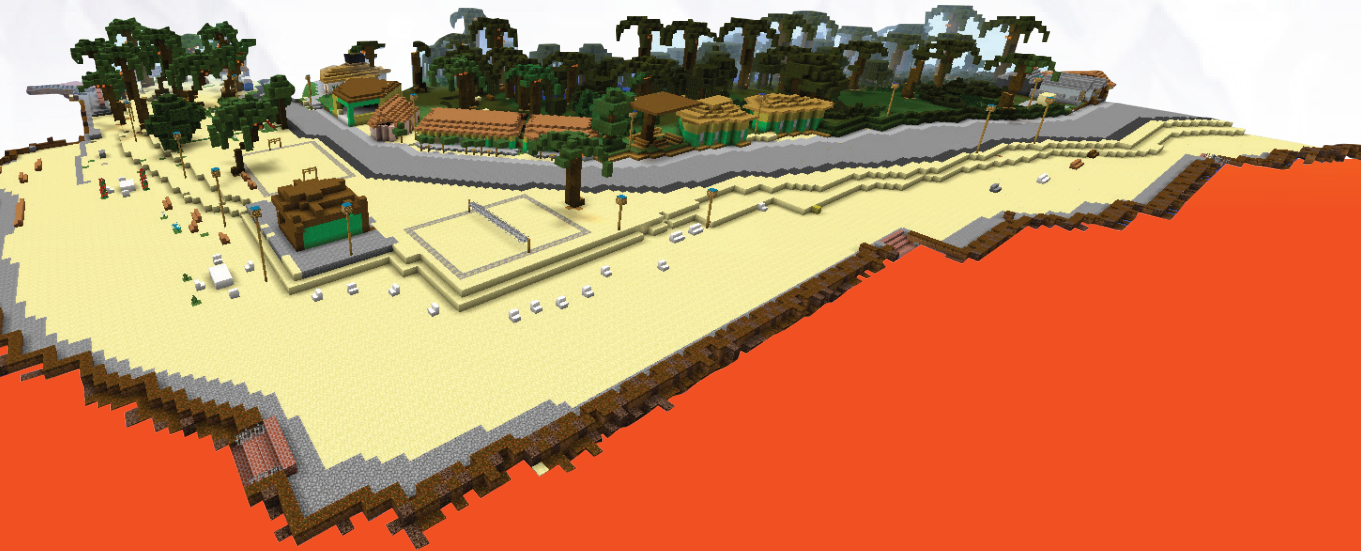


USING **MINECRAFT** FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

MANUAL



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Authors: Pontus Westerberg and Sohel Rana

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About UN-Habitat

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) is the United Nations agency for sustainable urban development. It is mandated to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities while advocating adequate shelter for all. UN-Habitat works to expand understanding of inadequate shelter and urban poverty, and to facilitate the tracking of progress in urban development. It also sets out norms and best practice for sustainable urbanization and urban poverty reduction, promoting realistic and integrated urban planning as the key to harnessing the economic potential of cities.

About this manual

The purpose of this manual is to provide an overview and a step-by-step guide to the use of Minecraft as a community participation tool in urban design projects. UN-Habitat has been using Minecraft to engage communities in the design of public spaces since 2013.

UN-Habitat's Global Programme on Public Space

Public space has often been overlooked and undervalued by urban authorities but is increasingly being considered the backbone of the city and sustainable living. Public spaces are places that are accessible and enjoyable by all without a profit motive and take on various spatial forms, including parks, streets, sidewalks, markets and playgrounds. Good public spaces enhance community cohesion and promote health, happiness, and well-being for all citizens.

In 2012, UN-Habitat launched the specialized Global Programme on Public Space with the aim of improving the availability, accessibility, inclusiveness and quality of public spaces worldwide. As part of the development process, participatory planning workshops are held with members of local communities in which they can provide input into the design and eventual implementation and management of the spaces. The projects are usually implemented as a partnership between UN-Habitat and local development partners such as local authorities, non-governmental and community organisations.

Block by Block

In 2012, UN-Habitat entered into an innovative partnership with the Swedish computer game company Mojang AB, the makers of the popular computer game Minecraft. Through the partnership, named Block by Block, UN-Habitat uses Minecraft as a community participation and engagement tool in the design and implementation of public space projects. To date, Minecraft has been used for community participation on every continent, including in Nigeria, Peru, Mexico, Kosovo and Nepal.

About Minecraft

Minecraft is a 'sandbox' computer game originally launched in 2011. The game has sold nearly 100 million copies worldwide, making it one of the world's best-selling computer games.

The gameplay of Minecraft is perhaps best imagined as a complex 'digital Lego'. The creative and building aspects of Minecraft allow players to build structures out of textured cubes in a three-dimensional generated world. Creative mode enables gamers to easily create buildings similar to those produced by complex 3D modelling software, with the additional benefit of being able to construct structures together through the multiplayer setting. As a result, the building process is more similar to real-life construction projects with multiple workers carrying out different roles simultaneously, than traditional digital 3D model-making with only one designer.



Plage la Touterelle, Haiti, redesigned in Minecraft

Methodology for using Minecraft for community participation

Summary of method

1. Based on images, plans, Google Maps and other available materials, a Minecraft model is produced by UN-Habitat's Minecraft consultants.
2. UN-Habitat arranges for a Minecraft expert to provide Minecraft training and support.
3. Project staff, with the support of the Minecraft expert, hold workshops with community participants, project staff and partners in order to:
 - Train participants in the basics of Minecraft modelling
 - Facilitate a dialogue on issues regarding the space
 - Produce Minecraft models incorporating the proposed design ideas
 - Collate the ideas that are included in the models
4. The participants are divided into groups of 2-4 people, with one computer provided for each group.
5. The workshops need to provide sufficient time for participants to develop their ideas in Minecraft. Depending on the level of prior IT and Minecraft knowledge, two to four days is recommended.
6. Project staff facilitates a final workshop where the refined models are shown to stakeholders to generate discussion.
7. The Minecraft proposals feed into the professional design work.

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