures, traditions, and lifestyles, fostering mutual respect and meaningful exchanges among participants.
- Identifying topics that maintain ongoing interest and engagement and organise meaningful workshops.
- Maintaining momentum for collaborative initiatives.
- Generating physical and virtual spaces where all stakeholders can gather to co-design, share ideas, and make decisions collectively.
- Attracting and sustaining the involvement of groups less inclined to engage, especially young people and men.
- Navigating unique local conflicts without exacerbating them, while remaining neutral within community social structures to uphold an inclusive spirit.



Target / Beneficiary Groups

Neighbours of las Palmeras.

Workers and people related with the neighbourhood.



Relevant Stakeholders

- Community activators and researchers who plan, schedule, and oversee all workshop-related actions.
- Organisations contributing to specific workshops aligned with their areas of interest or specific dynamics.
- Community members.

Outcomes

- +50 weekly workshops to co-design, co-deploy and co-assess neighbourhood initiatives.
- Over 100 participants involved (not that recurrent participants are also counted).
- +25 entities and companies participating in the workshops.
- +15 activities linked to the 5 thematic axes developed.
- A physical space, now known as the IN-HABIT room in the parish area, established as a safe, neutral, and open space for interaction.

Impact

- Cornerstone for all subsequent community initiatives, with a profound influence on neighbourhood dynamics.
- Neutral spaces that strengthen the local social fabric and bring residents from diverse backgrounds together around shared goals.
- Fostering a strong sense of belonging within a safe, supportive environment where participants can exchange ideas, receive guidance, and promote collective well-being.
- Beacons of trust and respected catalysts for change, consistently demonstrating commitment and dedication to the neighbourhood's ongoing transformation.

Enabling Factors

- Strong neighbourhood leadership and coordination among entities and stakeholders.
- Local activators commitment to organise and facilitate the workshops, including a local activator from the neighbourhood.
- Dedicated engagement spaces and structures like the neighbourhood committee that foster transparent collaboration.
- Deep understanding of the social and cultural identity to co-design initiatives that reflect residents' needs, interests, and priorities.
- Prioritisation of underrepresented groups and women to ensure equitable representation and inclusive outcomes.
- Flexible schedules that adapt to residents' availability and daily routines.
- Continuous communication channels (WhatsApp groups, word of mouth) to maintain awareness and engagement.
- Incentives (not monetary) and give visibility of the work done and its true makers.
- Project legitimacy and available resources to develop actions.



Blocking Factors

- Highly demanding activity that can easily lead to participation fatigue, both for the organisers and facilitators and for the participants.
- Lack of trust in external institutions required significant efforts to build trust and sustain participation.
- High vulnerability of the target neighbours (high unemployment rates, social stigmatisation, and resource scarcity) makes it challenging to secure commitment.
- Limited time availability due to work, caregiving, or economic pressures of neighbours.
- Conflicts within the community reduce willingness to collaborate.
- Reluctance to participate of some target groups.
- Pressure to organise workshops that are relevant, interesting, and aligned with resident realities.



Lessons Learned

- Continuous presence and commitment of local activators in the neighbourhood breaks scepticism and opens opportunities to engagement.
- Flexible and adaptable strategies can effectively encourage population participation and sustain commitment over time.
- Early engagement of local champions and committed individuals helps ensure that activities reflect genuine community priorities and needs.
- Ensuring space for active participation and community-led development unlocks the neighbourhood potential.
- Continuous collaboration increases social inclusion, networking, common goals and sense of belonging.
- Outcomes such as the tangible and intangible VIS enhance a collective sense of identity and pride, encouraging greater turnout and contributing to the longevity of community initiatives.
- Voluntary work remains vital, proving that dedicated neighbours (despite economic or social challenges) can drive substantial changes.
- Smaller financial inputs can yield a significant impact when combined with time, dedication, and commitment to community engagement.
- Working in an area once deemed "unworkable" highlights the untapped potential of vulnerable communities, where people, if given the opportunity, have valuable ideas and actions to contribute.



Have a look at our YouTube videos!



<https://youtu.be/17akkLWi5t>



<https://youtu.be/qH2wwNBXP5k>

Socio-cultural dynamisation in a vulnerable neighbourhood

The socio-cultural dynamisation in Las Palmeras, achieved through regular workshops and cultural events, has helped foster social cohesion and active participation. It has created opportunities for residents to access culture, connect, collaborate, and build trust. These activities have strengthened community identity, promoted inclusion, challenged stigma, and highlighted positive stories. Activities include meditation, dance, self-esteem and trust-building workshops, stress management, and promoting a healthy lifestyle. Cultural initiatives involved cultural weeks, theatre workshops, videodancing, socio-cultural visits, and activities related to environmental awareness. Schools and children from Las Palmeras and Córdoba have been highly involved. These soft VISs pave the way for the implementation of the hard VISs. By providing consistent spaces for learning, creativity, and interaction, they help improve wellbeing and foster a sense of belonging.

