

Inclusivity & Accessibility in Urban Public Space.

A Case Study of
Think Playgrounds
Projects in Hanoi.

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version 2
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This manual has been made possible thanks to the kind contributions of

Think Playgrounds
The embassy of New Zealand
MoMo



Think Playgrounds !

We envision every urban child in Vietnam to have a playful childhood!



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Inclusivity & Accessibility in Urban Public Space.

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in Vietnam





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Part 2 PRACTICE

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- Phúc Tân Forest Park
- Sensory garden at the Chương Dương Forest Park
- Nhat Hong Center for the blind in Bắc Ninh
- Tân Mai market renovation
- Giang Bien roundabout renovation
- Water Playground at the Tân Bình District Centre for Inclusive Education



Introduction

PURPOSE

Everybody has the right to access and use the public urban spaces independently and equally without any discrimination. The provision of this depends on the accessibility of our cities.

The first large-scale National Survey on People with Disabilities was conducted in 2016. The survey found that 7% (6.2 million people) of the population aged 2 years and older have a disability, while 13% (almost 12 million people) live in a household with a person who has a disability.

Compared to people without disabilities, people with disabilities in Vietnam have lower rates of literacy and education, as well as higher rates of living in poverty. Primary school enrollment for children

with disability is about 69%, and among children who do attend, one-third drop out before completing their basic education.

This document was prepared in cooperation with XXX with the hope that it can become a document to help localities in Vietnam develop effective and inclusive public spaces, in an effort to reduce inequalities (SDG10) as well as ensure inclusive education (SDG4) and promote well-being for all (SDG3). Overall promoting a sustainable city and communities (SDG 11).



↑ Consultation with the Đống Đa District Association of People with Disability in preparation of the playground renovation. Thánh Gióng Playground

This manual is a result of the knowledge and experience gained by Think Playgrounds in designing inclusive playgrounds and public space in Vietnam.

What makes this process unique is the approach of mobilizing local communities in a participatory approach. This means involving local government entities, as well as specialists and disability groups.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



SDG3. Good Health and Well-being: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.

SDG4. Quality Education: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.



SDG5. Gender Equality: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

SDG10. Reduced Inequalities: Reduce inequality within and among countries.



SDG11. Sustainable cities and communities: To make cities inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.

3 GOOD HEALTH
AND WELL-BEING



4 QUALITY
EDUCATION



5 GENDER
EQUALITY



10 REDUCED
INEQUALITIES



11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES
AND COMMUNITIES



UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Article 31

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

2. States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.



*Participatory building workshop of the new
play equipment
Nhat Hong Center for the Blind*





↑ Consultation with the Đống Đa District Association of People with Disability in preparation of the playground renovation. Thánh Gióng Playground

CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Article 5

With a view to enabling persons with disabilities to participate on an equal basis with others in recreational, leisure and sporting activities, States Parties shall take appropriate measures:

c- To ensure that persons with disabilities have access to sporting, recreational and tourism venues;

d- To ensure that children with disabilities have equal access with other children to participation in play, recreation and leisure and sporting activities, including those activities in the school system;

GOAL

These guidelines and case studies are not examples to be copied but are aimed at illustrating the main challenges when designing for people with disabilities, in order to make designers and architects more aware when considering children with disabilities. There is no book that can replace the direct contact and dealing with those people affected to be able to provide good solutions to their challenges. For every project, Think Playgrounds has been working with the concerned disability groups.

AUDIENCE

These guidelines shall provide assistance to planners, architects, politicians, authorities and interested individuals in order to understand the challenges of play design and public space accessibility for people with disabilities.

The case studies selected may serve as good examples for local governments in maintenance and improvement of their public space.



STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

- People: persons with disabilities living in the city and their families
- Policy: policy stakeholders working in the country/city
- Practice: industry professionals including urban planners, inclusive designers, therapists and disability experts working in the city

These three groups also represent the three main objectives and working framework for enabling inclusive environments:

- People – to understand the experiences of persons with disabilities living in the city and their aspirations for a more inclusive city.
- Policy – to understand the awareness and understanding of inclusive design among policy-makers and the opportunities for inclusive cities.
- Practice – to understand the importance of inclusive design among built environment through direct knowledge from experts and practioners.

← previous page

Children from the Center playing with the newly inaugurated water playground. Tân Bình District Support Centre for Inclusive Education

↓ Participatory building workshop of the new play equipment.
Nhat Hong Center for the Blind



STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL PUBLIC SPACE

Public space is essential for the wellbeing of everyone in a community. It provides opportunities for relaxation, recreation and socializing, while contributing to a neighborhood's local character and sense of place. Active, safe and enjoyable public spaces draw people to them.

