

LOCAL PERSPECTIVES ON PUBLIC SPACE

GRAND GOAVE, HAITI



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Explore Lab 12



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INTRODUCTION



One of the best ways to get insight in the habits and desires of a community is to let local people present this. The workshop local perspectives on public space had the goal to let students in Grand Goave present their typical and desired public space during a couple of workshops. The interaction with the students and documentation of the process of the workshops resulted in a creative and playful representation of local perspectives on public space. Two workshops have been conducted to two different groups of students. One workshop with teenagers of Wonderful WEFSI, where they drawn/described their public space and discussed these in a role playing game. The other workshop was with kids of Ecole Nationale Mixte. They drew their favourite public

(playing) space and fantasy improvements. Winners of the first workshop got a disposable camera to portray, in their mind, vital public places in Grand Goave. The workshops have been documented with drawings, photos, videos and sound clips. The outcomes are presented in a video, an exhibition and this booklet.

Grand Goave, Haiti

The workshop focuses on Grand Goave, Haiti. This location was visited during the field research for the authors graduation theses. Haiti is located in the centre of the Caribbean and occupies the western third of the island Hispaniola which it shares with the Dominican Republic. There live 9,7 million people in

Haiti, wherefrom 2,2 million live in and around capital Port-au-Prince.¹ Grand Goave is a small city with 19.874 inhabitants lying 48 km west of Port-au-Prince.

On 12 January 2010 Haiti got struck by an earthquake. In this event 222.570 people got killed, 300.572 injured and 1.5 million people became homeless. A total 3 million people (about 1/3 of the total population) got affected by the disaster.² The earthquake destroyed 90% of Grand Goave, including most of its public buildings.



Figure 1: Grand Goave
































Figure 2: Map of Haiti

1 Thomas Brinkhoff, 2010. *City population Haiti*. [online] Available at: <<http://www.citypopulation.de/Haiti.html>> [Accessed 04 February 2012]

2 UN OCHA, 2011. *Haiti one year later*. [online] Available at: <<http://www.unocha.org/issues-in-depth/haiti-one-year-later>> [Accessed 04 February 2012]

Icon legenda

Settings

-  Basketball field
-  Beach
-  Church
-  Cinema
-  Day care
-  Football field
-  Garden/yard
-  Gym
-  Highway
-  Hospital
-  Hotel
-  House
-  Laboratory
-  Legislation office
-  Library
-  Market
-  Parking garage
-  Pharmacy
-  Playground
-  Police station
-  Prison
-  Restaurant
-  School
-  Square
-  Swimming pool
-  Tennis court
-  Theatre
-  Town hall
-  University

Characteristics

-  Advertisement
-  Air conditioning
-  Bed
-  Bike
-  Boat
-  Car
-  Cat
-  Chair
-  Dress
-  Flag
-  Flowers
-  Fountain
-  Fresh water
-  Game
-  Gate
-  Graffiti
-  Grass
-  Ladder
-  Lamp post
-  Motor
-  Observation Plateau
-  Podium
-  Public parking
-  Public shower
-  Public toilet
-  Referee
-  Salad
-  Sandbox
-  Security
-  Shovel
-  Slide
-  Statue
-  Swing
-  Table
-  Taptap/bus
-  Trashcan
-  Tree
-  Tricycles

Activities

-  Basketball
-  Buying
-  Cards
-  Crafting
-  Cycling
-  Dancing
-  Driving
-  Gardening
-  Gym
-  Football
-  Healing
-  Jump rope
-  Karate
-  Making music
-  Motor driving
-  Pissing
-  Playing games
-  Reading
-  Shooting
-  Sitting
-  Skating
-  Supporting
-  Swimming
-  Tennis
-  Watching TV

WORKSHOP WITH TEENAGERS



Goal

The goal of the first workshop is to get local perspectives on culture and public space, coming from teenagers and focusing on creating mutual understanding amongst each other.

Assignment

Part 1: The students are asked to make a drawing / write down their wishes of what a public space should be.

Part 2: The second part consisted out a role-playing game where the municipality, ministry of culture an investment agent and a project developer were represented, and four people could present their plans to them. The intention was to create a debate on what public space needs and how to realize this coming from different stakes.

Part 3: Explaining their plans on camera as testimony.

Storyline

The first workshop was held on a Saturday, when additional classes are given for students to improve their English in particular. As we did become friends with one of the teachers in this facility during our stay in Grand Goave, a request was placed to keep one of the workshops with his class. Excitement and willingness was the response. However, first some practicalities needed to get arranged. It was decided we needed to have a proper introduction and plan ready, as the class would consist out of almost 30 students. Together with Denis, our local friend and teacher, the job was to give the

students the instruments for the workshop, as well as inspire them to actively participate. For this, we used a concept that would let them discuss differing interest and visions mostly. It was imagined teenage students would be able to set up dialogues for us to document. Question interrelated were how we could stage a committee which formulates the highest potential for developing a public space? Also, how and to whom should they present their plan? In this part, the actual events are described where after the results are presented.

The workshop started with a proper introduction of us as students of the Delft University of Technology, interested in local perspectives on public space. Next to this, the outline of the workshop was given. It was to be a semi-competitive workshop, where the outcome resulted in a winner that would take disposable cameras to document current public space in the city.

Firstly, students were to draw, or write, their ideal public space. This would include the setting, its characteristics and activities possible to perform. Local teachers, and us as students, were actively involved in stimulating, observing and listening to ideas of individual students. Where the outcomes are presented in the following pages, a clear distinction between students motivated to participate and ones who seem to be present only on the request of Denis can be made. Where students motivated described their places in detail, others clearly presented simple mono-fuctional outcomes. The role playing game started with an explana-

tion of what our favourite public space would be, in order to set the dialogue for the Haitian students. The format was to introduce each other, present the plans and after debate whether the plans are feasible and how each stake is represented. The local visions on public space were presented by four 'project developers', where the 'mayor', 'minister of culture' and an 'investment agent' evaluated the plans. Each was given specific, conflicting interests in order to create a dialogue to test whether the students could come to consensus. The spaces presented were a hospital, basketball field, public square and play ground. What was striking, that in the first two discussions points were made where the stakes of each actor were defended. Based on this, the 'project developer' adapted his plan to come to overall consensus. In the latter two, the debate was solely focused around finances. Each actor tried to benefit financially. Concluding, the rest of the class voted who they thought presented the best plan and this person was given the 'price' of two disposable cameras to photograph his, or her favourite public spaces in Grand Goave City. Ultimately, the girl presenting her plan for a public square won.

