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Tactical Urbanism and Economic Inclusivity: Evaluating the Impact of Spacena Project in a Marginalized Urban Area

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ABSTRACT

Addressing economic and social inequalities in urban settings, particularly those that affect marginalized groups, is becoming more challenging. In less privileged urban areas, women entrepreneurs face restricted opportunities, specifically in limited retail activities in urban spaces. This study examines the effects of implementing a tactical urbanism solution known as "Retailscape," as represented by Spacena, to address the existing socio-economic disparity. Spacena is an urban furniture piece designed to respect and accommodate PWD, serving as a platform for showcasing locally made products. Employing qualitative methods, including focus groups, interviews, and observations, the research assesses Spacena's economic and social impact. Key themes identified through coding reveal a strong desire for inclusive spaces, economic empowerment, and enhanced social integration. Findings indicate that Spacena is perceived as an opportunity for economic advancement, income generation, and social interaction among residents. However, concerns about project sustainability and regulatory challenges persist. This study demonstrates that tactical urbanism can effectively address economic disparities and foster social cohesion in marginalized communities, suggesting that similar small-scale interventions could have broad, positive implications for sustainable urban design. The findings highlight how Spacena's low-cost, scalable design and its positive impact on community inclusivity can serve as a model for replicating similar urban interventions in areas with comparable economic and social challenges.

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Highlights:	Contribution to the field statement:
-Spacena enhances economic empowerment for women entrepreneurs in marginalized urban areas, providing a sustainable platform for income generation. -The project promotes social cohesion by fostering inclusive interactions among diverse community members, including people with disabilities (PWD). -The study introduces a novel methodological framework using cloud analysis for qualitative data, offering insights into community-driven urban interventions.	This study provides critical insights into the transformative potential of tactical urbanism by demonstrating how Spacena fosters economic empowerment and social cohesion among marginalized groups. It bridges a gap in existing research by highlighting the role of community-driven initiatives in inclusive urban design and offers a replicable model for urban regeneration, particularly in economically disadvantaged areas.

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1. Introduction

Confronting the growing economic and social disparities in urban areas has become increasingly demanding due to rapid urbanization, limited resources, and systemic inequalities (Chmielewska & Horváthová, 2016). The high cost of urban living disproportionately impacts low- and middle-income families, exacerbating socio-economic disparities (Niessen, et al., 2018; Bailey, 2017). This gap further intensifies with the influx of refugees, which raises demand for housing, healthcare, education, and open spaces, increasing economic challenges (Aytug, 2023; UN-Habitat, 2022).

According to Forbes, there are about 2,755 billionaires worldwide as of 2021. The World Bank, on the other hand, estimated that more than 700 million people worldwide were living on less than \$1.90 per day (Lynch, et al., 1998; Illingworth, 2022). Global economic disparity refers to the unequal distribution of money and opportunities among various social groups (OECD, 2014). Many individuals remain stuck in poverty with no chance to move up the social scale (Thirlwall, 1974; Soja, 2010), particularly in less fortunate urban areas experiencing high rates of discrimination, large numbers of marginalized groups, intense urban pressure, and the presence of People With Disabilities (PWD) (Pandey & Nathwani, 1996; Baldwin & Johnson, 2006). Economic challenges in these areas can accelerate project closures due to a lack of financial activity, difficulty in obtaining affordable workplaces, competition in commercial sectors, male dominance in business, and limited trade options (Harris, Franz, & O'Hara, 2023).

With a focus on gender variances, women entrepreneurs in less privileged urban areas face restricted opportunities, specifically in retail activities, due to social and economic discrimination (Abuhussein & Koburtay, 2021). Even educated urban women, with access to managerial knowledge and skills, encounter barriers to establishing small businesses (Rizvi, et al., 2023). These enduring socio-economic disparities underscore the necessity for inclusive cities that provide access to opportunities, services, and decision-making processes regardless of financial situation, gender, age, ethnicity, or physical abilities (Talen, 2018; Kajjita & Kang'ethe, 2024). Inclusive urban policies aim to ensure that everyone can access the resources and opportunities they need to thrive (Fainstein, 2010; UN-Habitat, 2016).

However, the practical implementation of inclusive urban policies can be complex and slow-moving. This is where tactical urbanism comes into play (Silva, 2016). Tactical urbanism, defined as short-term actions for long-term change through low-cost, scalable interventions, offers a dynamic and immediate approach to addressing these issues (El-Messeidy, 2019). Tactical urbanism strongly emphasizes rapid, inexpensive, and scalable interventions that enhance urban areas, meet pressing community needs, and spark long-term urban regeneration (Mike, Anthony, & Andres, 2015). These initiatives can be spearheaded by governments, nonprofits, community organizations, or residents (Burton & Mitchell, 2006).

Tactical urbanism initiatives have the potential to accelerate urban regeneration processes and provide economic benefits to disadvantaged populations by promoting entrepreneurship, supporting local businesses, and creating employment and training opportunities (Meerow, Pajouhesh, & Miller, 2019). Projects focusing on women, particularly in specific seasons for particular products and services, can demonstrate these economic impacts and benefit society (Rossitti, Oppio, Torrieri, & Dell'Ovo, 2023). Despite the growing interest in tactical urbanism interventions, there is a notable absence of research on their economic implications and effectiveness in fostering urban regeneration and economic empowerment, especially for marginalized groups like women and PWD (Nello-Deakin, 2022). This gap in the literature highlights the need for studies that evaluate the broader impacts of such initiatives. To bridge this gap, the research focuses on Al Hashmi Al Janoubi, a neighbourhood in Amman designated for special assistance due to its significant refugee concentration. Al Hashmi Al Janoubi, located in the Al Madeenah District of the Capital Amman, has 14,100 people; 11.2 percent of them are refugees (UN-Habitat, 2022; Zalloom, 2022). To create more inclusive public spaces, particularly Queen Noor Park in the neighbourhood, creative and environmentally friendly design solutions are



crucial. This is especially vital for women and individuals with disabilities, who face numerous obstacles in accessing and using public spaces due to safety concerns, lack of accessible features, and gender-neutral design.