- Diversity of activities: Public space encourages users to move and spend time in it. Generating feeling of identity that reinforces social cohesion with different activities addressed to all.

- Safety and inclusivity: Space should be perceived as open to all. It accommodates the needs and interests of various types of users. A space for all also means a safer space because no one is excluded.

- Accessibility: People living & working around the site can access it easily and use it regularly.

- Comfort and cleanliness: Users feel comfortable in the space designed at human scale. Proper maintenance and cleaning are also essential to quality public space.

Comfort
and cleanliness



Diversity of
activities



Successful public space



Accessibility



Safety and
inclusivity

Types of disabilities, impairments, and resulting effects

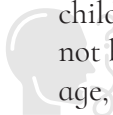


It is important to notice that different types of disabilities have different design requirements and the design choices that are made should prevent that only one type of disability is considered, which could represent an additional limitation to all other types of disabilities.

The child experiences, discovers her/his environment and her/his own capabilities and limits through play. Play becomes a form of training. Therefore, obstacles and difficulties should not be eliminated from the play area, but rather should be designed in such a way that they can be overcome. What is intended to be helpful for one person can be an obstacle for another person.



Children with disabilities (just as any children) are in a continuous process of growth and a development process which can go faster or slower according to the type of disability. Therefore, children with disabilities should not be classified with relation to age, height, or abilities.



Nevertheless, the various disabilities can result in typical impairments and effects.





↑ Member of the Đồng Đa District
Association of People with Disability at the
opening of the renovated Playground.
Thánh Gióng Playground





PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENT, LACK OF WALKING ABILITY, WHEELCHAIR, CRUTCHES

Children with disabilities resulting in an impeded walking ability require short paths and platforms as well as supports to stop for a short break. Guardrails and supports should be designed as surfaces against where the entire body can be leaned.

Wheelchairs are used for many types of disabilities to provide more mobility, but sometimes the wheelchair can become the real disability. For therapeutic reasons, it is often a good idea to encourage the wheelchair user to leave the wheelchair, thus allowing them to experience their entire bodies as well as train their bodies by supporting themselves, crawling with their hands or moving with their hands between bars.

The paths leading to the playground, entrances and the layout of pathways should be always suitable for people using wheelchairs. The wheelchair is also only a vehicle.

← Vân and Hiếu on the basketball court.
Phúc Tân Forest Park

→
Child from the Đống Đa District Association
of People with Disability at the opening of
the renovated Playground.
Thánh Gióng Playground



LACK OF GRASPING ABILITY

Children that lack grasping ability because of missing limbs, hand weakness, hand paralysis, temporary injury, are not capable of securing themselves. Therefore, play equipment should be selected for these children allowing them to secure themselves by leaning or pressing their body to the equipment (for example: hammocks instead of swings, slides that are accessed via a mount/embankment rather than a staircase).



← Yến Anh giving feedback during a consultancy workshop
Phúc Tân Forest Park



VISUAL IMPAIRMENT, BLINDNESS

People with impaired vision have a very good orientation ability once they have been made familiar with the environment. Dangerous situations can be pointed out and instructions provided regarding how to act with the help of different ground covers (grass, sand, paving stones...) but also wind chimes or audio guides.

Visual impairment is often underestimated. People wearing glasses are sometimes more restricted than blind people in a play environment. The visual field is limited, the glasses do not stay in position, fall down.... Children with glasses are often uncertain about their movements and can lack body control. Because of these uncertainties, they will not participate in a lot of activities.

The play environment should be designed with contrasting areas. Areas requiring different movements, such as steps or slopes, and areas representing risks should be clearly and distinctly indicated.

→
*Children from the Center playing with the
newly inaugurated water playground
Tân Bình District Support Centre for
Inclusive Education*



AUTISM, DOWN SYNDROME, LIMITED OR IMPAIRED LEARNING ABILITY

Children with impaired learning abilities are often not capable of evaluating risks in play situations. They are also often not able to recognize problematic behavior of other children during play that may lead to unforeseeable reactions. These children have usually outgrown their play structures and are therefore often too big or too heavy for their behavior.

Children with this type of disability are very rarely capable of visiting playgrounds on their own without supervision. The supervisors accompanying the disabled child will have to provide the respective assistance and responsibility.



DEAFNESS, MUTE, HEARING IMPAIRMENT

It is not possible to stimulate deaf children with noise resulting from movement, or to provide orientation assistance or to point out risks. Furthermore, they cannot be warned by calling. The field of vision is mainly oriented towards the front. Persons with this type of disability react well to elements full of contrast and movements within their field of vision.