Challenges

- Engage participants from an often neglected and unstructured neighbourhood.
- Create trust among residents who distrust institutional actions.
- Provide physical and virtual spaces for co-creation, dialogue, and joint decision-making.
- Create inclusive environments that respect cultural diversity and promote meaningful exchanges.
- Encourage participation from underrepresented groups, especially young people and men.
- Sustain momentum in collaborative initiatives.
- Establish clear guidelines, responsibilities, and timelines for organising events to ensure transparency and shared commitment.

Target / Beneficiary Groups

- Neighbours of Las Palmeras.
- Members of NGOs working in the neighbourhood and people related to it.

Relevant Stakeholders

Members of the IN-HABIT project (UCO, AVUE, City Hall), residents, core group of women neighbours highly engaged with the project, social services, NGOs and associations working in the neighbourhood, businesses and entities from the IN-HUB engaged and supporting the interventions.



Outcomes

- Events celebrated:
 - Four Christmas celebrations in the main square.
 - Three "Cruz de Mayo" celebrations.
 - One carnival celebration.
 - Four Women Day (8M) celebrations.
 - 1 cultural week.
- Changes in the use of public space. Appropriation of degraded spaces or spaces not used before.
- Stronger sense of ownership and belonging among community members.
- Creation of a neighbourhood committee to make decisions.

Impact

- Large-scale events celebrated in a neighbourhood where no events take place, like Christmas Parties and 8M celebrations, with over 300 participants.
- Significant improvements in social cohesion and community engagement in terms of participation, commitment...
- Offer of sociocultural activities that have shown that culture fosters collective well-being by strengthening participation, engagement, local identity and pride.
- Increased visibility of Las Palmeras promoting more internal and external positive perception and encouraging broader participation in initiatives.



Enabling Factors

- Strong leadership of the neighbourhood committee and coordination between entities and stakeholders.
- Dedicated engagement spaces and structures to co-develop the actions.
- Local activators and dedicated personnel, investing time and effort to engage people, coordinating, solving problems and executing the actions.
- Use of public spaces and Córdoba's cultural traditions to create new spaces of celebration.
- Knowledge of the cultural and social identity of the residents and entities taking part in the VIS.
- Focus on underrepresented groups and women, who are often overlooked.
- Project with legitimacy, resources and strong commitment of researchers.

Blocking Factors

- At the beginning, COVID-19 blocked many actions.
- Institutional neglect, discoordination, and misalignment in institutions interventions.
- Neighbours' distrust and apathy to engage.
- Structural factors (unemployment rates, stigmatisation, limited resources) limit the capacity and interest to participate.
- Low resident participation due to people not being used to seeing interventions carried out in the neighbourhood.
- False expectations and inconsistent continuation of previous actions foster mistrust.

Lessons Learned

- A limited budget can create a significant impact with time, dedication and commitment.
- Flexible and adaptable formal and informal actions help to foster commitment and engagement.
- Local leader engagement attracts residents. The commitment of both ensures activities grounded in real needs and priorities.
- Collaboration between stakeholders, local associations and residents reduces friction, although it requires continuous communication to overcome bureaucratic, social, legitimacy or political barriers.
- Listening to people delivers excellent results.
- Using culture, local heritage, and communal spaces reinforces a sense of identity and pride, encourages participation and bolsters sustainability.
- Voluntary work multiplies possibilities of intervention.



Have a look at our YouTube videos!



<https://youtu.be/KdztXniLGwk>



<https://youtu.be/c4d3MpboSxY>

Healthy habits and healthy lifestyle activities

Las Palmeras is recognised as a food desert, with the only sports facility being a football pitch, which poses challenges for healthy living, especially for women. IN-HABIT has promoted healthy eating, safe sports options (particularly for women), cultural events centred around food, and wellbeing initiatives through workshops on health and mental wellness. Initiatives included cooking classes using affordable seasonal ingredients, two cultural gastronomy events related to diet education, debates on food deserts and nutrition, therapy-dance for stress relief, a running event (La Milla) that drew over 400 participants from the city, and sports activities that support weekly exercise. These (outdoor) initiatives support the idea of “healthy patios” as shared spaces for socialising, and cultural exchange, connecting Las Palmeras with the wider city through shared cultural and culinary traditions and sporting activities. Over 1000 people have visited the neighbourhood through these various events.

Challenges

- Access to healthy food (expensive, not sold in the neighbourhood).
- Cooking healthy meals takes time, and many families face unstable daily routines and many obligations.
- Harsh living conditions, lack of safe spaces, and few community examples reduce motivation to eat well or stay active.
- Many families rely on food banks, which rarely provide fresh products.
- Lack of sports facilities and activities, particularly for women in the neighbourhood. They can also be costly (equipment, fees).

- Care duties, shift work, and hot weather make it hard to exercise regularly.
- Unhealthy food may be more culturally familiar, socially accepted, or heavily marketed compared to healthier options.

Target / Beneficiary Groups

- Residents of Las Palmeras, particularly women and families and children and youngster.
- Other city residents who do not usually visit the neighbourhood.