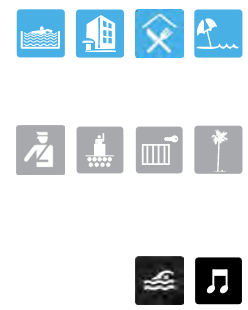
The final part of the first workshop consisted out five testimonies where students presented their work. In this, they were asked to give a short description of their plans. Four boys and a girl presented their visions, where it was obvious boys were more outspoken throughout the entire day.

Profiles



He would like to activate the beach. It should become a place where people can relax, get married and celebrate their honeymoon. It would therefore need to have a hotel, a swimming pool, trees, restaurant and a podium for live music. He says though, Haiti can be dangerous and the beach will need to be save with security and gates.

Finds music and swimming the most important activities needed in the place.



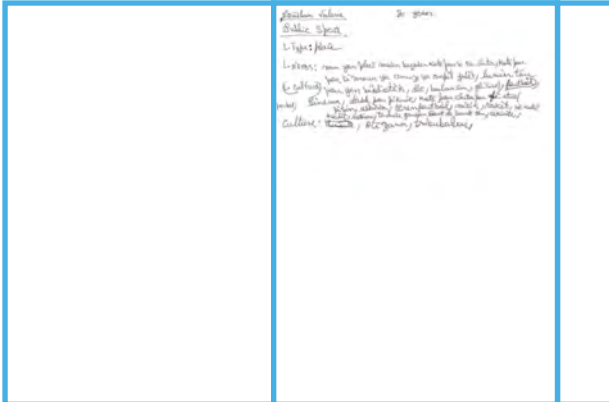
Needs a communal campus. A place where students can learn and pray. Finds education and god leading necessities in live. The place needs trees, chairs and air conditioning.



The market must be improved. It is important more families can have income. The market should be improved by incorporating public amenities as showers, toilet en water fountains. Next to this chairs are needed so people can rest and trees should be planted for shade.

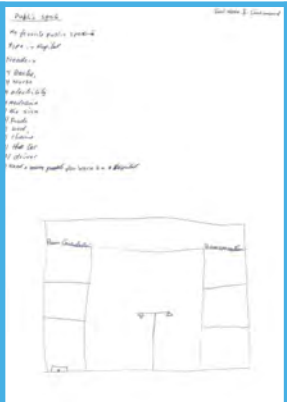
The prime and sole activity important for him is stimulating commerce.





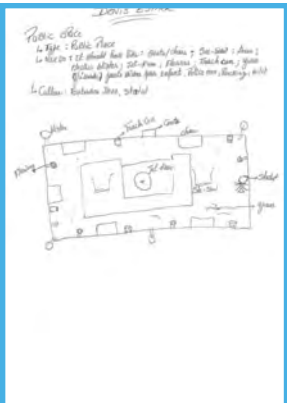
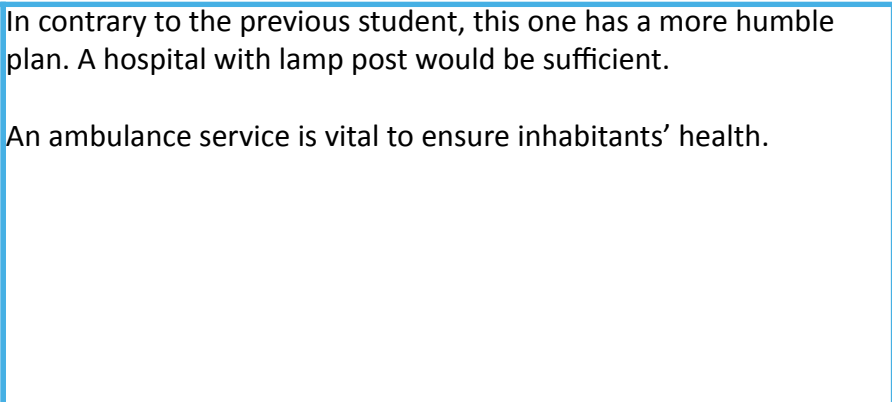
This student want loads; in new actual places, as well as its characteristics and activities. He finds a good public space one that has a market, a football field, a hospital, library, cinema and restaurants. These must be secured, have a public toilet and fresh water, tables for picnic, swings and a podium.

The place should provide room for commerce, football, crafting, music, reading and watching films.



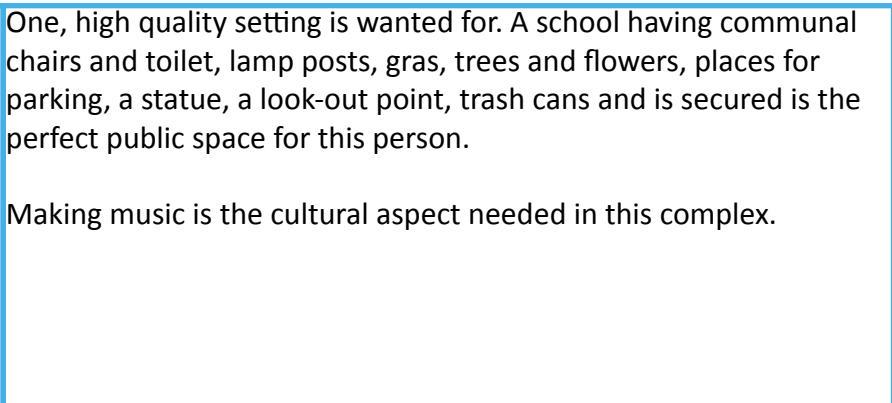
In contrary to the previous student, this one has a more humble plan. A hospital with lamp post would be sufficient.

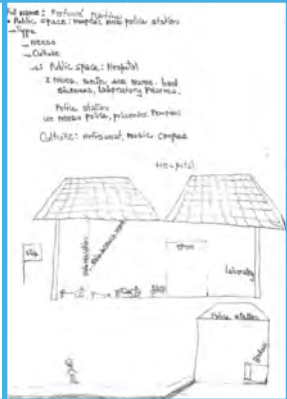
An ambulance service is vital to ensure inhabitants' health.



One, high quality setting is wanted for. A school having communal chairs and toilet, lamp posts, gras, trees and flowers, places for parking, a statue, a look-out point, trash cans and is secured is the perfect public space for this person.