Everything that is not in the field of vision of deaf children or children with hard of hearing is often taken as a surprise and can be alarming. Play elements emphasizing on movement should therefore be very distinct, full of contrast, and clear. Other senses can also be stimulated, such as touch and smell.

→
*Châu participating in a design consultancy
workshop
Phúc Tân Forest Park*

← Sign interpreter for deaf/mute
children at a Think Playground event
Thong Nhat Park



PEOPLE OF SMALL STATURE

People and children of small stature can have difficulties reaching and using equipment and play items which should have been suitable for their age. In many cases, they are even more at risk due to their body proportions and the resulting changed center of gravity.

Reasons and benefits of inclusive playground

- Integrated and inclusive playgrounds are not more expensive than conventional playgrounds when the integrative approach is taken into consideration from the start and initial phases of design.
- By intensely investigating individuals, an informed design will result in a more suitable play possibility of children using the equipment and encouraging more fun.
- Organizations working with people with disabilities can use the inclusive playground as a destination for excursions.
- Necessary and beneficial contact between children with and without disabilities will be encouraged when playgrounds are used more frequently by children with disabilities. A child with disabilities will be able to visit a playground and play with siblings, family and other children from the neighborhood.



THE URBAN PLAY

FRAMEWORK identifies three fundamental dimensions that city authorities and urban practitioners need to consider for creating a playful environment.

The Framework provides a structure to capture and understand the complexity of play in cities and inform the design of playful cities.



FROM EXCLUSION TO INCLUSION

Parents often avoid taking their children to the existing playgrounds due to a sense of being socially distanced, as well as prejudices and the lack of understanding in the environment – all of which represent a major obstacle to the inclusion of this group of children.

When children and families are enabled to use inclusive spaces, promoting the possibility of common and individual playing, children feel that they are respected, taken care of, encouraged and active in playing. Thus interaction, mutual understanding, friendship and true sense of community are stimulated.

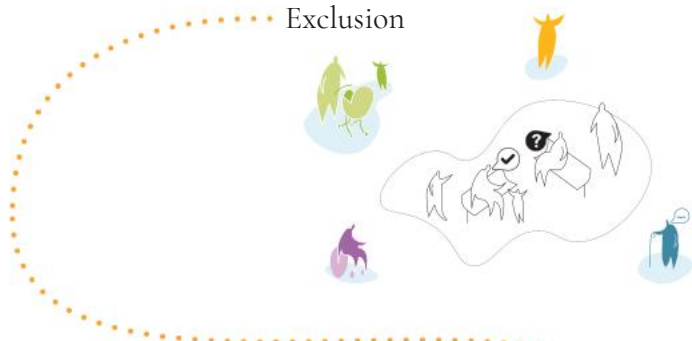
Recreation and play are activities that stimulate social inclusion and well-being of persons with disabilities in two ways: the way that people think and feel about persons with disabilities is changed, and the way that persons with disabilities perceive themselves is also altered. This joint influence of the community and individuals on play and recreation creates synergy that decreases the isolation of children with disabilities and promotes full integration of children and families into the life of the community.

Social inclusion primarily involves providing equal opportunities to all. In an inclusive society, every person is respected and accepted.

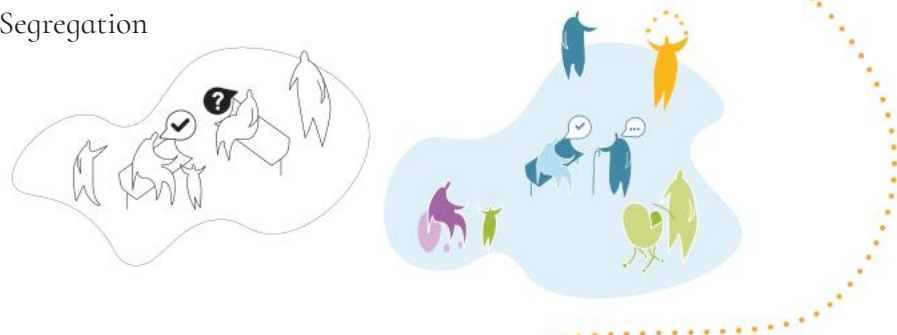
What characterizes an inclusive playground is that all children should be included in play and not only a certain group of children.

Designing a playground only for people with a certain type of impairment results in **segregation** rather than **inclusiveness**.

Exclusion



Segregation



Integration



Inclusion





General Recommendations And Good Practices In Inclusive Public Space Design



HUMAN CENTERED DESIGN

Human Centered Design involves direct work with beneficiaries and participation of end users. In this case children and their parents, as well as members of the Đồng Đa District Association of People with Disability need to be secured during the entire process of planning and construction of inclusive playgrounds. In this way, the process of transferring the ownership of the final product to the local community is transparently promoted.