Relevant Stakeholders

- Community members, including a core group of women neighbours and local volunteers.
- Organisations contributing to specific workshops and events (nursing school, chefs, sports clubs, recycling company, NGOs).
- IN-HABIT partners and community activators (UCO, AVUE, City Hall).



Outcomes

- +10 healthy eating workshops with affordable, seasonal recipes, including menu planning, label reading, and food waste reduction.
- 2 gastronomic cultural events with (+300 participants from all over Córdoba).
- 16 sessions on mental health, self-esteem and self-perceived health.
- One therapy-dance for stress management.
- One videodance production to reflect cultural identity through dance and movement (+50 participants).
- 8 inclusive community sports actions.



Impact

- Better food culture and nutritional knowledge among the participants in the workshops and training.
- Sports and dance opportunities for women.
- Regular use of patios and public spaces, as places to promote IHW.
- Cooking, dancing, and training opportunities to reduce stress and build social ties.
- Gastronomic and sports events as attractors to the neighbourhood.
- Increased visibility of the transformations in the neighbourhood.
- Positive image at the city level, fostering internal pride and decreasing stigma.

Enabling Factors

- Active engagement of chefs, food providers, nursing schools, sports clubs, and NGOs.
- Strong interest and willingness of residents to take part.
- Renovated public spaces that offer attractive settings for sports and culinary events.
- Food culture as a shared value that attracts the community and draws participation.
- IN-HABIT resources to support the costs of the events.



Blocking Factors

- Gendered perceptions limit participation: sport often seen as “for men” and mental health “for women”.
- Irregular attendance caused by heat, work shifts, care duties, or family needs.
- Limited sport infrastructure, offer and continuity.
- Families struggle to afford healthy food or dedicate time to sports.



Lessons Learned

- Short cooking and nutrition classes and hands-on training made healthy eating easier to integrate into daily life.
- Anchoring activities in local culture (gastronomy and patio life) attract residents.
- Safe spaces and non-traditional sports (e.g. therapy-dance) increased women’s participation.
- Partnerships with chefs, food providers, NGOs, and sports clubs multiply impact and attract external visitors.
- Giving visibility to the changes in the spaces improves the image of the neighbourhood, reduces stigma, maintains motivation and encourages ongoing participation.

Have a look at our YouTube videos!



<https://youtu.be/SB3t96LvOu8>



<https://youtu.be/X9ISSnZnJu0>

Immersive Training Experience for Adults with Down Syndrome

The immersive training experience (ITE) is a serious game designed to train adults with Down syndrome to act as hosts and hostesses at conferences and events. It is a digital tool that simulates real-life scenarios such as reception, catering, seating, and setup. It helps participants learn routines, improve memory, and gain confidence in performing these tasks. The ITE is the first phase within a structured training cycle that combines gameplay, guided practice, and real-world application. This approach allows participants to transfer what they learn in the simulation to actual employment settings, ultimately giving them job opportunities under standard labour conditions. It has been an innovative initiative co-developed by researchers, a video game company, and the Córdoba Down Syndrome Association. The tool could also be adapted for use by other individuals with neurodivergent conditions.

Challenges

- Consider the special needs of users: finger dexterity, visual weakness, limited patience and attention capacity and potential misuse of tablets.
- These individuals will always need accompanying professionals and caregivers when developing these jobs. The latter should have the necessary digital competencies to support the former.
- The ITE requires high-speed internet, a robust storage platform and devices such as tablets.
- Innovative experience that poses challenges to developers to adapt IT skills to the needs of the target group.
- Families need to be engaged and support the individuals in the training and job development.
- Event companies need to support this inclusive job opportunity, understanding the differences between individuals with Down syndrome and standard employees.

Target / Beneficiary Groups

Adults with Down syndrome and their families. Down syndrome associations and caregivers. Conferences and event companies. Other organisations supporting individuals with neurodivergent conditions.

Relevant stakeholders

Key actors are Down Syndrome Association's staff, Down individuals and their families, IT developers with the sensitiveness to understand the specificities of the target population. The user also need the support of their families



Outcomes

The development and testing of the IET has delivered the following outcomes

- One innovative immersive training experience.
- One User's Manual, devoted to families, social workers and caregivers.
- 22 individuals with Down syndrome trained using the IET.
- 7 individuals employed in 2 different events as hostesses.
- Several Down associations and local authorities interested in replicating the actions.
- One Congress company is interested in employing individuals with Down syndrome in its events.

Impact

- adults with Down syndrome equipped with practical skills and confidence that enhance employability and autonomy.
- Inclusive innovation in vocational training offering a replicable model of inclusive training, combining immersive technology, pedagogy, and user engagement.
- The digital tool permits seamless training adapted to the needs, timing and availability of the users, even if they usually need the support of caregivers or families.
- Attractive training opportunity that allows training through play.
- Opening of temporary employment opportunities to people with this syndrome.
- Evidence shows that repeated gameplay reduces the need for multiple practice sessions.
- Trustworthy relations between researchers, Cordoba's Down syndrome association and IT developers.
- Improving the well-being and social skills of participants, fostering not only employability but also a stronger sense of belonging and purpose.
- Possibilities of adaptation, transferability and scaling to diverse contexts and other intellectual disability groups.