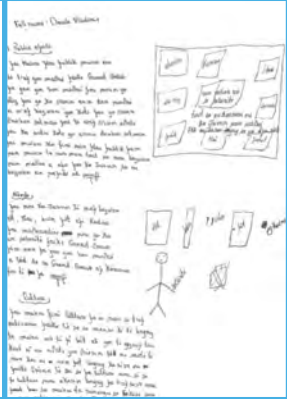
Making music is the cultural aspect needed in this complex.





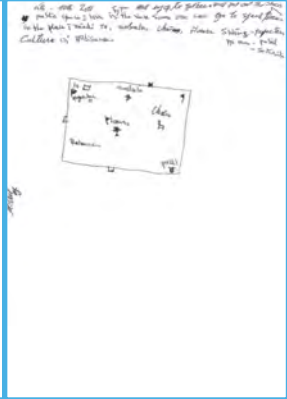
Would like to have public services explicitly. Finds a police station, hospital, pharmacy, laboratory and a prison essential. All should be lighted at night and guarded by gates.

Crafting and music are considered important activities.



Finds a good market and public square as imperative public spaces. Yet, these should be guarded by security personnel and gates.

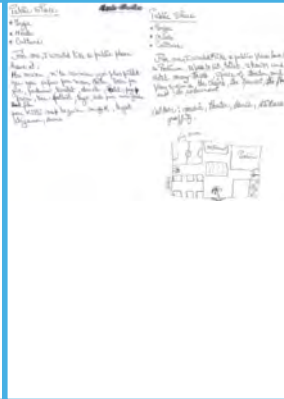
In these places, commerce is the essential activity.



Wants to have a cinema in town with good chairs, and swings and flowers outside.

Watching film should be done comfortably.





This public squares has a lot of functions, characteristics and activities. There is a football field, restaurant, hotel, swimming pool, theatre and play ground. There are trees, a podium, graffiti, public toilets, chairs, flowers and public showers present.

Music is played, people play football, they dance and swim.



This person wishes for a music school.

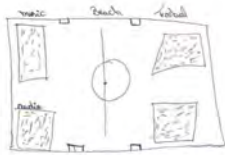


A public square is complemented by a basketball court. These are guarded by security personnel and gates, has chairs so people can watch the basketball game, walls are sprayed with graffiti and swings are present.

The ones interested can cycle and play basketball.



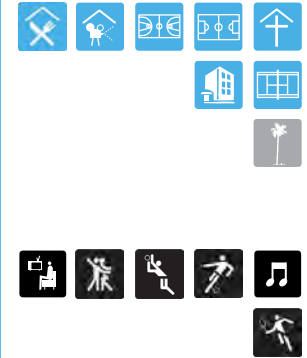
Handwritten notes in German describing a community space with various facilities.



God Bless You

Religion is combined with sport and leisure here. A church, football field, basketball field, cinema, restaurant, hotel and tennis court are present; surrounded by trees.

Music is played, people play football, basketball, tennis, dance and watch films.



Handwritten notes in German describing a public square with a football field and tennis court.

A public square, football field and tennis court are present. Lamp post and air conditioning ensure the quality of the place.

People are able to come by car, play football and tennis.



Handwritten notes in German describing a public square with a football pitch, restaurant, swimming pool, tennis court, and theatre.



Indicates a public square should be combined with a football pitch, restaurant, swimming pool, tennis court and theatre. The town's inhabitants should be able to sit and watch the sport activities, and graffiti determines local culture.

For the ones who are interested, one can play football, swim or play tennis.



Discussion

The spaces presented were a hospital, basketball field, public square and play ground. After introducing each other properly, the first plan was presented. This person wanted to build a hospital, with the emphasis that it would create a lot of jobs for society. Doctors were needed, nurses, drivers and security guards. After presenting the initial plan, the project developer took a passive role within the discussion. It was the investment agent who was particularly interested. For this reason, he took over the actual debate by trying to influence the mayor. It would be good for the town for it ensures the health of the people, he could use this for his campaign. However, although the mayor agreed on the content of the plan, he stated Grand Goave already had enough hospitals and an additional one is unnecessary. Also, he stressed the importance of finance in such a project. He and the minister of culture also addressed more public amenities should surround the hospital. Therefore, no concrete action was taken.

The second presentation was of a basketball field. Here, the emphasis was on the importance of sport to keep society healthy and entertained. For this project, investment were to be made in the actual court, benches, lamp posts, public toilets, public showers and a podium for half time entertainment by dance and music. As a response, the mayor agreed with the importance of sport to connect people, but commented there are no places to park ones car. He is concerned with the safety of

traffic where as you cannot park your car, the cars block the road and accidents are bound to happen. As a response, the project developer responded that the mayor alone holds the power to change parking regulations in favor for the stadium. However, the additional investments depended on the investment agent. Next to this, the minister of culture stressed the importance of facilities for the treatment of injured players. As these additional requirements came into debate, the investment agent was concerned with the possibilities to exploit the space economically. As he is expected to finance the project, he did not see enough commercial opportunities to make profit. Little space was available for return of his investment, as well as the dangers coming from such a project without having security 24/7. As a conclusion, no consensus was found on this plan either.

Thirdly, a more tangible presentation was taken into debate. The request was placed to develop a public space with possibilities for people to play and enjoy music. The intention is to provide people with the possibility to relax in the weekend, especially after a hard week of work. The minister of culture responded directly by stressing the value of placing trees, a swimming pool and restaurant. Where trees are fine for the project developer, the space would transform into a park then, she rejected the idea of a pool and restaurant. This was beyond the scope. The investment agent argues however, that if this is not incorporated his interests are not present. He takes over the plan by discuss-

