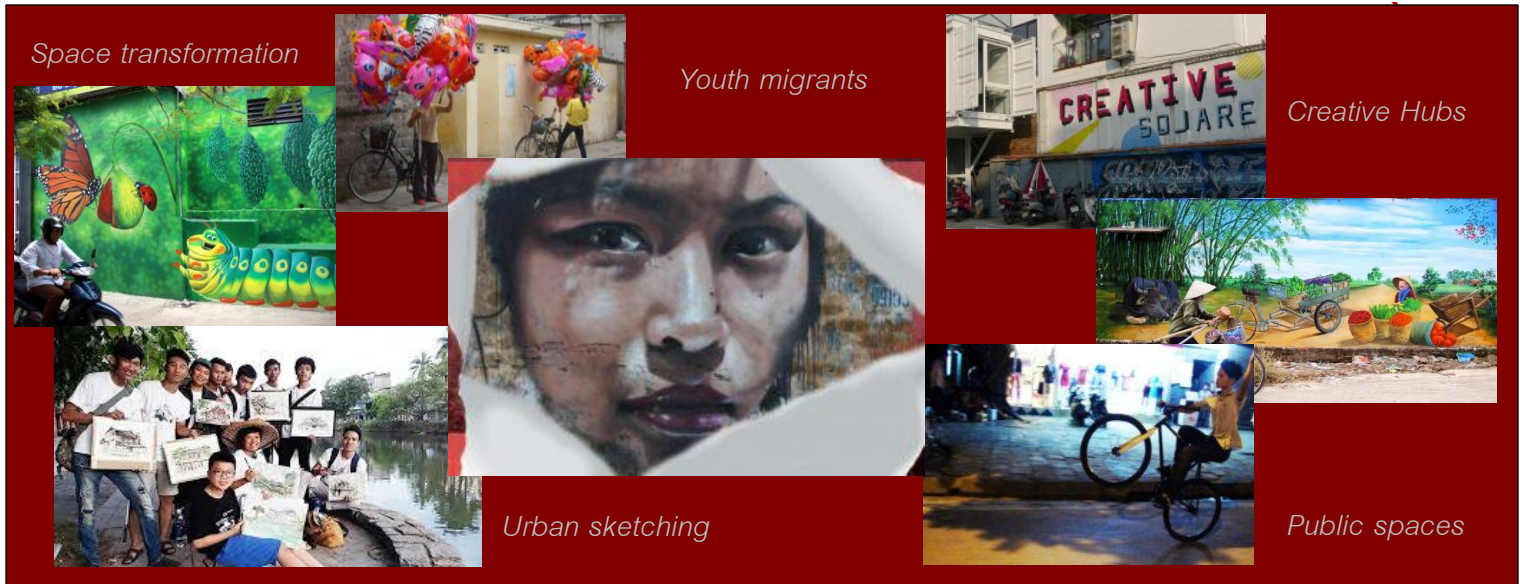


Side networking event at the 10th World Urban Forum
Cities of Opportunities: Connecting Culture and Innovation (<https://wuf.unhabitat.org/>)



Event title:

ACTIVATING PUBLIC SPACES FOR ALL IN HANOI, VIETNAM

Place: Abu Dhabi, UAE

Date: 8-13 February 2020

Time: tbc

Session length: 120 minutes

Summary of the event * (max 400 words)

In recent years, Hanoi witnessed a flourishing of urban public space-focused initiatives and experiments conducted by civil society and non-profit organizations. These initiatives seek to activate existing or underused public spaces in the city through mural paintings, the construction of playgrounds, etc. These projects greatly widen the range of conventional public space usage, designs, and physical forms, leading to new forms of appropriation by older and newer residents of the city. They further innovate by involving multiple stakeholders and partners in the conception and implementation of their project: local communities, NGOs, artists, the corporate sectors, social science experts, social activists, etc.

The 4 presentations and sharing-points included in this event provide different perspectives on and approach to public spaces in Hanoi of Vietnam:

- 1) A documentary about domestic migrants and public space in Hanoi discusses issues of public space access and use for urban-rural migrants, illuminating the difficulties they face and the coping mechanism they use to integrate into urban life.
- 2) Migration access to public spaces and social integration summarizes results of a study conducted in Hanoi on access and use of public space by disadvantage youth rural migrants, ie., industrial, domestic and informal workers. Living in low-income areas nearly devoid of formal public spaces, they mainly use the sidewalks and small tea stands as public space. While these spaces suit their living conditions, they play a limited role in their integration into the city life, a question in need of policy attention.
- 3) Sketch and public space: an association of sketchers (Urban Sketchers Hanoi) flourished in recent years that uses public space in a new way, besides traditional socializing and recreational activities. The story of this group raise new ideas about ways to organize, share and use public spaces to connect people of diverse lifestyles, in different cultures, landscapes, heritage, areas of the city, etc.
- 4) The mural project as public space development and community bonding is centred on the Arts Build Communities (ABC), an organization devoted to mural painting in older, lower-income areas of Hanoi. Their mural community projects opened up opportunities for social bonding and community participation in public spaces of Hanoi. ABC will share its experience and stories about how artists, communities, and other stakeholders have come together to transform public spaces functionally, spatially

and perceptually in derelict neighbourhoods of the Vietnamese capital city.

Key Objectives * (250 words)

The overall goal is to share and open up new perspectives on the diversity of access and use of public space in countries, such as Vietnam, where such ideas are just starting to take root. The event will explore ways to bring more attention to ways in which cities can better attend to the needs of different social groups in cities, vulnerable groups in particular. Research, civil society-led, and community activities are avenues to ensure fair access and use of public spaces.

More specifically, this event aims to:

- 1) share experiences, initiatives, activities as well as challenges in Vietnam through research, and projects that have been and are being implemented. Focus on experiences of combining older and new experimental approaches to activate public spaces;
- 2) Share and discuss ways to encourage stakeholder engagement and innovative partnerships, as well as encourage raise importance of ensuring diversity (cultural in particular) in public spaces access and usage;
- 3) Link scholars, artists, activists and community and encourage them to establish advocacy networks promoting “Public space for all”.

How the event is relevant to the WUF 10 theme and the selected Dialogue(s) * (Max: 250 words)

The activities introduced in this event promote a new way of approaching the urban public spaces question in rapidly urbanizing cities that are just starting to acknowledge social diversity issues. It builds on creativity and innovative initiatives in public spaces to put the ‘Towards equality in access for all’ on the agenda of policymakers, scholars, NGOs, civil society organizations and communities in Vietnam and beyond.

Initiatives aimed at overcoming the adverse impacts of rapid and intensive urbanization on public spaces. Initiatives are harmonious combinations of traditional and modern activities, based on cultural factors. Cultural differences need to be harmonized while approaching public spaces.

These activities also share perspectives on both aspects of mobilizing community participation, and encouraging multi-stakeholders partnership.

Monitoring strategy to follow up on the outcome of the event * (max 100 words)

This event will strengthen the four participating organizations’ role as an active core network. They will establish an active platform for communication among members as well as larger communities concerned with placemaking in Hanoi. Different activities to be initiated and activated by this platform will include:

- Shared talk: an open-to-public meeting (using Zoom tool) to share projects stories, experiences, etc.
- Publication: photo voice books, how-to manuals, etc;
- Knowledge transfer to potential research users (communities, policymaker, etc.);
- Policy reviews for implementing Hanoi Creative City vision, Green growth evolution, and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Vietnam