Enabling factors

- The Córdoba Down Syndrome Association and its staff commitment to backing an innovative and challenging initiative.
- A dedicated IT company with the necessary skills to develop the tool and the sensitivity to the special needs of the end users.
- Users' openness and willingness to engage with a new digital experience.
- A Congress company engaged in opening opportunities for disabled people.
- A European project with strong legitimacy, secured funding, and active involvement of researchers.



Blocking factors

- Difficulties in aligning technology with the needs and expectations of users, researchers, and staff from the Down Syndrome Association.
- Limited knowledge and a lack of standards on the sensory requirements of individuals with Down syndrome.
- Individuals with Down syndrome have special requirements that make it difficult for them to adapt to usual working standards (lower working time, limits to maintain attendance for a long time, etc.).
- Need for high-speed Internet and a quality tablet for the ITE to be successful.
- Technical skills of both users and caregivers. Normally, there is a need for External support to play the game.
- Accessibility challenges, such as visual impairments or limited finger dexterity.
- Societal expectations at an event, including the demand for instant responses, need to be adapted.
- Funding constraints once the IE was completed. Although the experience highlighted areas for further improvement, no additional resources were available.

Lessons learned

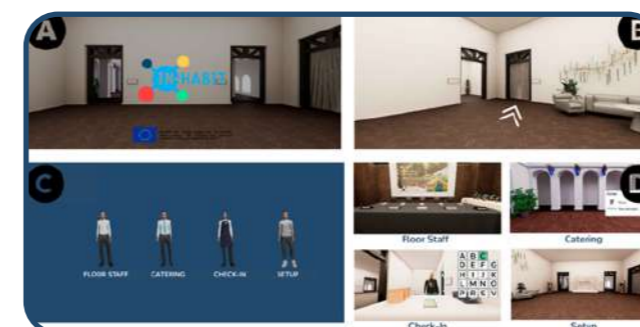
- Adults with Down syndrome can successfully perform in professional roles when provided with the right tools, opportunities, and support.
- Device and broadband limitations can hinder the use of ITE.
- Features such as simplified language, pictograms, and realistic environments increase usability and participant engagement.
- The final ITE required a lot of time and interactions between developers, users, the association and the researchers to ensure its usability and xxx
- The three-stage cycle—gameplay, guided practice, and on-site performance—proves to be effective for users' movement from initial reliance on prompts to near-autonomous task execution.
- Participants not only acquire job skills but also a sense of self-realisation, pride and increased well-being.
- Technological skills are crucial, but also the social skills of users when entering the workplace.

Have a look at our YouTube videos!



<https://youtu.be/-oC9OkDqBUU>

<https://youtu.be/K8gLuPQg2VM>



Inclusive and participatory communication, along with positive messaging in vulnerable contexts

Inclusive and participatory communication, along with positive messaging in vulnerable contexts

Communication in vulnerable settings must be adaptable and tailored to the audience's needs (such as low literacy and limited access to digital devices). Multiple channels were utilised to disseminate messages, including weekly articles, videos, monthly newsletters, timelines and activity maps, social media profiles tailored to popular platforms among residents, and a monthly radio programme. A key element of the strategy was involving the neighbourhood itself in the communication process, ensuring inclusive, participatory, and positive messaging that empowers residents to tell their own stories, as exemplified by the Las Palmeras in Positive documentary, which has attracted great attention.

Challenges

- Adapting tools to audience needs for effective engagement.
- Building trust among residents, in a context where external communication actions give a negative image of the neighbourhood.
- Adapting messages to audiences with low education or literacy, favouring accessible formats.
- The limited reach of local radio restricts access to broader audiences.
- Reaching people without internet access through alternatives such as printed newsletters.

Outcomes

The results after five years of implementing this local communication strategy show great results and a huge positive impact.

- 38 radio programmes on the local radio station, which is the second most listened to.
- 88 videos shot and edited in which the neighbours are the protagonists.
- 6225 views in our YouTube channel.
- 204 blog posts published weekly to keep residents informed.
- 46 monthly magazines summarising the activities.
- 141 appearances in local, regional, and national media.
- 56 press releases published on the UCO website and reproduced by newspapers, radio and television.
- 3 UCOdivulga events to disseminate the inclusive communication strategy.
- 1 documentary (Las Palmeras in positive) to make visible the good things in the neighbourhood.



Target / Beneficiary Groups

Primary targets were neighbourhood adults (25–60 years), alongside the wider city population. Different communication products were tailored to diverse levels of education, ensuring equal access to project information.

Relevant stakeholders

Key actors included neighbourhood NGOs and associations (as mediators), residents (both target group and co-creators of communication), traditional media (to inform the wider public), and the project team (providing resources and support).