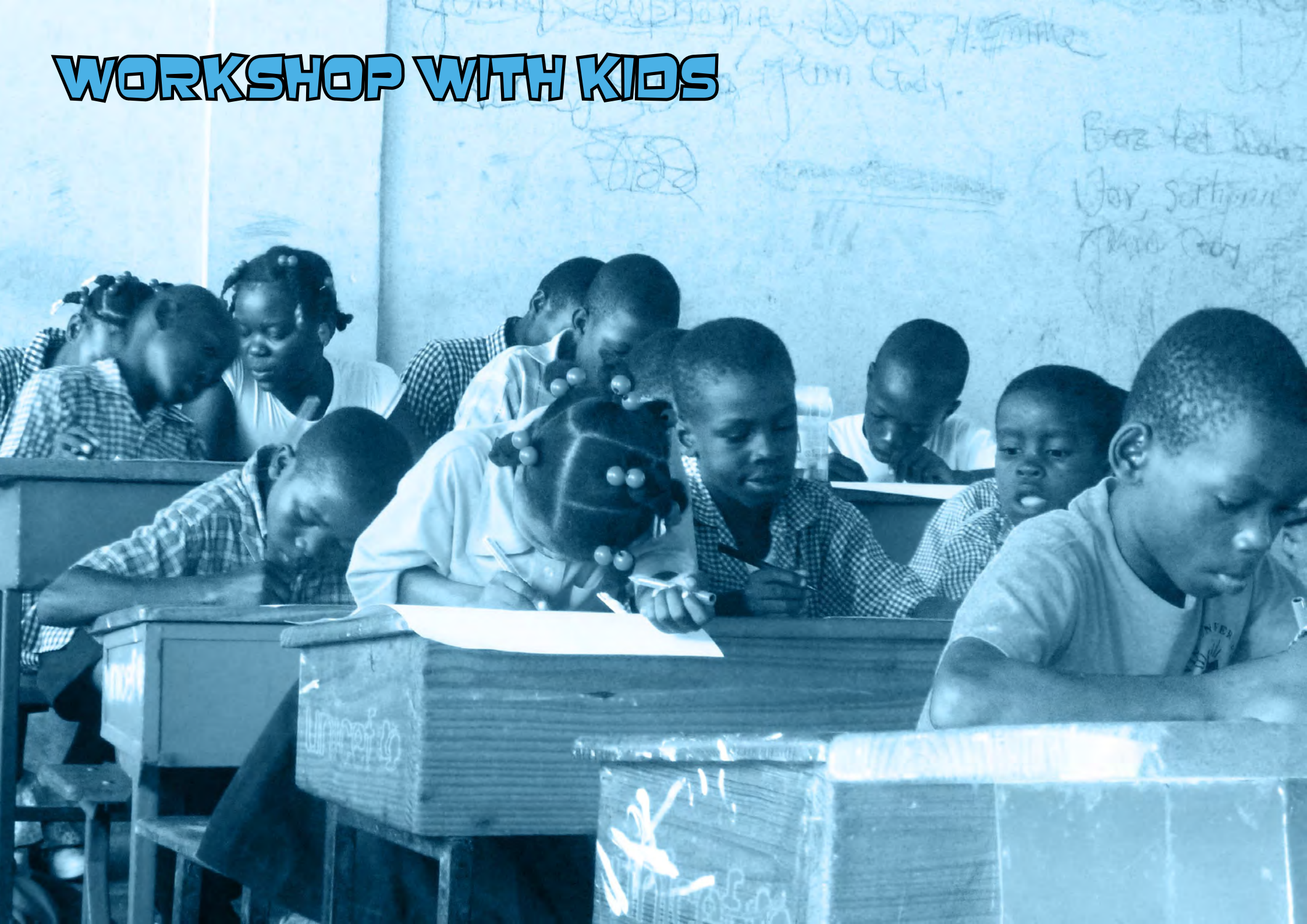
ing with the mayor. He wants to make the most money as possible. The mayor however, agrees with the statement of the project developer. His only prerequisite, is to place a billboard so people can see the plan was realized by him. Where the project developer and mayor agree on these terms, the interests debated by the minister and investment agent remained unchallenged.

The last presentation was that of a play ground within a park, having a fountain, jump ropes, bicycles and tennis court. The mayor finds it nice to have a playground in the town, but there is no actual spatial plan presented. No example drawings on how it should look like, where it should be and the size you need to put all the services in. The mayor has therefore no interest in the plan. As a response, the project developer turned to the minister of culture. He will improve and support the plan, only when he shares the revenues with him. The investment agent also negotiates a piece of the profit where after all want to share. It has become more a negotiation of finance and corruption. Eventually, the developer negotiates with the minister of culture in the hope to get the plan implemented.

What was striking, that in the first two discussions points were made where the stakes of each actor were defended. Based on this, the 'project developer' adapted his plan in the hope to come to overall consensus. In the latter two, the debate was eventually focused around finances. Each actor tried to benefit financially.



WORKSHOP WITH KIDS



Goal

Get an idea on the local perspectives of primary school students on public space or space to play. Find out what their perspective is on existing and desired public spaces in their city, Grand Goave.

Assignment

Part 1: Students are asked to make a drawing of their favourite public space/space to play.

Part 2: Students are asked to draw their wished/fantasy improvements of that public space.

Part 3: The students present their drawings and future ambitions on camera.



Figure 3: Example of the assignment

Storyline

The second workshop took place at primary school Ecole National Mixte. A group of about 25 students attended the workshop.

These students are about 6-10 years old. For them we formulated a different assignment than for the first workshop. For this group a drawing assignment would be more suitable. This gives the opportunity to have strong visual expressions on their vision on public space. What are the types of public space, their characteristics and activities? What does the community need to improve the public space?

When we arrived we got welcomed by the teacher Marie Antoinette and a class full of excited kids. After an introduction of ourselves, the assignment was explained to the students. For this workshop Denis helped us as a translator. As the students didn't speak and understand English he explained the assignments to the students and translated the presentations of the drawings.

Now the students know what to do, the paper and pencils got handed out and the students started immediate to draw their favourite public playing spaces.

After the kids had been drawing for a while the second part of the assignment got explained. The students were asked to draw what improvements they wish or fantasise for the communities public space. On the back of their drawing or with a new paper the kids continued drawing.

At the time that the drawings become close to finishing the last assignment gets explained. One by one the student come to the corner of the classroom to present their drawings. The other kids continue with finishing their drawings. Proudly and sometimes a little shy the kids tell about what they had drawn (on the following pages do profiles show what the kids presented). Issues of safety, health and sexuality are mentioned in the drawings, but most attention goes to football fields and housing, decorated with flowers and trees. At the end of each presentation the kids were asked about what they want to become in the future. Most students have the ambition to become either doctor/nurse or teacher.

After most of the students got the opportunity to present their drawings and the time was up the workshop got closed. The kids were thanked for their hard work and beautiful drawings. They respond enthusiastic that they enjoyed it.