The tactical urbanism project "Spacena" in Queen Noor Park was chosen as it exemplifies the potential of such interventions to address urban inequality and foster inclusive urban economic development. Spacena is an innovative urban furniture piece designed to respect and accommodate people with disabilities, serving as a platform for showcasing locally made products. By employing methodical procedures in urban planning and social interaction, and leveraging creative creativity and experimentation, Spacena aims to find solutions to problems with public spaces. This project not only provides immediate economic and social benefits to the community but also serves as a replicable model for similar urban spaces. It demonstrates that small-scale, community-driven interventions can lead to substantial positive changes in the lives of marginalized individuals and contribute to sustainable, inclusive urban design.

The aims of this study are:

1. To examine how tactical urbanism initiatives like Spacena contribute to economic empowerment, social cohesion, and inclusive urban design; and secondly,
2. To explore the challenges and opportunities associated with implementing such interventions in less privileged urban areas.

The research questions guiding this investigation include:

1. How can tactical urbanism projects address economic disparities and promote financial empowerment among women?
2. What impacts does Spacena play in fostering social cohesion and promoting urban livelihood in public spaces in less privileged areas?

The study's significance lies in demonstrating how practical, low-cost interventions can make substantial impacts on marginalized communities, offering a replicable model for urban regeneration. Urban planners, policymakers, and community activists can find the research relevant as it highlights effective strategies for fostering inclusivity and economic empowerment in underprivileged areas. Additionally, scholars and practitioners interested in the intersection of urban design and social equity can benefit from the study's exploration of how tactical urbanism can address real-world challenges faced by women and people with disabilities. The paper's findings not only contribute to the existing body of knowledge but also offer actionable recommendations for improving urban spaces to better serve diverse populations.

2. Research Framework

Urban planning has evolved to address environmental, economic, and social phenomena, shifting focus from expansion to the regeneration of existing cities with attention to reuse, reversibility, and temporariness of interventions. The research highlights the transition from temporary tactical urbanism interventions to permanent transformations and the integration of inclusivity, entrepreneurship, and sustainability in public space design.

The diagram in Figure 1. begins with the general goal of utilizing tactical urbanism to achieve economic empowerment by implementing Spacena in an urban space. Spacena was designed with principles of participatory urbanism, addressing site-specific gaps, ensuring long-lasting impacts, and incorporating inclusive design elements. The project transitioned these principles into a practical fabrication process, encountering challenges such as budget constraints, stakeholder collaboration, and obtaining municipality approvals. Once established in Queen Noor Park, Spacena was operated by women entrepreneurs selling their homemade products to park visitors. Throughout this stage, interviews and observations were conducted to analyze the impact of Spacena, utilizing coding techniques to understand its effects on urban livelihood and social cohesion.

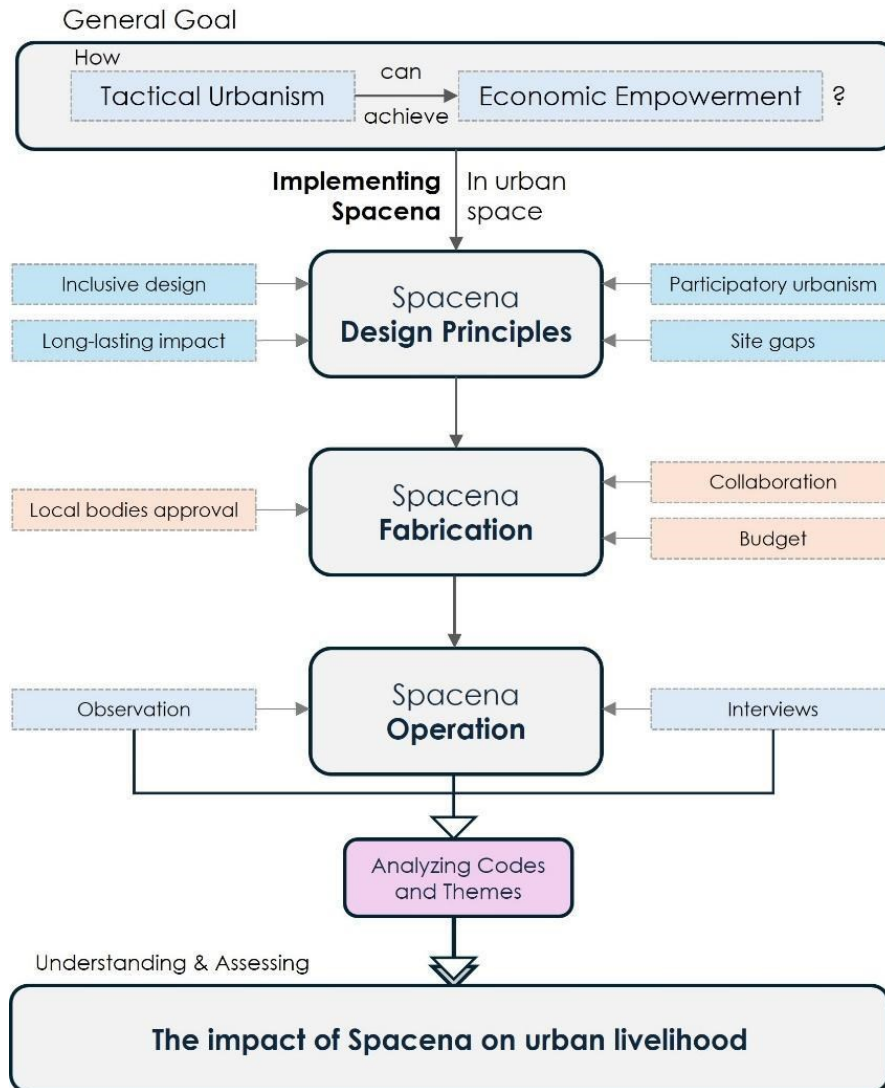


Figure 1. Research framework.