Impact

- High visibility at local and regional levels.
- Palmeras, tu voz se escucha, second most listened to radio programme in the neighbourhood.
- 197 appearances in media.
- 11 radio interviews.
- 10 television appearances.
- 8 articles in specialised magazines.
- 560+ visualisations of the documentary and its use for journalists and researchers.



Enabling factors

- Strong cooperation and willingness of residents.
- Support from neighbourhood organisations in daily activities.
- Existence of a local radio station offering a programme slot.
- Institutional support from UCO and its Scientific Culture Unit for press releases and visibility.

Blocking factors

- Persistent negative image of the neighbourhood.
- Limited interest from politicians, institutions, and wider society in vulnerable neighbourhoods.
- Difficulty achieving long-term structural changes.
- Low external interest in positive stories from vulnerable groups.

Lessons learned

- Long-term actions and persistence are essential in vulnerable contexts.
- Residents must be listened to and actively involved.
- Messages should be adapted to community needs.
- Openness to suggestions strengthens engagement (e.g., Instagram channel created on residents' proposal, now most-followed network with 480 followers in a 2,500-person community).



Have a look at our YouTube videos!



<https://youtu.be/plRas0aGHQk>



<https://youtu.be/c4d3MpboSxY>

Renaturalisation of Las Palmeras neighbourhood

Las Palmeras is a vulnerable area on the periphery of Córdoba, characterised by low-quality social housing, a lack of green spaces, and limited, if any, areas for socialising. Dirt, degradation, and concrete materials dominate most of the patios, buildings, and communal spaces. IN-HABIT has planted over 300 trees and 800 bushes in the neighbourhood's patios and streets, and has created a biodiversity corridor alongside a water stream. To achieve this, more than 30 co-design workshops have been held to plan the shared spaces. Co-deployment and co-management workshops were also conducted with residents and local stakeholders, along with a gardening course to train residents in caring for the newly planted vegetation. Planting and caring methods to increase tree survival have been tested and shown very positive results. Volunteer work from neighbours has been key to the success.



Challenges

- Complex and time-consuming permit procedures to act in public spaces delayed interventions.
- Need to align public procurement times with planting times.
- Short planting window time constrained by seasonal and environmental conditions in dry, hot climates.
- Diverse perspectives among community members required time and careful negotiation to reach a consensus.
- Plant maintenance proved difficult due to current pests, heat waves and drought conditions.

Target / Beneficiary Groups

- Residents of Las Palmeras.
- Visitors.

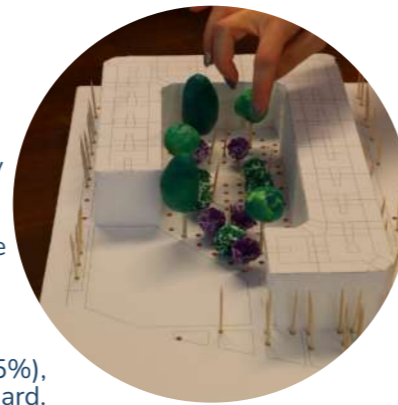
Relevant Stakeholders

The volunteer neighbours who participated, the companies responsible for planting and maintaining the new plants, the researchers, and the project that provided resources.



Outcomes

- +300 trees and +800 bushes planted.
- 320 m2 of accessible, safe and environmentally friendly corridor surrounded by native vegetation, improving the biodiversity of the area.
- Central square and five courtyards renaturalised.
- High rate of survival (>85%), well above the city standard.



Impact

- An increased number of trees and bushes, enriching the local green space.
- Enhanced health and well-being for participants thanks to the benefits of nature.
- Improved aesthetics, making the neighbourhood more attractive and welcoming.
- Potential reduction of the temperature as trees grow and vegetation matures, offering relief during hot weather.
- Methods to increase tree planting survival tested and delivered.

Enabling Factors

- Strong community participation and a sense of ownership in the greening activities.
 - Support from some local authorities, including permits and logistical assistance.
 - Availability of funding and resources for planting and maintenance.
 - Expert advice to support planting and growth.
 - Partnerships with local companies with proven expertise to do the work.
- Availability of vacant spaces in the neighbourhood to be renaturalised.



Blocking factors

- Bureaucratic delays and difficulties in obtaining permits for interventions in public spaces.
- Limited planting window due to climate conditions.
- Droughts and vulnerability to pests affect plant survival.
- Different views among community members make consensus difficult.
- Need for long-term maintenance plans and resources to ensure sustainability.



Lessons Learned

- Establish early and continuous communication with public authorities to streamline approvals and reduce delays.
- Plan ahead for public tenders to avoid deadlines that clash with planting times.
- Align planting activities with seasonal windows to take advantage of favourable conditions.
- Anticipate and plan for environmental factors such as pests, climate variability, and soil conditions to maximise plant survival.
- Secure resources not only for initial planting but also for long-term care until trees and bushes become self-sustaining.
- Involve community members throughout the process to strengthen ownership and support ongoing maintenance.



Have a look at our YouTube videos!



