



Co-designing built interventions with children affected by displacement

Riccardo Conti – Catalytic Action



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with children affected by displacement

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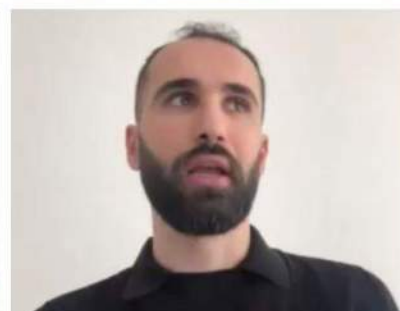
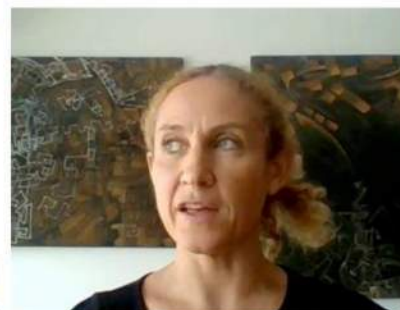
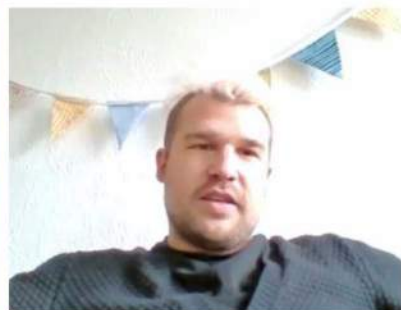
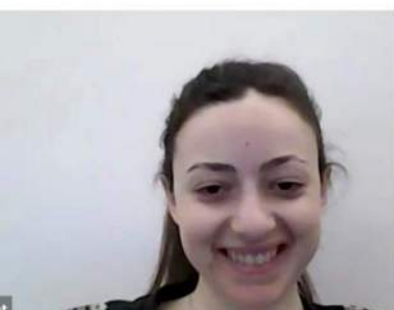
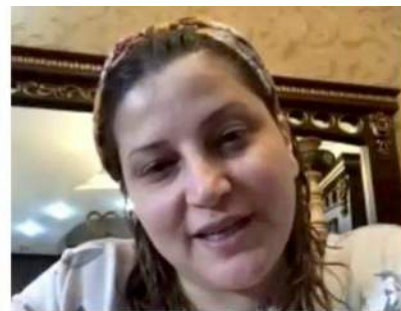
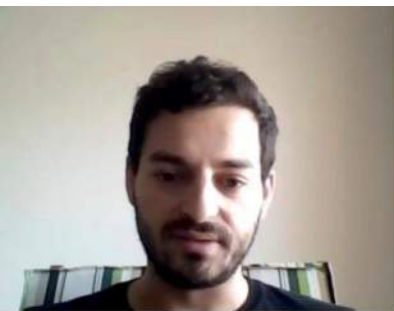
TOOLKIT