Profiles



Favorite



Wished improvements

On the first drawing (his favourite public space) he made a drawing of 2 (karate) fighting man. A third person tries to kill one of them from a house. A man on a motorbike passes a football field where a player is playing football. The field is surrounded by a car, coconut tree and a cat.

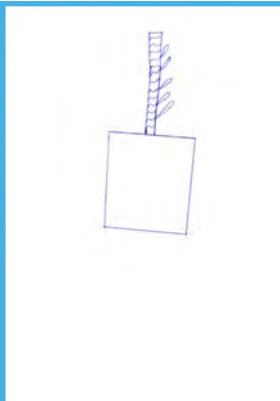
On the back he drew a hospital, what he thinks is needed in his neighborhood. In the hospital is a baby lying in bed.



Someone is sitting on a chair next to his house. The house is surrounded with flowers and has a garage. On the bottom of the drawing some people are playing on a football field with referees on the side.

On the back he drew a hospital with someone inside who is sick and has an IV therapy infusion.

He wants to become a doctor.



She drew a garden flower.

On the back she drew her wish of having a hospital in town.

She wants to become a doctor.

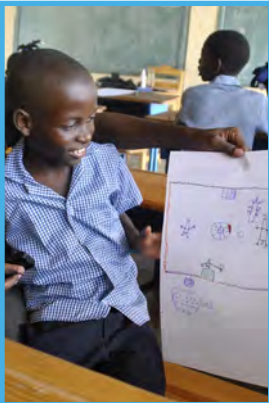




A couple of houses surround a football field. There is also a hospital with somebody in bed. Other element around the field are a flower, another house, chairs and a boat.

On the back he drew 2 hospitals.

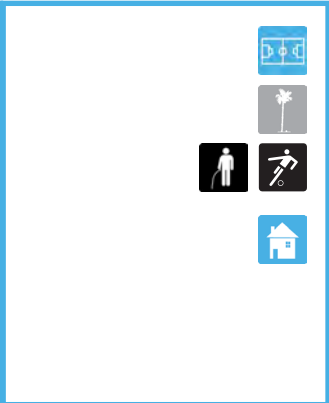
He wants to become a doctor .



Someone is kicking the ball to the goal. There are some mango trees next to the field. Several people are taking a piss. He drew this for fun.

On the back is a big house.

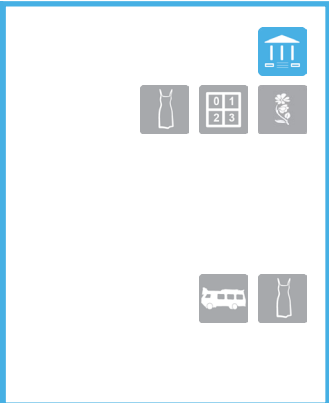
He wants to become a doctor.



She draw a university with some flowers, a game and a dress around it.

On the back she drew a car and some dresses.

She wants to become a dress maker.





He has been interviewed before, but wants to show this drawing too. He draw a football field and colored the grass of the field.



She drew a tree next to a yard. Some people playing a game. There are also a mango tree and flowers.



The favourite public place he drew is a football field. Next to the football field is a little house. In front of the house is standing a man.

On the back he drew a house.

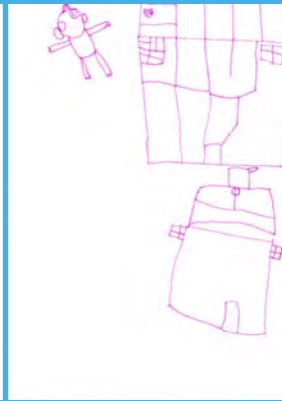
He wants to be a carpenter.





She drew a yard with flowers, a girl and a salad. Next to the yard are some trees and a man playing a game.

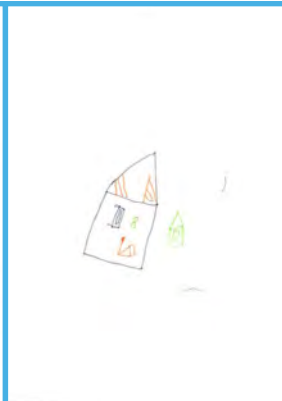
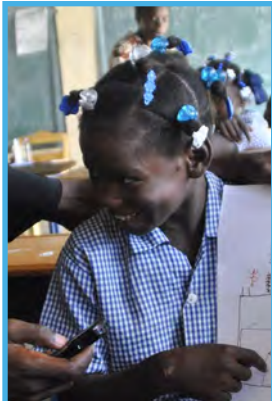
She wants to become a princess.



His favourite place has a house, flowers and a football field.

On the back he drew two big houses with windows and a man next to it.

He wants to become a teacher at an university.

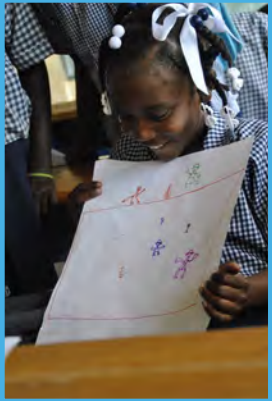


Her favourite place is a house with flowers and chairs.

On the back she drew another house.

She wants to work in a hospital.





She drew a square with several rastas on it and flowers around.

Her fantasy is a couple of houses with flowers and a table.

She wants to become a teacher.

Navigation icons: Home, Search, and a blue icon with a white symbol.



His fantasy is a house with a shovel and a flag.

Navigation icons: Home, Search, and a blue icon with a white symbol.



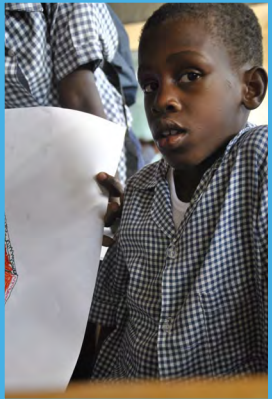
This guy made three drawings. His first drawing is a house with a man and a girl inside.

His second drawing is a football field.

His third drawing a man next to a coconut tree and a taptap (Haitian bus).

He likes to become a driver.