The Spacena project is a “retailscape” as a tactical urbanism solution in the research area Al Hashmi Al Janoubi neighbourhood in Capital Amman's Al Madeenah District, an urban gathering place for residents and visitors to socialize, shop, and rest; especially for women and children. It takes only the area (4.0*4.0 m), which can be found anywhere in urban areas.

2.1. Study Area

Amman provides improved access to rights and services, making it a crucial hub for the integration of refugees. With about 1,080,716 Palestinian, 193,361 Syrian, 121,000 Iraqi, and 27,000 Yemeni refugees, the city is home to a sizable refugee community. Although a quarter of these refugees live in camps, most are housed in densely populated, unofficial dwellings in the city's east and centre (Hawkins, Assad, & Sullivan, 2019; Hamed-Troyansky, 2017). Many refugees find Amman appealing because of its freedom of movement, sense of dignity, well-established community networks, better housing, accessibility to services, and employment opportunities—despite the difficulties of living in an urban setting. Amman becomes a destination where refugees can come to find stability and start over (Hawkins, Assad, & Sullivan, 2019). The Greater Amman Municipality (GAM)'s refugee density research determined which neighborhoods had the highest concentration of refugees based on data from the 2015 census. Five neighborhoods—Jabal Al Nuzha, Al Hashmi Al Janoubi, Al Qweismeh,

Al Yadoudeh, and Al Amira Alia—were chosen for additional assessment. In order to provide targeted support in the most vulnerable locations, these neighborhoods were assessed (UN-Habitat, 2022; Zalloom, 2022). Figure 2. Al Madeena District and Al Hashmi Al Janoubi Neighbourhood (UN-Habitat, 2022).



Figure 2. Al Hashmi Al Janoubi Neighbourhood (UN-Habitat, 2022).

In many parts of the world, the issue of inclusion and accessibility in public spaces is a major concern, as Amman, Jordan city is considered one of them. According to Amman's spatial profile created by UN Habitat's program, the Al Hashmi Al Janoubi neighbourhood within the AlMadeenah District was chosen based on the results of the refugee density analysis. It showed that it has the highest refugee presence in comparison to the other neighbourhoods within the district (UN-Habitat, 2022).

This neighbourhood is in need to creative and environmentally friendly design solutions; especially for women and PWD, since they encounter several obstacles when trying to access and utilize public areas due to safety hazards, & accessibility (UN-Habitat, 2022). With 14,100 residents overall and an area of 430,000 m², the Al Hashmi Al Janoubi neighbourhood has a population density of 32,118 people per km². Al Hashmi Al Janoubi's population is made up of 11.2 percent refugees, of which 2.4 percent are Palestinians, 8.4 percent are Syrians, and 0.4 percent are Iraqis (UN-Habitat, 2022). It is important to note that the percentage of Palestinians includes those who are not citizens of Jordan, even though there are more Palestinians in this neighbourhood, they are citizens of Jordan. Its infrastructure networks are overburdened, and facilities for women, children, and individuals with impairments are particularly important and accessible. The area has to be made more aesthetically pleasing for its people, as the spatial analysis also showed (UN-Habitat, 2022).

2.2. Spacena Design Principles

To implement Spacena as a specific case of Retailscape, emphasizing its design principles and objectives, the research is using the following conceptual framework:



Anticipating Site Gaps and Aligning with Participatory Urbanism: A crucial aspect of Spacena's conceptual framework lies in its proactive approach to identifying and addressing site-specific gaps within the urban landscape. The meticulous process involves a comprehensive analysis of the immediate surroundings, with a keen focus on recognizing potential deficiencies. For instance, the project acknowledges the need for enhanced commercial spaces, prompting the strategic proposal of a well-needed function – the selling counter. This process is close to fitting a missing puzzle piece into the urban picture.

Moreover, the identification of these site gaps isn't a mere theoretical exercise; it is grounded in the lived experiences and demands of the local community. By acknowledging the tangible needs of residents, Spacena aims to fill a void, creating a functional space that resonates with the genuine requirements of its users. This meticulous approach goes beyond the conventional understanding of urban planning, transforming Spacena from a theoretical concept into a practical solution that actively contributes to enhancing the urban environment. Through this site-specific analysis and responsive proposal, Spacena becomes a dynamic intervention, finely tuned to the specific needs and aspirations of its community.

Sustainable Transition: From Tactical to Permanent: The conceptual underpinning of Spacena delineates a trajectory from transient tactical urbanism interventions to a transformative permanence. This evolution is not merely a functional shift but a deliberate embedding of sustainability principles. Spacena's seamless transition from a temporary gathering locale to a fixture within the urban fabric speaks to the enduring impact of foresighted urban interventions. The integration of sustainability principles, inclusive of environmental and socio-economic facets, transforms Spacena beyond a mere commercial enclave into a sustainable urban furniture piece. The confluence of inclusivity and entrepreneurship inscribed in its design ensures that it becomes a resilient nucleus for perpetual economic and social activities, substantiating its contribution to the sustainable advancement of the community.

In conceiving Spacena, our foremost consideration is to transform inclusivity into a tangible and functional reality. The meticulous design process incorporates specific features addressing the needs of PWD.

Inclusive Design for Women Empowerment: Spacena, as an exemplar of tactical urbanism, stands at the intersection of inclusivity and community empowerment. Its compact dimensions and welcoming atmosphere not only accommodate the diverse needs of residents, including women and children, but also prioritize the economic empowerment of women with special needs. Through careful spatial design, Spacena becomes more than just a retail space; it emerges as a symbol of inclusive urban planning. Its user-friendly layouts ensure that it is accessible to all, fostering an environment where women entrepreneurs, particularly those with disabilities, can confidently engage with customers and fellow vendors. This inclusive design goes beyond physical accessibility; it extends to creating a social space where diverse community members can interact and thrive.