<https://youtu.be/V7An7N5odeY>



https://youtu.be/eVU9oDB_zF4

Creation and renovation of public urban spaces

IN-HABIT has co-created various infrastructures to make Las Palmeras more sustainable, green, and liveable: a picnic area for meeting, chatting, and eating together in a former landfill; the renovation of the central square and the five patios through some creative art, the building and installation of over 70 benches, and the creation of spaces for socialisation; the participatory painting of the city's largest mural (reflecting local identity and traditions) and a biodiversity corridor parallel to the water stream. In this corridor, about 70 granite monoliths coated with bioluminescent paint have been installed, guiding people at night without harming biodiversity. All these features have been built with durable, vandal-resistant materials, and through the active participation of residents via our co-design, co-deployment, co-management, and co-assessment approach, which fosters respect, attachment, and a sense of ownership. Local social companies and volunteers carried out the work.

Challenges

- Fear of vandalism on infrastructure that will lead to the misuse of public funds.
- Low initial trust and engagement from residents.
- Gradual approach to build confidence by installing small temporary elements and monitoring their use, before installing permanent furniture.
- Long, complex procurement and permits for acting in public space, and the need to align tender calendars with on-site works.
- Very hot summers and drought, which affect materials, and use patterns, so furniture had to be climate-resilient and adapted to on-site conditions.
- Reconciling safety, accessibility, and local customs (for example, accommodating night bonfires in the square design).



Impact

- Safer, more welcoming spaces to socialise and rest.
- New infrastructure supports healthy routines (walking, spending time outside, social meetings) and improves liveability.
- Stronger sense of belonging and pride, mainly because their ideas and cultural expression are reflected.
- Low vandalism after delivery, with spaces actively used for events and daily socialising, which strengthens our "from soft to hard VISs" approach.
- Better general image of the neighbourhood, facilitating links with the city.



Target / Beneficiary Groups

- Residents of Las Palmeras.
- Visitors.

Relevant Stakeholders

- Community members, including the core group of women neighbours.
- Community activators and researchers (UCO).
- Associations and NGOs working in Las Palmeras.
- Businesses and entities supporting the development.



Enabling Factors

- Use of CO-CO-CO-CO methods and gradual delivery, starting small, proving acceptance, then scaling up.
- Involving neighbourhood entities and children in the initiatives, fostering ownership from the outset.
- Use of robust, vandal-resistant materials (granite, white concrete...) and designs that respect local and cultural practices.
- Continuous integration between soft and hard VIS.
- Strong support from certain public administrations in granting permissions, providing materials, and offering assistance.
- Companies with strong social foundations engaged in action deployment.
- Funds provided for IN-HABIT.



Lessons Learned

- Begin with small, highly visible actions in public spaces, test community acceptance, and then expand to reduce vandalism and foster care and responsibility.
- Use CO-CO-CO-CO methods from the start to make residents part of the project.
- Design adapted to the context, anti-vandal furniture and layouts that fit local customs.
- Combine functionality with culture (benches, murals, art spaces), identity-based elements boost ownership and everyday use.
- Engage the right people in public administrations, those making things work.
- Patios as versatile public spaces, adapting the traditional concept to a broader scale and linking patios, the square, and the corridor to the city.



Blocking Factors

- Early distrust and fear that new works would be damaged, requiring time and communication to shift mindsets.
- Procurement barriers, permissions and administrative burdens, plus political changes that slow or redirect work.
- Difficulties in finding the right companies for the work.
- Not adapted furniture (resilient materials and simple care routines) to meet the needs.
- Ensure maintenance in a context of low resources and investment, administration neglect, heat waves, and pests.



Have a look at our YouTube videos!



<https://youtu.be/wZdj06wcAM4>



<https://youtu.be/0-LJNjY819U>

Citizen science initiatives to monitor urban wellbeing

Citizen science initiatives to monitor urban wellbeing

IN-HABIT has created a "powered by FIWARE" open platform to monitor urban wellbeing using citizen science in the city of Cordoba. Citizens engage with the initiative by installing sensors in their homes to monitor different parameters. Some participants have installed sensors in their patios that measure the thermal comfort provided by patios (inner courtyards). Other citizens participate in the creation of the first acoustic climate map by installing sound sensors packed in flowerpots in their windows or terraces. Sensors transmit data through collaborative, cost-free LoRaWAN networks that operate at no cost to individuals, thereby democratising access to scientific participation and facilitating broader citizen contributions to scientific knowledge. The data collected will support decision-making processes.

Challenges

- Success relies on citizens' willingness to participate and provide private spaces for device installation.
- Installation and maintenance of devices and connecting them to the platform to ensure accurate data transfer.
- Limited LoRaWAN coverage caused by buildings and other obstacles that hinder the connection between sensors and gateways.
- Cost of platform maintenance and cloud data storage.
- Weather conditions can influence device performance and maintenance.
- Sensor batteries need to be replaced every 2-3 years.

Target / Beneficiary Groups

- Policy makers.
- Researchers.
- Citizens in general.