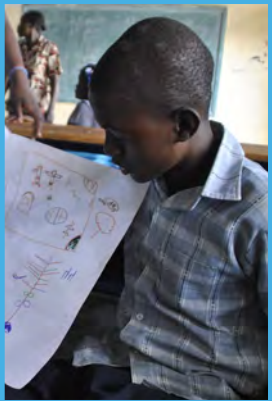
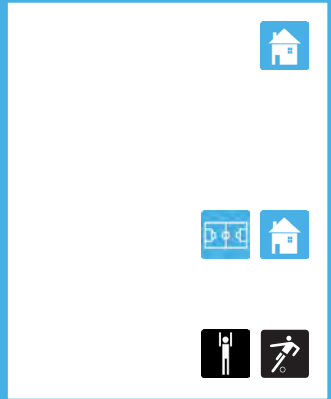
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His favourite place is a house.

He wishes to have a football field.

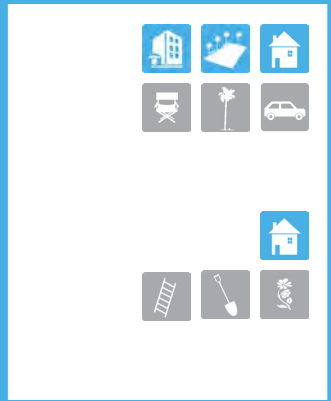
He wants to become a teacher.



His favourite place is a square with a hotel. A boy and girl go to the hotel. Around the square are flowers, Coconut tree, a car and mangoes.

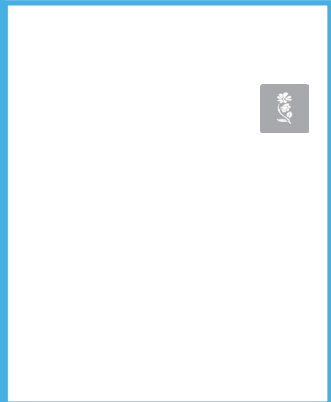
On the back he drew a house with flowers, a ladder and a shovel.

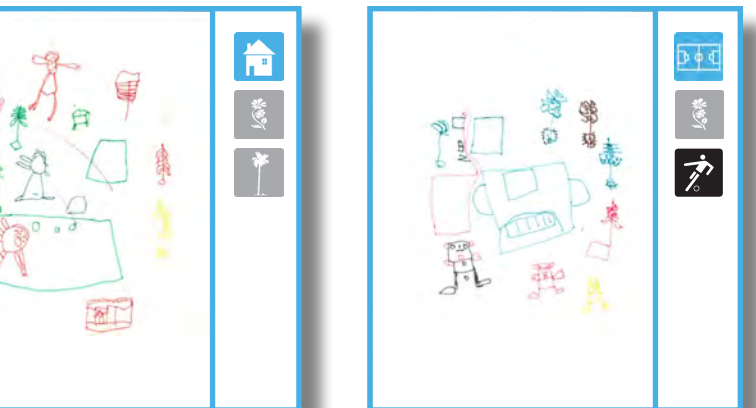
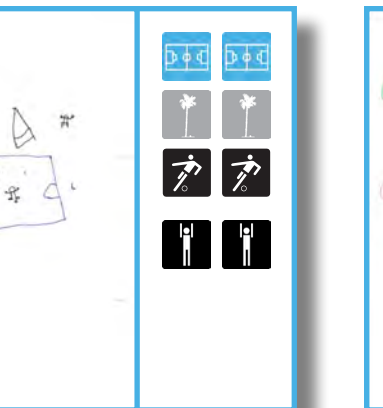
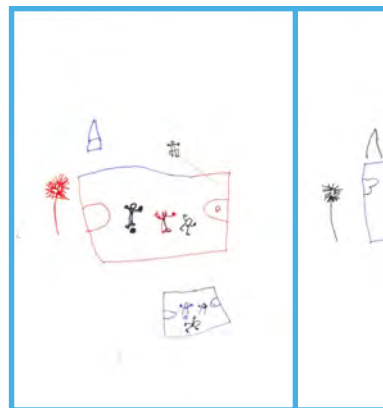
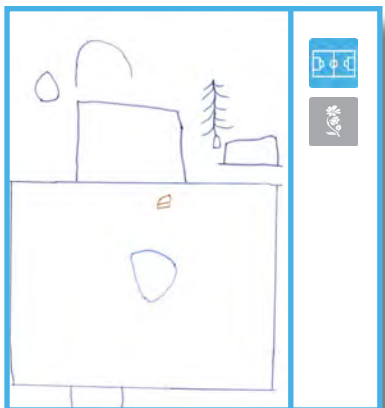
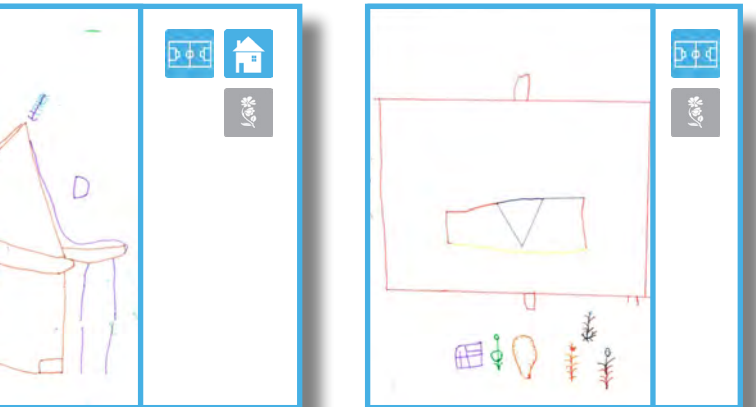
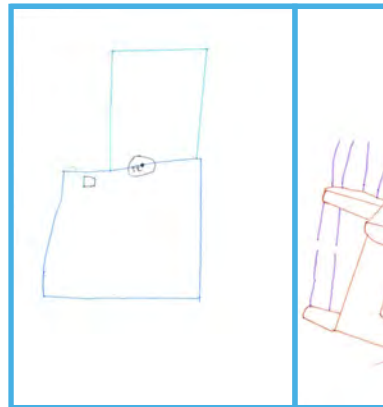
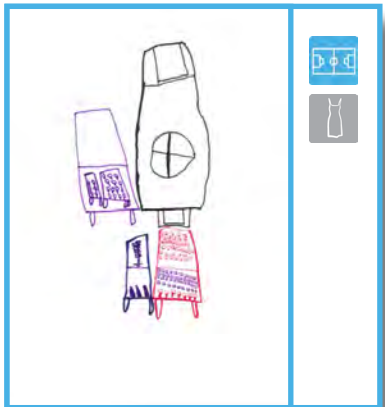
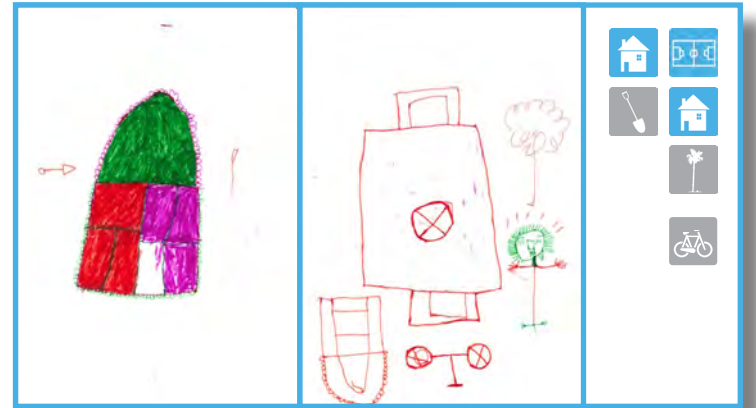
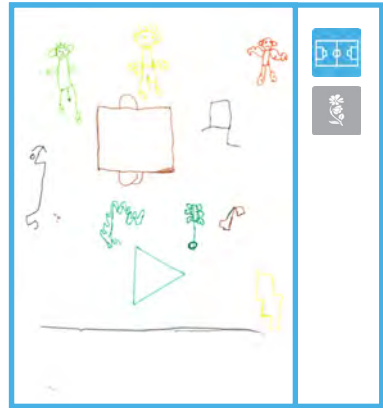
He wants to become a doctor.