At the heart of Spacena is a commitment to empowering women entrepreneurs through thoughtful community integration. Leveraging the skills cultivated at community support centres, particularly the International Rescue Committee (IRC). Spacena becomes a conduit for translating theoretical knowledge into practical opportunities. This strategic alignment transforms Spacena from a static structure into a dynamic force for economic empowerment. Community engagement is not an afterthought but a foundational principle. Through focused group discussions, observations, and interviews with local residents and park visitors, we systematically ensure that Spacena is not a unilateral imposition but a reflection of genuine community needs. This iterative process ensures that Spacena becomes more than a physical space; it evolves into a community asset co-shaped by those it aims to uplift.

2.3. Spacena Fabrication

Bringing Spacena to life in Amman, Jordan comes with its unique challenges and opportunities. The local municipality, Greater Amman Municipality (GAM), plays a substantial role, but getting the project approved might take some time due to ongoing design discussions. The project has six months to analyze, design, and put everything in place, dealing smartly with a budget of 7,000 EUR. Exploring future partnerships with local NGOs could mean more support and a chance to make Spacena a lasting part of the community. It's like putting together a puzzle, figuring out the best way to balance rules, budgets, and collaborations to make Spacena work for Amman.

The fabrication process of Spacena emphasizes sustainability and accessibility, aligning with its mission to empower local communities. It prioritizes user-centered design, incorporating specific features. The counter's height, set precisely at 75 cm, ensures it's accessible to a broad spectrum of users. A generous turning radius of 1.5 meters accommodates diverse mobility requirements. Shelves are strategically positioned, ranging from 0.6 m to 1.2 m, offering easy access for everyone. Ground fixation serves as a tactile guide for individuals with visual impairments, As shown in Figure 3. a: The Project 3d model, b: Preparing the site for implementing the project, c: Transfer the project on-site, d: The Project site in the Queen Noor Park.



Figure 3. a: The Project 3d model, b: Preparing the site for implementing the project, c: Transfer the project on-site, d: The Project site in the Queen Noor Park.

The choice of materials is intentional – a combination of recyclable steel and wood not only aligns with sustainability goals but also contributes to an aesthetically welcoming atmosphere. Set within the vibrant context of Queen Nour Park in Amman, Jordan, Spacena's ground-fixed implementation harmonizes seamlessly with the local environment, ensuring it becomes an integral part of the community fabric. Through collaborative efforts with local craftsmen and manufacturers, Spacena is assembled with meticulous attention to detail, reflecting the diverse needs and preferences of the community.



Figure 4. Implementation of the project on the site.

The output of Spacena is represented, as shown in Figure 4. Implementation of the project on the site., a transformative urban intervention, providing a vibrant gathering space for residents and visitors alike. Its multi-functional design enables it to serve as a hub for social interaction, local entrepreneurship, and community engagement. The thoughtful integration of amenities, such as flexible usage policies, ensures operational sustainability and accessibility. Spacena's impact extends beyond physical infrastructure, fostering economic empowerment and social cohesion within the neighbourhood.

3. Material and Methods

The following techniques are used in qualitative research: focus groups, open-ended interviews, participant observation, discourse analysis, case studies, etc. (Lune & Berg, 2017). A variety of fieldwork techniques can be used with qualitative approaches, such as "participant observation, formal and informal interviewing, document collection, filming, recording, and so on." (Maanen, 2011). A qualitative approach was employed for this research. Focus group, semi-structured interviews, and observations were used to examine the extent to which the Spacena project influences the economic opportunities for women entrepreneurs in the targeted less privileged urban area.

Focus groups, semi-structured interviews, and observation are selected due to their capacity to deliver rich qualitative data while maintaining flexibility and a balance between the breadth and depth of information. They work especially well for understanding complicated phenomena, gathering the subtleties of participant experiences and viewpoints, and doing exploratory research.

The greatest way to observe park visitors' socio-spatial behaviours is through observation, which is important since it helps to identify and target the target group more accurately before designing.

Regarding the focus groups, they were conducted in collaboration with UN-Habitat-Jordan and involved a select group of concerned citizens from the Southern Hashemi neighbourhood who were invited to share their opinions, ideas, and goals. By offering crucial background information and needs-based design data, the focus groups enhanced the design process. In addition to what was covered in the focus groups, semi-structured interviews are a good approach to getting specific details about the thoughts and experiences of the participants clearly and concisely. Therefore, these three methods were chosen to work together during the design stages to reach satisfactory results. The process for collecting data via observation focus groups, semi-structured interviews, and data analysis is explained in full in Figure 5. Conceptual methodology shows.

