

# COMMUNITY DRIVEN PUBLIC SPACE REHABILITATION TURKANA, KENYA

SUPPORT TO KALOBEYEI NEW SETTLEMENT PROJECT  
AS PART OF KALOBEYEI INTEGRATED SOCIO-ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (KISED P)



# COMMUNITY DRIVEN **PUBLIC SPACE** REHABILITATION TURKANA, KENYA

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Public Space Design Workshop in  
Turkana, Kenya. © UN-Habitat



# 01 Introduction

UN-Habitat has been providing various workshops to support Refugee and Host communities in developing contexts towards achieving sustainable urban development; a notable project includes planning and implementation of the Kalobeyei New Settlement as part of the Kalobeyei Integrated Socio-Economic Development Program (KISED). Complementary to this project, UN-Habitat works with various specialised programs internally and externally to develop training methodologies to help develop practical, feasible approaches to implementing these urban planning interventions. This methodology has successfully been applied in numerous contexts.

UN-Habitat's Public Space Programme has been supporting the engagement of communities internationally in revitalizing their neighborhoods through public space designs, such as the creation of court yards, streets and shared facilities etc. Participants are taught in an engaging and creative way on how to visualize the potentials of public spaces within their neighborhoods. Not only can this provide for better management of public spaces within the Kalobeyei New Settlement or Kalobeyei Town, it also supports the Kalobeyei New Settlement's transition from a short-term, emergency planning to long-term, sustainable development model, and to better provide for infrastructure to communities within Kalobeyei Town, strengthening the integration of Host Communities and Refugees.

Minecraft Design Workshops for Kalobeyei New Settlement Refugee and Kalobeyei Host Communities was conducted based on the Public Space Program's Minecraft Software ICT Technology, to provide a platform for youth and members of the communities to contribute to designing their own public spaces, enhancing capacity with the process of formulating and implementing more integrated urban elements in the settlement. The outputs of Public Space site 1, in Neighbourhood 1 is captured within this report, with a way forward for the remaining three sites (Kalobeyei Town, Neighbourhood 2 and Neighbourhood 3).

## Kalobeyei New Settlement

In 2016, UN-Habitat started a project to plan, develop and construct a new Refugee settlement in Kalobeyei, north-western Kenya, expected to Host over 60,000 Refugees and people from the local Host communities. Multiple UN agencies, international and national organizations are involved in the project under the leadership of the Turkana County Government. The Kalobeyei project has been designed in order to play a key role in the paradigm shift from the traditional camp planning processes beyond relief and temporary settlement, taking into consideration the fact that they often remain in place for many years, highlighting the gradual transition from humanitarian support to sustainable development.

The Kalobeyei Settlement Spatial Plan has been developed by UN-Habitat in collaboration with the Kenya Ministry of Land and Urban Development according to Kenyan urban planning regulations, and is now being used by humanitarian actors to implement emergency infrastructure and facilities in the settlement. Unlike in a typical camp, education, health and public facilities are established for both Refugees and Host communities. The market, as a public space, is particularly important for encouraging integration and economic development for all. Currently, (December 2017) 35,000 people live in Kalobeyei Settlement, and one market is active and managed by the World Food Programme (WFP).

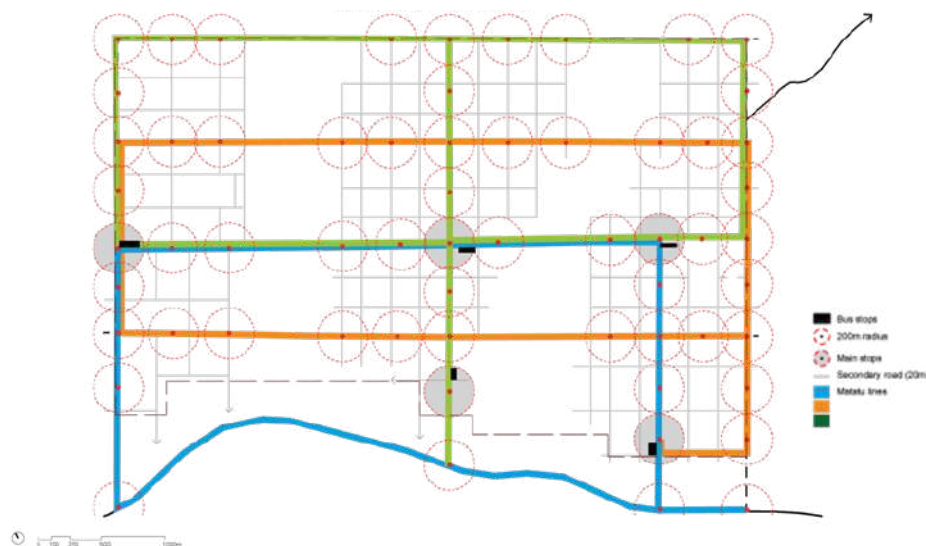
The Spatial Plan of Kalobeyei Settlement provides a well-designed network of public spaces and streets that can be a key asset for the settlement's economy that, if well managed, can increase property values, multiply retail activity, as well as improving health and well-being. Public space is important for neighborhood safety and contributes to developing a sense of ownership of the settlement, improving the quality of stay for the Refugees and increased opportunities for cooperation between Refugees and Host communities.