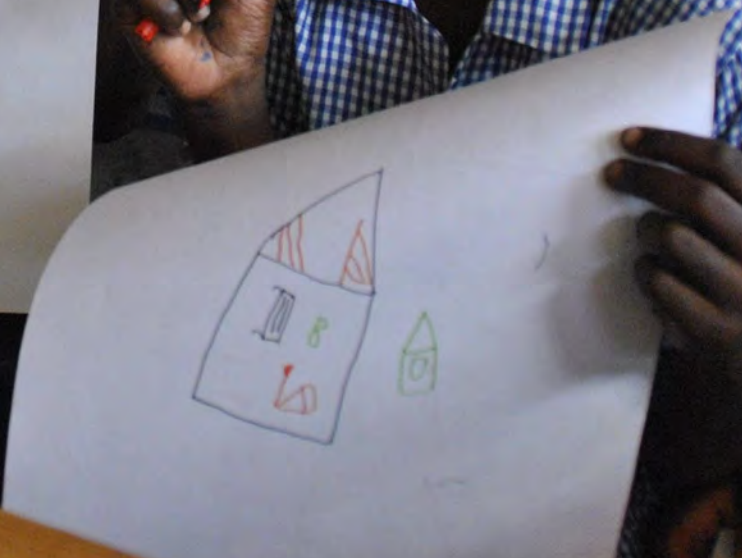


She drew flowers, a man and some balls.

She wants to become a nurse.

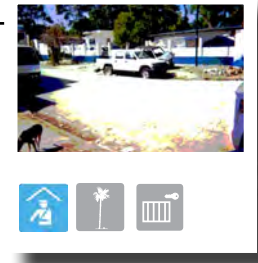
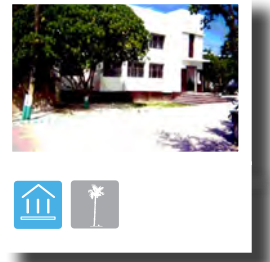
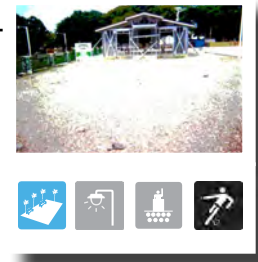
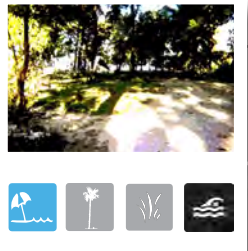