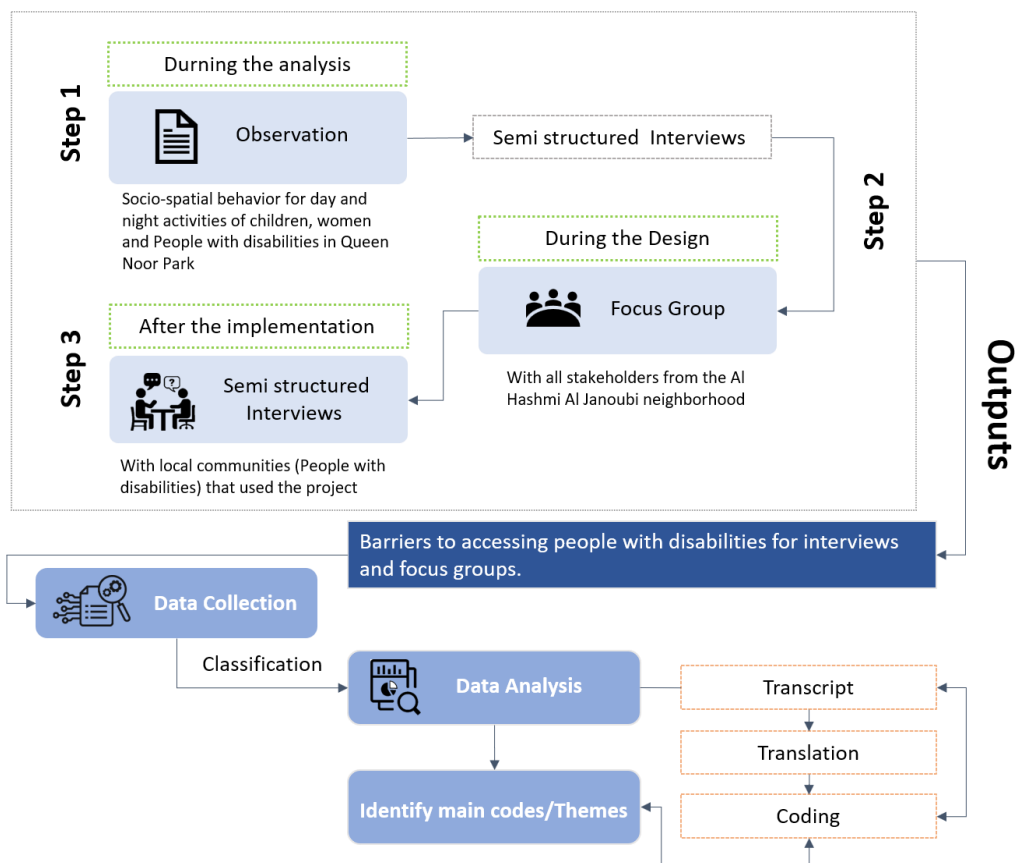


Figure 5. Conceptual Methodology.

3.1. Data Collection

Observation during the site analysis: Over a week, we observed the sociospatial behaviours of women, children, and individuals with impairments in Queen Noor Park, recording observations at predetermined intervals. We mapped important symbols, took pictures, videos, and written notes to record recurrent behavioural patterns. This was completed before the project design and during the site analysis phase.



Focus groups in during the design: As part of the Creative Forward Fund with UN-Habitat Jordan, Takween hosted an interactive design session on August 30, 2023, at the GAM Central Amman Library, which is next to the Al Hashmi Al Janoubi Neighborhood. Representatives from GAM and thirty-three participants from a variety of backgrounds attended the session.

Purposive sampling was used to choose participants to guarantee a varied representation of the neighbourhood's population. The hiring process sought to include: To make sure the session takes into account the needs and viewpoints of all community members, the following groups were specifically targeted: women, youth, the elderly, refugees, and people with disabilities.

Al Hashmi Al Janoubi locals: By concentrating on locals, it was ensured that the information acquired was pertinent to the neighbourhood's unique setting. Interaction with Nonprofits and Local Institutions: Access to potential participants was enabled by gatekeepers from non-governmental organizations and local community institutions, which helped us contact a wide range of the population. By using this strategy, the focus groups were guaranteed to be representative of the variety of the community, encompassing a wide range of experiences and needs.

Purposive and snowball sampling were used to find participants for the semi-structured interviews that were used to evaluate the Specna project in Queen Noor Park.

Semi-structured interviews after the implementation: Purposive Sampling: To ensure that the input from the people we gathered would be pertinent and informative, we deliberately looked for people who would probably be directly impacted by the initiative. Snowball sampling: We were able to reach a wider network throughout the community by having initial participants recommend others who met our criteria.

Gatekeepers: Women's organizations and young, old, and disabled people's organizations helped find and recruit participants so that we had a diverse group. To provide a representative and diverse sample, we conducted in-person Arabic interviews in Queen Noor Park with 13 participants, 9 of whom were female and 4 of whom were male, ages 18 to 55. As shown in Table 1. Participant characteristics of Semi-structured interviews., including gender, age, number of persons with disabilities, level of education, and field of work.



Table 1: Participant characteristics of Semi-structured interviews.

Participant characteristics of interviews		
Gender	Female	Male
	9 participants	4 participants
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21-30 31-40 41-50 51-60 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21-30 31-40 41-50 51-60
Number and type of disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People with reduced mobility Visual impairment 	0 participants
Education Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary Secondary Diploma Bachelors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary Secondary Diploma Bachelors
Work Field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home project Unemployed Engineer Teacher trainer in NGOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government employee driver Retailer coordinator in NGOs



3.2. Data analysis

The data processing and analyzing process take place simultaneously. Qualitative data analysis is an iterative and reflexive process that involves a constant interaction between data collection and analysis, where during the data analysis process, orientation toward data collection for issues arising from the analysis (Suddaby, 2006; Akinyode & Khan, 2018).

Data analysis involves transcribing simple audio recording data and translating focus group and interview transcripts from Arabic into English. The transcripts of all focus groups, interviews, observations, and notes are encoded in two stages using Excel: initial coding and focused coding methods.

Coding is a significant analysis method that categorizes data segments with a short name (code). These codes create and sort an understanding of what is going on in the participants' experiences (Maher, Hadfield, Hutchings, & de Eyto, 2018). This coding method makes it possible to view sections of text and information in new ways, and this analysis exposes emerging themes and patterns (Belotto, 2018).

Coded in two phases: the initial phase of data coding manually on Excel, open coding, for all transcript data. The second stage involved coding manually on Excel pages, in which the topics and themes within the previously defined categories were identified. Made a connection between the evolving data and patterns and the research questions and aims. In addition to making graphs to illustrate the results of data analysis.

4. Results

The synthesis of these themes offers valuable insights into the impact of Spacena on the community, addressing both positive outcomes and concerns from the community perspective shown in Figure 6. Outcomes and concerns from the community perspective. Spacena successfully strengthened community ties by providing essential amenities, catering to user preferences, and fostering economic empowerment, particularly among women and individuals with special needs. The analysis of coding from interviews, focus groups, and observations identified six key themes, including financial empowerment, promotion of social cohesion, timely response to community demands, addressing user preferences, project displacement concerns, and operating expenses.