## Transportation and Mobility Strategy

The Spatial Plan of Kalobeyei New Settlement also provides for well-designed networks of public spaces and streets that can be key assets for the settlement's economy, and if well managed, can drive increased property values, multiply retail activity, as well as improving health and well-being. Currently the Kalobeyei New Settlement residents often travel to Kalobeyei and Kakuma town for services such as shopping for food items and other necessities. The main form of public transportation to Kalobeyei and Kakuma town is motor-bikes (bodaboda) which is often charged at a high cost. There is currently no public transport provided for travelling within the settlement.

The development of an effective transportation system and street network would promote further integration within host and refugee communities through reducing taxing distances of travel and allowing for better efficiency. It supports the public space network in determining the living quality of a neighbourhood at the local scale and the functionality of a settlement at a larger scale.

Figure 1.1: Kalobeyei New Settlement Mobility Strategy



The overall objectives of the strategy would be to achieve the following:

1. **Develop and implement a Public Space Transportation and Mobility Strategy within the Kalobeyei New Settlement.**

Transportation and mobility strategy will guide the long term development of efficient, multi-modal sustainable public transport systems for the settlement catering for safe walking and cycling, bodabodas, matatus and buses. The strategy will allow for greater connectivity within the settlement neighbourhoods, and foster greater convenience of travel. In the long term, greater connectivity and efficiency can contribute to stonger and more resilient economic growth of Kalobeyei New Settlement.

2. **Equip host and refugee communities within the Kalobeyei New Settlement the skills in utilizing ICT for greater civic engagement in infrastructure design proposals.**

With ICT being a catalyst to improve planning and increase levels of participation, efficiency and accountability in public urban development, through directly impacting civic engagement and youth participation, Minecraft and Ericsson's Virtual Reality Simulation Tools can be utilized in urban design formulation as part of UN-Habitat's participatory process. In design of

streets, emphasis will be on the design of complete streets that cater for all road users (non-motorised transport and motorised vehicles) and access for people with disabilities.

3. **Promote greater livelihoods creation through the Transportation and Mobility strategies service providing and maintenance.**

Through the adoption of a mobility strategy, and with utilizing different modes of transportation such as bodabodas, matatus and buses, a network of transportation services could create greater livelihood opportunities for members within various communities, in aspects of service and maintenance. It would also be viable to have community members lead in managing the transportation services to prove it more sustainable in the long term.

Additionally, the project builds on the Public Space Project in Kalobeyei, which seeks to establish a network of public spaces to foster the integration of host and refugee communities - through the construction of four public space pilot projects, capacity development at community levels to promote the importance of public and harness its potential for economic and environmental integration, and the establishment of public space community management groups.

## Public Space Program for Kalobeyei

The UN-Habitat approach to public space focuses on integrity and equality, defining public space as “all places publicly owned or of public use, accessible and enjoyable by all for free and without a profit motive”. At the 23rd Governing Council of UN-Habitat in 2011, Member States mandated UN-Habitat to place a larger focus on public space and how it can contribute to sustainable urban development. A public space resolution was adopted to consolidate local and international approaches to creating inclusive settlements, enhance the knowledge of UN-Habitat and local authorities of public spaces and the quality of urban life.