Relevant Stakeholders

- Researchers.
- IT developers and technicians.
- Participating citizens

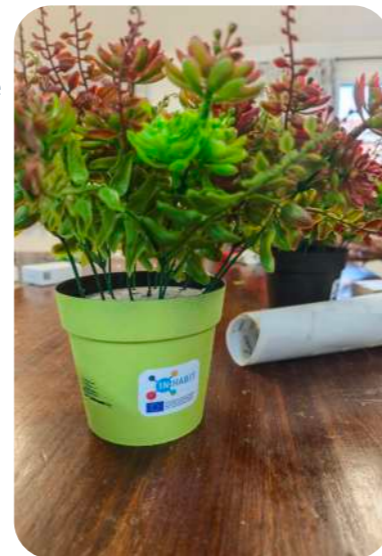


Outcomes

- Open platform offering real-time data.
- 24 patios equipped with devices to monitor environmental and thermal comfort parameters.
- 100 noise sensors distributed around the city providing acoustic information.
- The first citizen science acoustic climate map in the world.
- A collaborative network of over 120 citizens providing real-time data on key environmental factors affecting urban wellbeing.

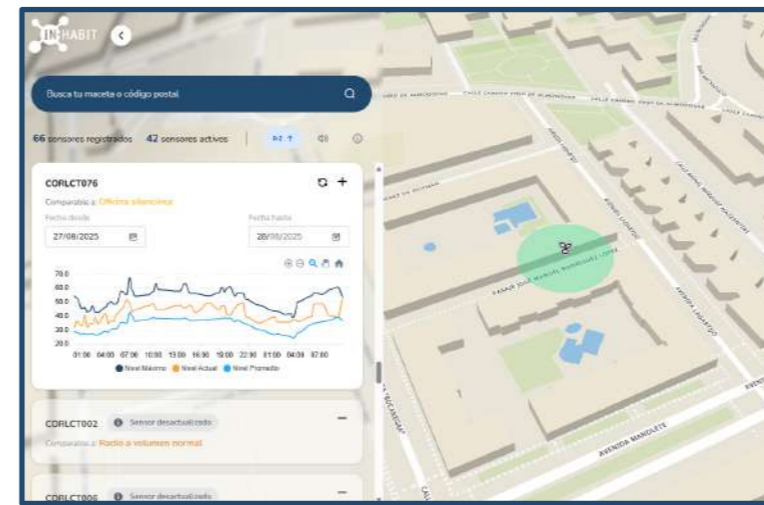
Impact

- Citizen science initiative empowering residents to contribute to knowledge through low-cost technologies.
- Free LoRaWAN networks remove financial barriers, democratise data, and enable broad participation.
- Sensor installation fosters citizen engagement, awareness, and stronger ties to urban spaces.
- Real-time data improves monitoring of thermal comfort and acoustic conditions.
- Available data supports research and guides improvements in local living conditions.
- Collected data informs urban planning and policy on climate, noise, and public health.
- Monitoring patios highlights their cultural and environmental value in providing thermal comfort.
- Traditional features like patios and flowerpots are validated through modern monitoring.
- Citizens gain deeper understanding of their environmental conditions.
- The open platform enables scalability and replication in other cities.



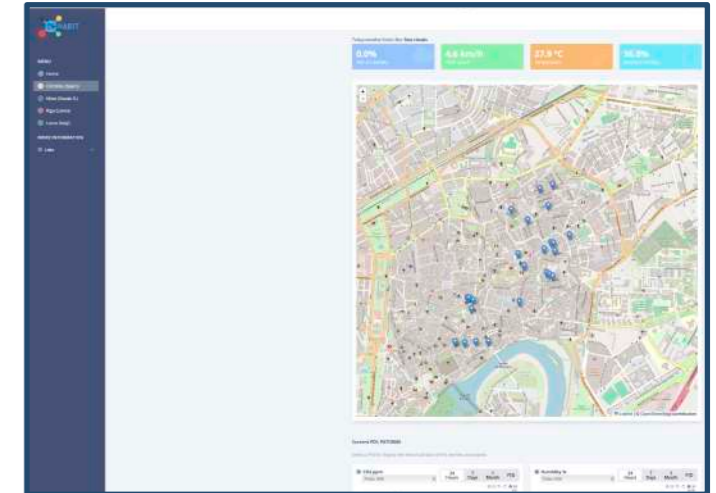
Enabling Factors

- Open platform powered by FIWARE, ensuring transparency, interoperability, and replicability.
- Use of low-cost, collaborative LoRaWAN networks, removing financial barriers and allowing widespread citizen participation.
- Citizen engagement through sensor installation at home, fostering ownership and inclusivity.
- Open data and open access of participants to the platform support evidence-based decision-making.
- Scalability and replicability, with potential to expand across other neighbourhoods or cities.



Blocking Factors

- Platform maintenance requires skilled staff and cloud storage, adding financial costs.
- Sensors require upkeep, calibration, or replacement by skilled staff, also adding financial costs.
- Citizens may hesitate to install sensors in private spaces due to fear of surveillance or misuse of data.
- Limited technical skills or access to digital tools may hinder participation for some residents.
- Environmental and technical vulnerabilities, such as sensor breakdowns, weather exposure, or connectivity issues.