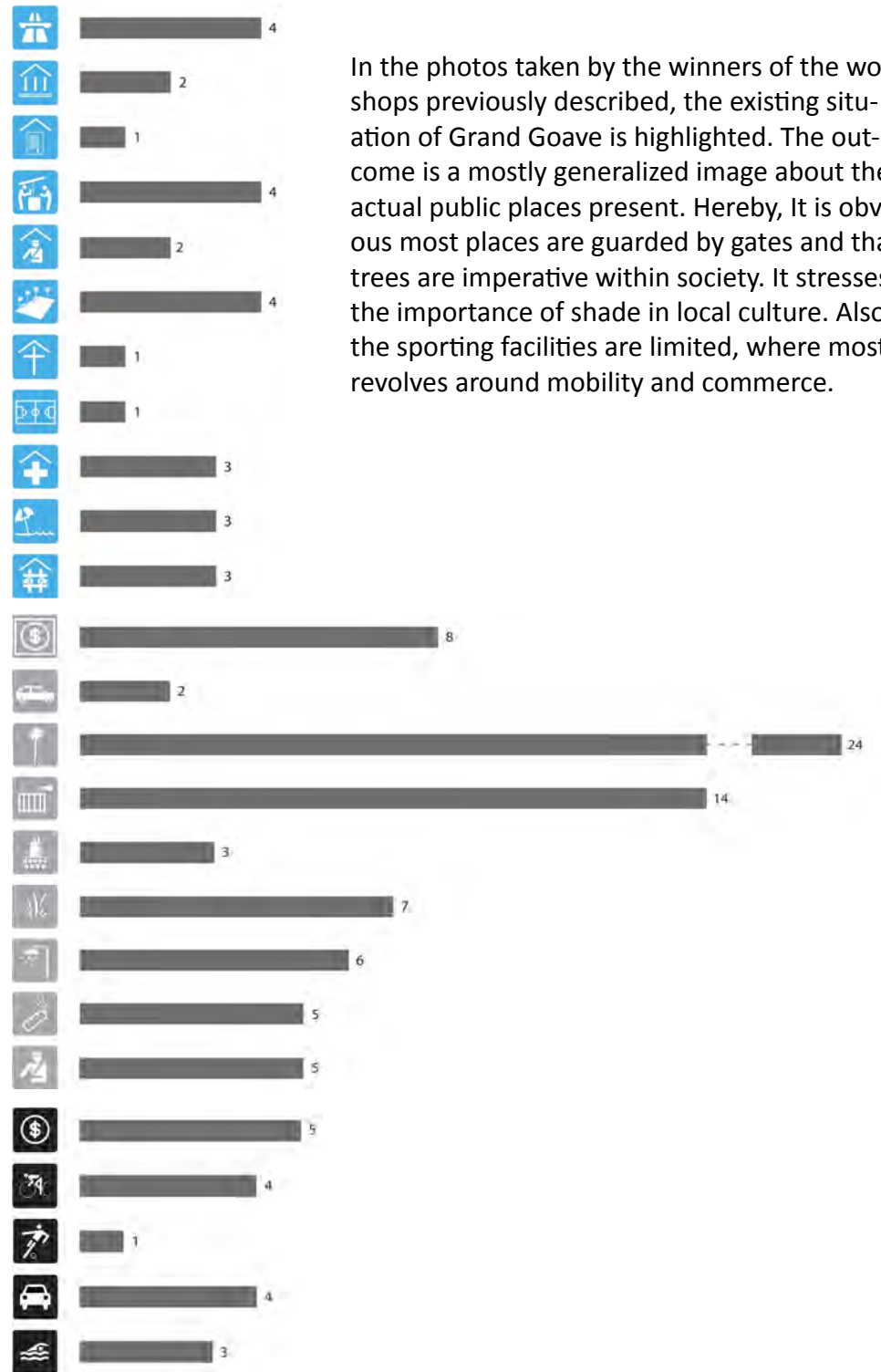




PORTRAITS OF LOCAL FACILITIES







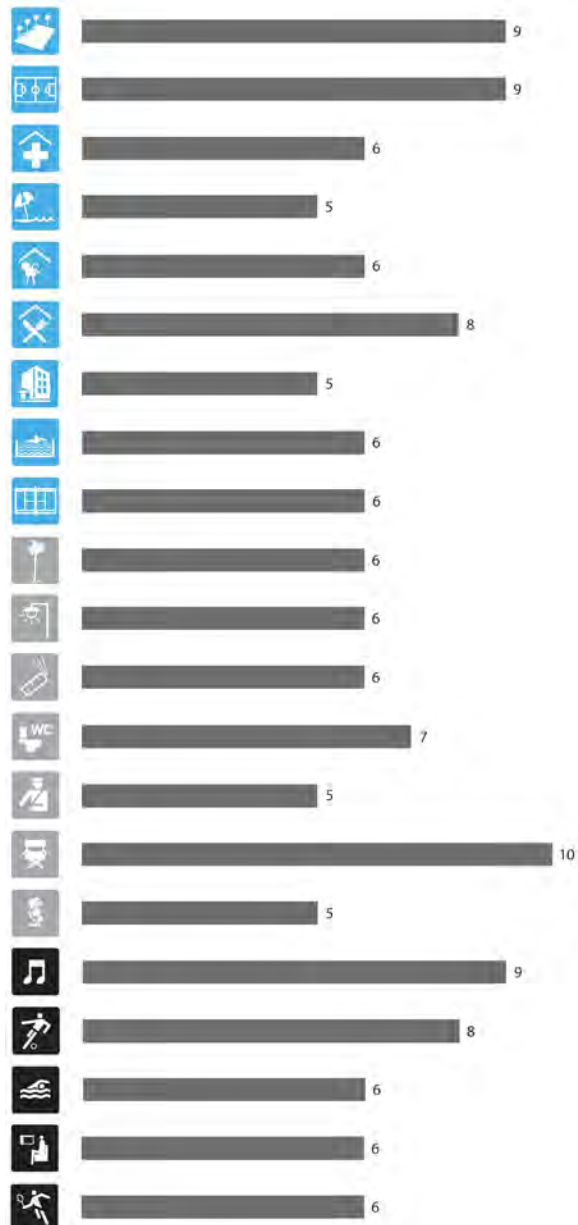
In the photos taken by the winners of the workshops previously described, the existing situation of Grand Goave is highlighted. The outcome is a mostly generalized image about the actual public places present. Hereby, It is obvious most places are guarded by gates and that trees are imperative within society. It stresses the importance of shade in local culture. Also, the sporting facilities are limited, where most revolves around mobility and commerce.



CONCLUSIONS



Workshop with teenagers

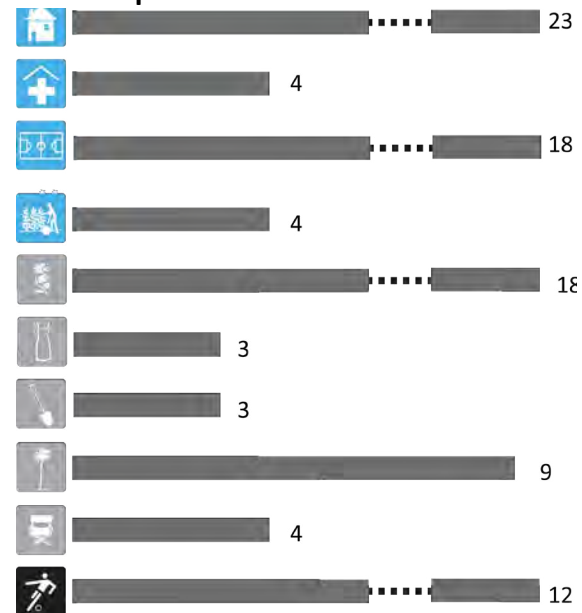


The three different workshops have, due to their different methodology and different target groups, different outcomes. The portraits of local facilities gives and insight in the current public places. These focus mostly on public services, the square and the market along the main road. The workshop with the teenagers resulted in different detailed plans of desired public spaces. There was a diverse amount of settings presented, but often a combination of playful/entertaining place combined with economic activities like a restaurant. Chairs are the main amenity to sit and linger. Sports and music are the main activities. These activities together with sit and linger are typical for the use of public spaces in Haiti.

The workshop with the kids had a more general outcome. The most striking was that these kids are concerned with important social issues as housing and health. The other setting of public space, a football field, is more obvious as you see also kids playing football in the streets. Flowers and trees are the most important amenities where they make the place lively with.

Overall you could say that sports, especially football, is the most favorite setting and activity for a public space. These sport fields are made lively and attractive with trees and flower and comfortable with chairs to sit and linger.

Workshop with kids



Portraits of local facilities