## Overall Objectives of the Public Space Program

The objective is to assess different typologies of



**Bridge humanitarian support** with development through a **properly planned, designed, implemented, managed and maintained public space network**, with the continuous involvement and ownership of the local community.

public space in close relation to their surroundings and current use and to link the Host and Refugee communities within a network. By encouraging liaison with the local communities and groups, public space

is the key tool for integrating communities and fosters community management of space, reducing reliance on humanitarian support. Kalobeyei is situated in a very dry area, where strong sun, sand storms and dry lands are factors to consider in site location and design process.



Establish a network of public spaces to **foster integration of Host and Refugees communities.**

## Outputs of the Program

The network was initiated through construction of public spaces, which was to demonstrate the added value that investment in public space brings in supporting the settlement’s transition from emergency to development phase. These public space pilot projects have been strategically chosen in collaboration with local stakeholders to ensure that they align, contribute to the overall development of the Kalobeyei Local Physical Development Plan, and facilitate the integration of Refugees and Host communities.



Establishment of public space community management groups around each public space to **promote self sustainability of infrastructure and processes.**

The development of the public space network include capacity development at the community level, to promote public space as an opportunity for integrated livelihoods, but also to provide opportunities for economic and environmentally responsible activities. The proposed achievement indicators will measure the increase in the community’s capacity to plan and implement projects in public space, and the extent to which the public spaces support socio-economic and environmental development at the neighbourhood scale.

The groups constituted both Host community members and Refugees from the immediately surrounding neighbourhood to ensure engagement, contribution and ownership. The objective aimed to increase the capacity and skills of Host and Refugee community members to plan, design, implement and maintain public spaces. The groups were trained and supported to develop and implement different public space designs and strategies for maintenance and management of public spaces. This can increasingly lead the way to integration of communities for leisure and economic purposes, and make it possible to implement future actions which will improve the neighbourhood climate and liveability.

The first training component focused on design and management purposes, including design workshops, but also a component on management and group self-sustenance. The second training component addressed skill development for youth that will contribute to implementation and future maintenance of the public spaces.

## Proposed Activities

Through a participatory processes, the UN-Habitat approach to public space targets capacity development, design workshops, upgrading and implementation of activities through the following structure:



Team discussing on laptops while using Minecraft. © UN-Habitat

- 1 Establishment of community groups for design, implementation upgrading and maintenance of public spaces in the settlement. Potential division of groups between design/ management and implementation according to the skills/interests of community members involved;
- 2 Mapping and demarcation of public space intervention areas in agreement with community leaders;
- 3 Participatory design, with public space management by community-based organizations, aiming to facilitate sustainable small-scale economic and socio-cultural activities;
- 4 Support implementation of a public space design that will improve neighborhood accessibility and livability, providing space for small-scale economic activities focusing on skill training;
- 5 Presentation of project progress in a conference with all groups involved in pilot projects which was developed in collaboration between the Minecraft creators, Mojang, and UN-Habitat.
- 6 Establishment of public space management committee as led through advisory by UN-Habitat to encourage greater long-term self sustainability.

# 02 Land Acquisition Process

## Land Title changing for Public Space Allocation

To allocate the land for public space, UN-Habitat Public Space and Kakuma Field Office sought to change the title of the land area from Communal Land to Public Land through the following processes.

- 1** Hosting participatory meetings with the community, SDGs, Local leaders, including area members of the county assembly.  
Since the land is communal and held in trust by the county government on behalf of the community, we sought the consent of the community to allocate land for the public space in Kalobeyei town. The criteria used was to have the land in proximity to the main transportation corridor to support the planned functions of the public space.
- 2** The Land administrator within the area made an agreement to document the acceptance of the community to allocate the land to UN-Habitat.
- 3** The County Government Planner and surveyor for Turkana west conducted a survey for the land, after which a Physical Development Plan(PDP) was developed from the survey map. The PDP is the current document used by the county for land adjudication as they wait for the right legislations to facilitate proper land titling in the county. The PDP was signed by the county surveyor, direction of physical planning, chief officer and minister of Lands, Energy, Housing, and Urban Area Management.
- 4** The ministry conducted a circulation of the PDP to local stakeholders, especially to other county ministries for validation.  
A national circulation in the Kenyan gazette allowed the general Kenyan public to validate the project.
- 5** PDP was delivered to UN-Habitat for implementation, after which the project will be handed over to the county to maintain the public space as a county resource.

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