Co-designing built interventions
with children affected by displacement

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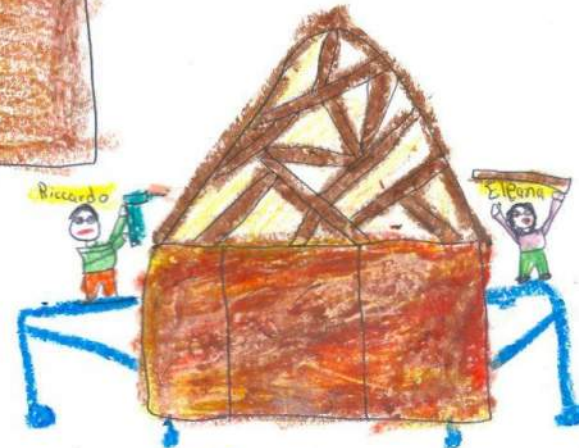
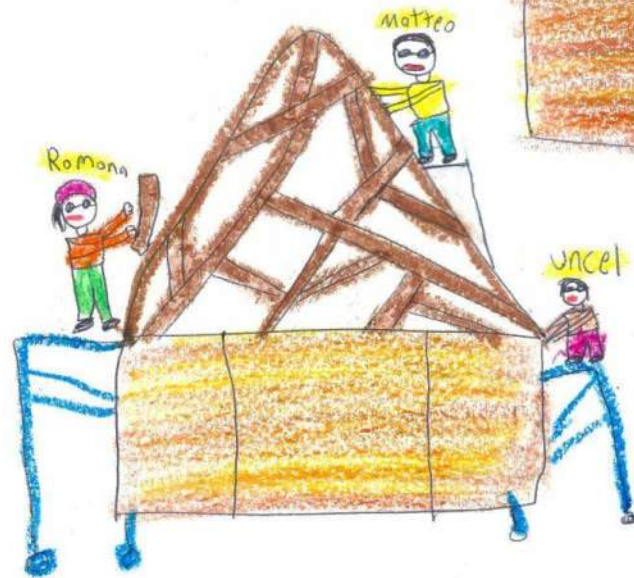
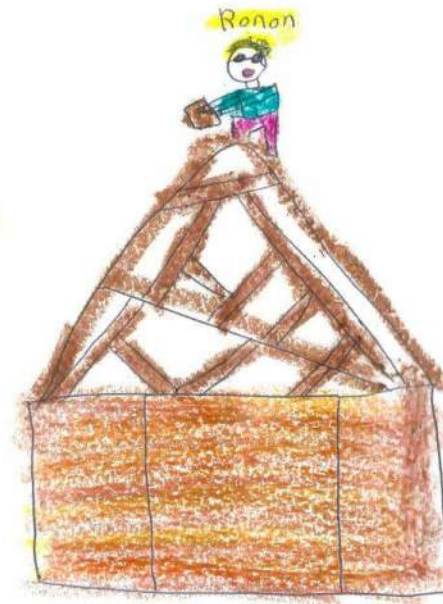
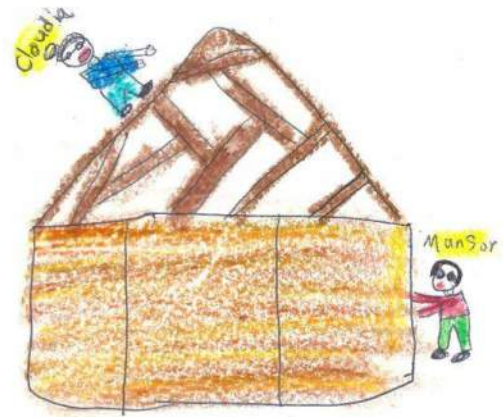






- Empower children and have a lasting positive impact
- Improve social cohesion between refugee and host communities, and within the refugee community
- Have a positive impact on the local economy, build capacity and provide employment
- Deliver better infrastructures for children and their communities





- They require professionals from different fields of specialism to work together and often organizational structures do not make these collaborations easy
- Their additional value is difficult to measure, especially on the long term
- They require a larger initial investment compared to the funds required only for the built product
- They often present multiple operational challenges, including some linked to safeguarding, which prevent many organizations from taking on such projects





Designing
with children



Procurement and
building



Post building,
impact and sustainability



Visioning Play

Visioning activity developed by CatalyticAction

Visioning Play is an activity in which participants' memories of play spaces are initiated in order for them to create visions of their desired future playground, expressed through art making. Children affected by displacement might not have had opportunities to enjoy play spaces, or might have experienced traumatic events such as the loss of friends and family members or the destruction of their homes or other spaces where they used to play. A guided visualization led by the facilitator can engage participants' imagination as they navigate memories, in order to dream and reach new ideas.

Tip: Throughout the session, be sensitive to the children's individual situations, and conscious of images you choose, what associations they might trigger and how you discuss them. Images that are associated with memories of war such as destruction, small dark rooms, and loud sounds may cause traumatic memories to resurface in children who have experienced displacement. It is helpful to have a professional's support.



Purpose:

For participants to create their individual vision of the playground



Duration:

50 minutes



Group size:

Ideally up to 15 participants with one facilitator, up to 30 participants with two facilitators



Suggested Age:

4+



Materials:

Papers; Pencils; Crayons; Glue stick; Scissors; Printed texture templates; white board, flipchart or large papers; markers.



Space:

This activity works best in a classroom with desks or tables for drawing and collage.