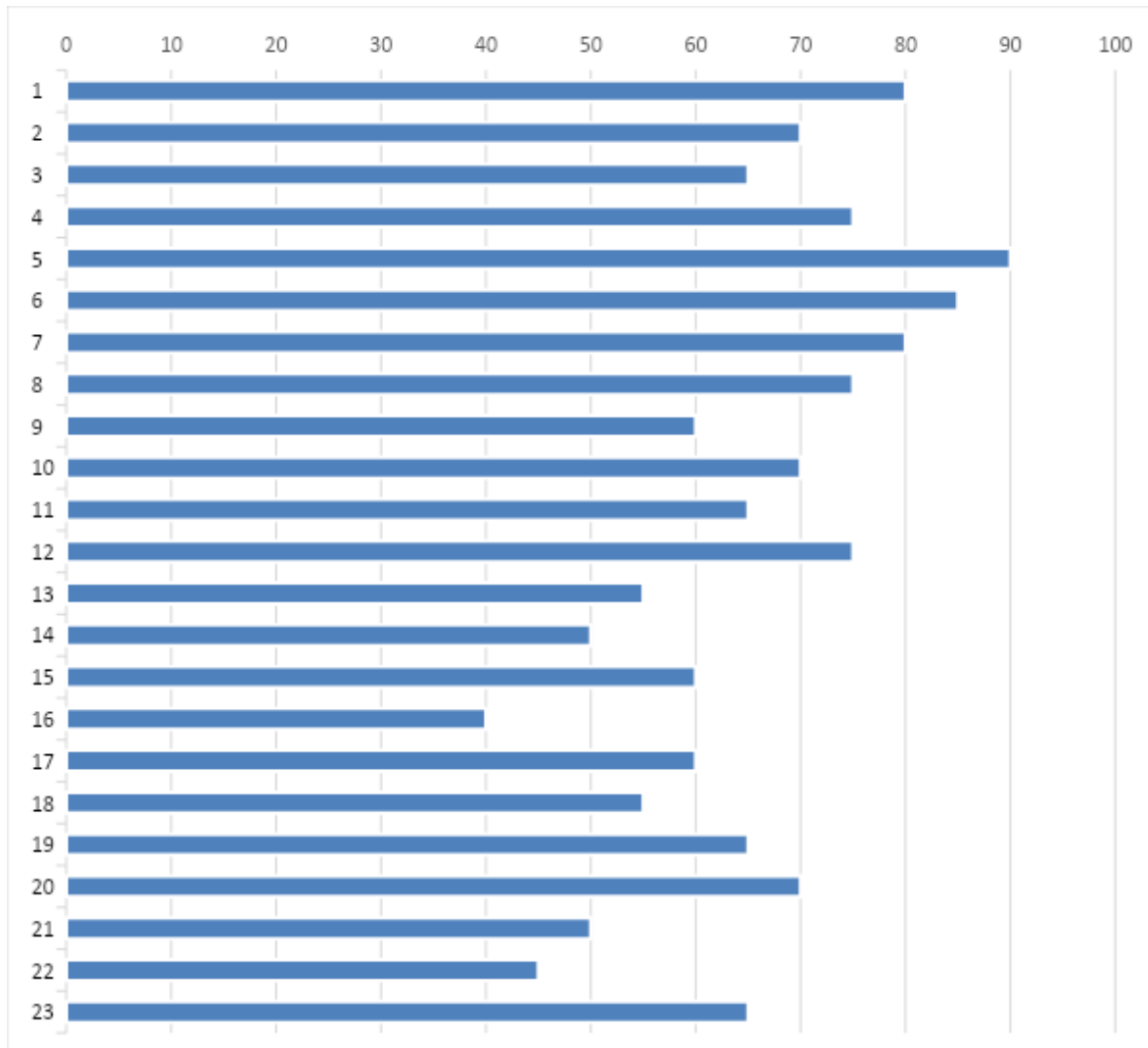


Figure 6. Outcomes and concerns from the community perspective.

4.1. Financial empowerment

Spacena served as a launchpad for entrepreneurship, enabling women to start or expand their businesses with low entry barriers. By providing a physical space to showcase their products and interact with customers, Spacena facilitated income generation and business growth for aspiring entrepreneurs. During the participatory focus group session, every participant conveyed their interest in the project, as one of the women stated "The project is fully aligned with our needs. I manufacture home products and require a well-appointed space to showcase them".

The results indicated that Spacena's role went beyond immediate income generation to capacity building and long-term economic impact. One said, "*Now I feel that I can bigger my project and show my products live instead of social media streams*". By nurturing entrepreneurial skills and providing ongoing support, Spacena contributed to sustainable livelihoods and economic resilience among women in the community.

From a different perspective, the IRC Community Center, situated within the park, plays a significant role in providing workshops, training sessions, and unique activities tailored towards economic empowerment, with a particular focus on women in the community. These initiatives are designed to equip women with the practical skills and knowledge necessary for entrepreneurship and economic independence. Here, Spacena serves as a tangible outlet for applying this acquired knowledge, effectively transforming theoretical concepts into viable business opportunities. The interview



conducted with IRC community centre employees verified that *“Spacena has transformed from a static structure into a dynamic force for economic empowerment. This alliance provides women with opportunities to earn money and access to financial resources. Rather than being an afterthought, community engagement is a core value”*. This partnership not only enables women to generate income but also facilitates access to financial resources. In return, it provides guidance on budgeting, pricing strategies, and financial management, empowering participants to make informed decisions and sustain their ventures.

4.2. Promotion of social cohesion

The study revealed that Spacena significantly strengthened community cohesion, particularly among women, including those with special needs who represent around 10 percent of the neighborhood. The project empowered women to engage actively with children and fellow residents in the garden, fostering stronger social networks. Women with disabilities quickly embraced the project, finding opportunities for communication and collaboration that enhanced their sense of belonging and participation in community activities. One woman said *“my son, (who is a PWD) is extremely thankful for this opportunity. Finally, we can achieve our dream!”* This comprehensive approach not only enhanced community ties but also economically empowered women, driving broader community participation. This sentiment reflects a genuine need for inclusive employment opportunities and highlights the project's importance in addressing diverse community needs and aspirations.

