

The Culture and Development of Children's Play.

**The socio-cultural influences of playgrounds on the development
of children and communities with case studies in Mumbai | CULTPLAY**

A partnership between India and Austria

KEF



Mumbai is one of the most densely populated cities in the world with an estimated population of 22 million people in 2015. More than 60% of the people live in slums and more than 50% of them are children. In these slums and particularly in Mumbai possibilities to appropriate and use space through children are often limited. Safe and well equipped playgrounds for children are often lacking. Although playing provides freedom and opportunity. Play helps children not only learning to make decisions of their own but also helps them negotiating differences and to develop new skills through observation, communication and experience. Providing well equipped and safe playgrounds for children contributes to their individual learning processes and to the development of their communities. Play is socio-culturally structured through general values, the beliefs and roles of parents, behaviour around children's play, the role of children and particularly girls in society.

Against this background we find the need to research the culture of play, the role of the play-element and playgrounds within this culture in selected slums areas in Mumbai, to understand the contribution of playgrounds to the development of children and their communities, and to develop an innovative design tool for safe, hygienic and sustainable playgrounds open to all children irrespective of their upbringing and background. Methodologically the project mainly relies on participatory action research with children. Main outputs are a better understanding of the relation between culture, play and playgrounds and an innovative design tool for playgrounds.

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