Lessons Learned

- Open, interoperable, and robust FIWARE-based platform architecture enables real-time data collection, management, and analysis.
- The platform supports continuous monitoring with citizen science and multi-sensor input, while giving participants access to results.
- Citizens are eager to engage in initiatives proposed by trusted actors, such as the university, that can enhance their health and wellbeing.
- Researchers access real-time and historical datasets to identify trends and design targeted health and wellbeing interventions.
- FIWARE's modular, open-standard design allows replication, scaling, and local adaptation.



Have a look at our website!



<https://loracetas.eu/>

Greening and renaturalisation in a shelter for homeless people

This greening intervention rehabilitated neglected spaces in a homeless shelter based on the co-creation and shared management of interventions through the so-called "Green Team". Homeless individuals were invited to participate in weekly sessions that include the development of social and team-building skills and physical work outdoors to build the following spaces: a vegetable garden; a therapeutic garden with features like a pond, bird cages, and insect hotels and the creation of the "patio for the future" using plants that require very little summer irrigation. An innovative lighting system, with low impact on biodiversity, energy efficiency, low maintenance, and user comfort, is also being tested.

Challenges

- Constant turnover of shelter residents makes it difficult to maintain continuity and long-term commitment.
- Irregular attendance due to unstable daily routines or competing priorities (e.g., job seeking, medical appointments).
- Substance abuse, alcohol dependency, and mental health conditions may hinder effective communication and collaboration.
- Limited social skills or difficulties in teamwork may create tensions.
- Distrust can reduce engagement.
- Low self-esteem or lack of confidence may discourage participation.
- Language and cultural barriers can complicate group work.
- Limited capacity to independently maintain or expand the gardens without ongoing guidance.



Relevant Stakeholders

The people running the shelter, IN-HABIT project researchers, homeless individuals and volunteers who contributed with knowledge and resources.

Outcomes

- 60 m2 of urban garden whose produce is distributed among low-income families.
- 260 m2 of therapeutic garden.
- A renaturalised courtyard with green and socialisation areas.
- A spot of biodiversity created in a low income neighbourhood.
- More than 30 homeless people trained in gardening.
- A more cohesive community with greater social skills among the homeless.
- Over fifty weekly workshops co-creating social skills and knowledge in gardening.

Impact

- Positive advances in psychosocial aspects: social cohesion, participatory behaviour, sense of belonging and commitment to collective work.
- Improvements in participants emotional well-being, perceived physical health, and psychological distress.
- Strong engagement: Some former residents continue to participate in the workshops, even if they no longer live in the shelter.
- Mobilisation of human and material resources in favour of this group.
- Interest in replicating the actions at the national and international levels.

Target / Beneficiary Groups

Homeless people, migrants, people with mental health issues, people with addiction problems.



Enabling Factors

- Highly motivated human team comprising researchers and volunteers with knowledge and expertise in both social and biological aspects.
- Shelter managers and workers highly committed to improving residents' health and wellbeing.
- Availability of neglected spaces that could be used.
- Willingness of many residents to participate and build the spaces.
- Many individuals and institutions contribute time, knowledge and resources.
- Availability of economic resources from IN-HABIT project.

Blocking Factors

- Difficulties in engaging homeless individuals due to their personal circumstances, experiences and living conditions.
- High turnover of shelter residents preventing continuity of activities.
- Low self-confidence or feelings of exclusion that prevent active engagement.
- Conflicts arising among participants due to limited social skills, substance abuse, or mental health issues.
- Dependence on a small group of motivated and skilled researchers, and volunteers.
- Limited staff capacity to coordinate and support ongoing workshops.
- Insufficient financial resources to secure tools, seeds, or gardening infrastructure.
- Bureaucratic barriers in obtaining permissions for outdoor modifications or community use of space.
- Weak institutional recognition of the value of participatory or therapeutic gardening.

Lessons Learned

- When homeless individuals are given the opportunity to create something, particularly if it is something natural and 'alive' they often demonstrate strong commitment.
- The co-creation of new spaces fosters teamwork, a sense of accomplishment, and pride in what has been achieved.
- Involving participants in all stages of the process (design, implementation, management, assessment) increases ownership and sustainability.
- Engaging with nature and working together does not necessarily require large spaces or costly interventions to promote health and wellbeing.
- Trust-building takes time but is crucial for overcoming initial resistance or scepticism.
- Small, visible successes (e.g., a first harvest or garden feature) help to maintain motivation and encourage continuity.
- Flexibility is essential, as activities must adapt to participants' changing circumstances and capacities.
- Social interaction and shared responsibility in gardening can reduce isolation and strengthen community ties.
- Professional support (e.g., psychologists, gardening experts) is essential to achieve results.



Have a look at our YouTube videos!



<https://youtu.be/2L8sUPdRUg4>



https://youtu.be/x_fedxLSlxQ







Córdoba'S Visionary and Integrated Solutions for Inclusive Health and Wellbeing.

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