The results also underscored the role of Spacena in enhancing inclusivity and diversity, bringing together individuals of different ages and economic backgrounds around a shared interest in locally made products. This inclusive approach empowered women with special needs to overcome social barriers and participate more actively in community life. One community member noted how discussions about the project encouraged her sister, previously reluctant to leave the house, to visit the garden and engage with the diverse group of women involved. This shift illustrates the transformative impact of Spacena in breaking down barriers and fostering a more integrated and inclusive neighbourhood environment.

The impact also reached a different category. The results confirmed strengthened community ties during the installation and study stages of the project. A security man humorously remarked, *“Put it next to me so I can drink coffee on a daily basis, and in return, I take care of the project at night.”* This humorous exchange highlights the collaborative spirit and shared ownership of the project within the different community groups and shows how Spacena is a significant need for the whole community.

4.3. Timely response to community demands

The results demonstrated that Spacena effectively addressed the community's urgent need for nearby commercial facilities, especially within the park, catering to the specific needs of women and children. One woman emphasized that *“the project encouraged children to remain safely inside the park by providing essential items like juices and chocolates, reducing their exposure to risks on main streets”*. This efficient service provision not only supported women's work and income but also fostered a sense of internal satisfaction, motivating them to deliver services with care and dedication.

The meetings and focus groups drew enthusiastic participation from community stakeholders who were impressed by the project's impact relative to its implementation time. They praised the project and provided valuable suggestions for enhancing community engagement. Supporters of community initiatives expressed interest in creating direct employment opportunities through the project, which would strengthen community initiatives and deepen understanding of community needs. Furthermore, one institution expressed a desire to replicate the project in multiple locations and gardens due to its proven effectiveness in promoting community development.



4.4. Addressing user preferences

The results highlight the impact of Spacena in addressing user preferences through a comprehensive analysis of the immediate surroundings and methodical observations over a week-long site assessment. This approach identified the pressing need for improved commercial space, leading to tailored amenities and services, including the strategic addition of a retail counter that was deemed essential by the community. Through this site-specific study and adaptive planning, Spacena emerged as a practical solution that precisely caters to the unique requirements and aspirations of its community, demonstrating the transformative potential of user-centred design in tactical urbanism.

An inspiring collaboration that closed the gap between experts and the community resulted from the participatory sessions with the local population and fostered a user-centred approach and a sense of ownership and pride in the intended Spacena development among the locals by encouraging active involvement and input. Residents engaged in open communication to share their opinions, goals, dreams, and personalized experiences, which enhanced the design process by providing important context based on their requirements. This resulted in increasing the satisfaction level of the users; especially PWD. One of the PWD said “oh! This space here is wide enough for the wheelchair!” she referred to the corridor space between the counter and the shelves in the back.

4.5. Project displacement concern

Despite the positive impact of the project on the local community, they showed a significant concern regarding the project’s removal. One woman frankly questioned “*Is it going to stay? Are they going to remove it later on?*”. After many consecutive political, social and economic constraints, they started to question the very simple opportunity they could benefit from, as if they didn’t have the right to access it. The temporality concern also extended to “*until when we can use it to show our products before it goes?*”.

The temporality concern also extended to “until when we can use it to show our products before it goes?”. The sentiment of questioning the accessibility and longevity of the project suggests a fundamental desire for stability and sustainability. For entrepreneurs, in particular, the temporality concern extends beyond inconvenience; it directly impacts their ability to plan and invest in their businesses. The prospect of a temporary opportunity raises doubts about the viability of using Spacena as a platform to showcase their products and establish a lasting presence in the market. Stability in location is crucial for entrepreneurs seeking to take serious steps toward business establishment and project continuity, highlighting the need for assurances regarding the project's permanence and ongoing support.

Furthermore, community members perceive regulatory and administrative entities as barriers to their access to initiatives like Spacena, raising doubts about the reliability of formal support channels to their businesses. Instead of viewing these bodies as facilitators of progress, there is a prevailing sentiment of caution and skepticism, driven by past experiences of bureaucratic obstacles and unfulfilled promises. “*Leave it! You will have to deal with Amana (municipality) in the future*”; said whisperingly by a woman pulling her friend away.

4.6. Operating expenses

Another concern raised by the residents is regarding financial planning and whether they will use Spacena as their main selling platform. For many start-ups, the location rent price plays a crucial element in managing their business budget. One questioned: “*Ohh! Are you going to take money from us?*” reflects apprehension about additional financial burdens, while another asked: “*Is it costly?*”, underscores the need for clarity on pricing structures.

Furthermore, the local entrepreneurs worried about the potential financial risks associated with renting the space, expressing concerns about being liable for rent even on slow sales days. The sentiment,



"What if we didn't sell on that day, are you going to make us pay for the rent?! This project is supposed to help us not break us!", highlights the community's desire for a supportive and sustainable economic platform.

After telling them that the project might be run by a local community support centre, meaning reduced or waived rental fees. Their concerns shifted towards the operational strategies like how many days per week one can use it and what type of products they are allowed to sell. This shift in focus towards operational strategies underscores the importance of transparent communication and clear guidelines to alleviate anxieties and empower entrepreneurs to leverage Spacena as a viable avenue for economic growth and community empowerment.

5. Discussion

The project achieved remarkable success, yet certain interactions posed challenges for individual users, particularly women with special needs. We analyzed the conducted codes and their frequency using cloud analysis, as Figure 7. Cloud Analysis shows. The results demonstrate a range of codes, with 69 percent indicating positive impacts and 31 percent reflecting negative sentiments.

The residents perceive Spacna as an "*Opportunity*". An opportunity to improve their economic and social conditions. This perception is rooted in its dual role as both an income generator and a socializing space. Locals view Spacena as a gateway to entrepreneurial opportunities, helping women in the community to start and sustain their businesses, thus boosting their financial independence and contributing to economic diversity. Additionally, the project has fostered a vibrant social environment where community members can interact, collaborate, and build stronger social ties. These findings align with existing literature on tactical urbanism, which emphasizes the potential for such projects to foster local economic development and community engagement (Mike, Anthony, & Andres, 2015; Lydon, 2015).