Preparation:

- Write down the guided visualization you will share with the participants. The guided visualization will lead them through a vehicle that transports them anywhere they would like to be. Practice your guided visualization, bringing awareness to your voice, pace, breath, pauses, and choice of words. Use a mirror, recording device or ask a friend to give feedback and suggest areas for improvement. The quality of your performance will significantly affect the participants' ability to go far with their imagination.



- For collage in the art making activity, print out or collect images that show textures you may find in different spaces. For example, textures of grass, flowers, forests, concrete, asphalt, bricks, tiles etc. This can suggest the participants' preference for material feel in the space. Avoid using preconceived images of objects, buildings or people, as these will be drawn by participants for a more personal expression.
- Prepare a drawing/collage of your vision, a world you would like to play in, as an example and reference for participants.



Step by Step

Part One - Visualization Journey

- Introduce the participants to your project, such as who the team is, how you work and what it takes to build a playground. Explain that in this activity, they will be brainstorming together ideas to help realize the built design.
- Inform participants that you will be telling them a story.
- Ask them to close their eyes and rest their heads on their desk throughout the story, in order to see it in their minds.
- Begin your guided visualization.
- In the following example, a bird will guide them from their classroom to their desired world:

(1) Imagine now, that outside this room, you hear the sound of a bird [you whistle]. It is singing! You get up from your desk and walk out the door, out the hallway, and the more you walk, the bird's sound gets louder [whistle again].

(2) Finally you are outside and there you see it! The bird is smiling at you, it is not like any bird, it is big, as big as a truck! And it is beautiful, with feathers of yellow and green, its wings are blue and purple, its beak is golden and its face is bright orange.

"Would you like to fly with me?" it asks.

"Where to?" you ask.

"Anywhere!"

"Anywhere?"



(3) "Yes! Think about it. Would you like to go to a big green field? Or a desert? Or to the top of a cloudy mountain? To a busy city, or to the big blue sea? We can go to a castle, would you like to go to the moon? To the stars, or anywhere in outer space? We can go anywhere you imagine. We will have a lot of fun. All you have to do is dream."

You are excited and decide to go. You climb up on the back of the bird and you tell it where to go. It flaps its wings one.. two... three... and takes off, up up higher, up towards the clouds. The world under you gets smaller. As you fly you see many worlds pass by. And finally you get there, the bird lands.

(4) What do you see around you? What colors? What does it feel like under your feet? Are there people around you or are you alone with the bird? Take a moment to stand and to look around this new and exciting place.

Notes on the guided visualization:

(1) Notice that the participants are guided from concrete images gradually into the world of their own. Begin with imagery that references the room you are in, for example, the classroom and the hallways you need to pass to get outside.

(2) Describe the vehicle in detail so as to help participants begin to visualize and imagine beyond the reality. You may choose a machine, a big balloon, a butterfly, etc. Preferably something that can fly and reach unexpected places.

(3) Ask questions to trigger images of different possible places, and keep it open to invite their own ideas.

(4) Ask questions that invite the participants to observe different details of the world they chose to go to.

- If a child opens their eyes, guide them gently to closing them back again.
- When you finish, give the participants time to rest in their imagination and then say: when you feel ready open your eyes.
- Ask the participants to share what places they went to and what they looked like. Take notes on the white board through quick texts or drawings.
- Then ask them to think of what they might play in each of these places and add their suggestions on the board. You may give ideas of your own if you feel they need a little push. For example: on the moon, I would like to build a big castle from the sand so that my friends on earth can see me!

Part Two - Creating

- Introduce the participants to the collage/drawing technique that would allow them to visualize the worlds they have imagined and how they would be playing in their worlds.
- Share the artwork you have prepared about your imaginary world as a reference.
- Divide the participants in- groups, as needed. Distribute a set of materials to each group and ask them to begin creating their play space.
- Go around the groups to interact with them about their artworks.
- When the participants complete their designs, set up a gallery walk as described in the 'Wind down' template in order to have a discussion about the work.



Designing with children



1. Generating an idea
2. Building partnerships
3. Funding
4. Researching local context and needs
5. Translating children's ideas into design solutions
6. Selecting the intervention location
7. Choosing materials, skills and technologies
8. Technical design