However, despite these positive impacts, concerns about the project's future persist. The risk of removal poses a significant threat to the gains made, as it could disrupt the established community benefits and undermine the emotional and financial investments of residents. Furthermore, issues related to budget management have emerged, with concerns about the adequacy of financial resources for ongoing operations and expansions. The community's apprehension about the complexities and costs associated with maintaining and potentially expanding Spacena highlights the need for stable funding and effective budget management strategies. Ensuring these aspects are addressed is crucial for preserving the project's success and extending its benefits to the community in the long term.



Figure 7. Cloud Analysis.

The results call for proactive measures. This fear of encountering institutional obstacles highlights the need for transparent communication and support from regulatory bodies. The effectiveness of Spacena is heavily reliant on institutional support and regulatory frameworks. However, the consistency and reliability of this support can vary significantly depending on the region and the specific regulatory environment. Inconsistent or inadequate institutional backing can pose substantial barriers to the project's expansion or replication. For example, bureaucratic delays, complex licensing requirements, and insufficient governmental resources can hinder the project's ability to scale or sustain its initiatives. Such challenges emphasize the need for more robust and supportive policy frameworks to ensure that projects like Spacena can thrive.

Based on this, it is crucial to implement policies that address key community concerns. First, subsidizing rental spaces within community projects can significantly reduce the financial burden on small businesses and women entrepreneurs, particularly those from marginalized communities. Simplifying and expediting the licensing and regulatory approval processes will help mitigate bureaucratic obstacles and encourage formal business participation. Establishing regular feedback sessions and community meetings ensures that the project can timely respond to community demands and tailor services to better address user preferences. Additionally, creating clear and accessible communication channels between the community and regulatory bodies can enhance transparency, build trust, and alleviate fears of project displacement.

Moreover, targeted programs that provide financial, educational, and mentorship support for women entrepreneurs can promote financial empowerment and help bridge economic disparities. Ensuring inclusivity in project design allows individuals of all abilities and backgrounds to participate, fostering social cohesion and maximizing community benefits. Developing long-term sustainability plans, including funding strategies, maintenance protocols, and community ownership models, will ensure the project's longevity and ongoing support for the community. By focusing on these strategic areas, policymakers can enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of community-driven projects.



6. Conclusions

The study's findings support the hypothesis that Spacena acts as a catalyst for economic empowerment, social cohesion, and community development in marginalized urban areas. Interviews and focus groups revealed significant financial empowerment among women entrepreneurs, who reported increased income and improved financial management skills. The project also enhanced social cohesion by providing a communal space that fostered interactions and support networks, particularly for women and individuals with special needs.

This study contributes to the existing literature by providing empirical evidence on the positive impact of tactical urbanism on marginalized communities. It highlights the challenges and opportunities for women entrepreneurs, emphasizing the importance of community-driven initiatives in urban planning. The findings underscore the value of integrating community input into project design, leading to successful outcomes. Additionally, the study offers policy recommendations to enhance project sustainability and introduces an innovative methodology using cloud analysis for data coding, setting a precedent for future research in similar contexts.

Spacena's impact appears to be multifaceted and significant, particularly in empowering women entrepreneurs and fostering community cohesion. The project has provided tangible economic opportunities for women, enabling them to manage finances, generate income, and engage socially within their neighbourhood. However, challenges remain, especially related to regulatory hurdles and concerns about project sustainability.

Overall, Spacena exemplifies the potential of tactical urbanism to create inclusive and transformative spaces within marginalized urban areas, offering valuable lessons for future community-driven initiatives. Spacena develops into more than simply a physical location; it also becomes a hub for women to start their businesses, generate income, and gain access to financial resources. In addition, Spacena becomes a communal asset that is collaboratively developed by the people it seeks to uplift.

The study's key findings reveal that Spacena has made a substantial impact in six crucial areas: First, it has significantly advanced financial empowerment by offering local entrepreneurs valuable opportunities and resources. Second, the project has fostered social cohesion, bringing together diverse community members and strengthening ties, particularly among women with special needs. Third, Spacena has responded effectively to community demands by providing timely, cost-efficient solutions and accessible commercial spaces. Fourth, it has adeptly addressed user preferences through responsive design and tailored amenities. Fifth, concerns about potential project displacement have been acknowledged, highlighting the need for strategies to ensure permanence. Lastly, the study underscores the importance of managing operating expenses, suggesting that streamlined regulatory processes and transparent communication are essential for long-term sustainability and trust.

The results underscore the critical need to address community concerns regarding the sustainability and permanence of projects like Spacena. Proactive measures are essential to ensure that these initiatives provide not only immediate benefits but also a stable foundation for long-term economic empowerment and community development. For example, integrating continuous feedback mechanisms and regular community meetings can help in refining operational strategies that align with local needs. The prevalent fear of institutional obstacles highlights the necessity for transparent communication, accountability, and tangible support from regulatory bodies. Establishing clear guidelines and simplifying bureaucratic processes can foster trust and enable sustainable development. Stakeholders and policymakers must engage in collaborative decision-making and tailored strategies, such as offering subsidized rental spaces and dedicated training programs, to create a supportive and inclusive environment for local businesses. These steps will ensure that the project not only meets immediate demands but also evolves as a resilient community asset.

Future research could explore the long-term impacts, through longitudinal studies, to assess how sustained community-driven initiatives affect women's entrepreneurship and broader economic



empowerment over time. Additionally, comparative studies across different urban settings could identify best practices and adaptable strategies for diverse socio-economic contexts. Further studies can also explore the potential for scaling such initiatives and integrating them into broader urban planning frameworks, contributing to the creation of inclusive and resilient urban environments.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Data availability statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author M.A. Shahed Alhadyan.

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