↓ Children playing with the newly renovated
inclusive playground
Thánh Gióng Playground





SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF UNIVERSAL DESIGN

1 - Equitable Use: Design that is useful and marketable to persons with diverse abilities.

2 - Flexibility in use: Design that accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.

3 - Simple and intuitive use: Design that is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or concentration level.

4 - Perceptible information: Design that communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.

5 - Tolerance for error: Design that minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.

6 - Low physical effort: Design that can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.

7 - Size and space for approach and use: Design that provides appropriate size and space for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of the user's body size, posture, or mobility.



↑ Hiếu enjoying the swing of the bird
playground
Phúc Tân Forest Park



ON STANDARDS AND SAFETY

In order to achieve the integration of disabled children in a playground, it is not always necessary to provide additional equipment. However, it is necessary to plan, design, and build these playgrounds with a lot of understanding and sensitivity.

Playgrounds providing lots of adventures and assessable risks are used more safely than over-safe and therefore possibly boring playgrounds where due to boredom, play equipment is used in contradiction to its function, for instance a swing is used as a climbing equipment, a slide as a jumping ramp.

Safety on playgrounds is always dependent on the play possibilities and the realizable and controllable limits of the user's capabilities. Since standards relate to average values, it is very rare that a standard may provide the correct value given the large differences between children. Due to the definition of the average, the standard excludes outsiders, different people, and thus disabled people. Therefore, it is in practice hardly possible to respect both standards and then to develop a playground suitable for children, full of adventures, and encouraging joyful play experience.

The more creative and more varied the play possibilities and play functions on a playground, the more secure and less risky playing becomes for children.

Designing is always the search for the best compromise.



↑ Eldery using the newly installed
accessibility ramp with a stroller
Phúc Tân Forest Park



→
Children playing with the newly renovated
inclusive playground
Thánh Gióng Playground



1- Assess budget and map community actors



In addition to a budget, it is necessary to map the actors in the community who will help, support, and participate in the realization of the project, bearing in mind the roles and responsibilities of each.

Budget can be obtained by mobilizing community resources like crowdfunding, donations, sponsors...



2- Mobilize the community and organize consultation

Promoting and advocating for the values of inclusion and healthy habits among children may turn out to be the link to connect different actors, which has been proven by the experience in modeling inclusive playgrounds.



4- Construction

After the design is approved by all interested actors, the project can be detailed and the construction prepared. The construction includes the preparatory ground work, playground installation, landscaping, and necessary information boards and signage.



5- Playground opening

After a final inspection, the playground is ready to be open to the public.

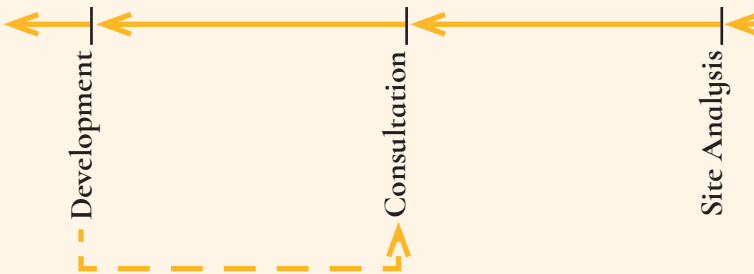


Roadmap to the development of an inclusive playground



3- Design Development

The main phases of design are the site analysis (best undertaken with experts), the consultation phase (with children, parents, and users), and the concept development. The space has to be a place where children of different ages and abilities can explore and develop their skills, as well as relax and socialize with other children.



6- Monitoring and maintenance

Regular monitoring of the children's playground should be done at least once a year.



Part 2 PRACTICE

Think Playgrounds Examples

● Community Implementations

- Thánh Gióng Playground Renovation
- Phúc Tân Forest Park
- Sensory garden at the Chương Dương Forest Park
- Nhat Hong Center for the blind in Bắc Ninh
- Tân Mai market renovation
- Giang Biên roundabout renovation
- Water Playground at the Tân Bình District Centre for Inclusive Education



June 2024

Thánh Gióng Playground Renovation



Hội Người
khuyết tật
Quận Đống Đa



unicef 
vì mọi trẻ em

V
M
Văn Miếu
QUỐC TỬ GIAM

The Thánh Gióng Inclusive Playground in Van Mieu contributes to building a more friendly city for children with disabilities.

The **Inclusive Playground** plays an important role in bringing a positive impact on the physical, intellectual, emotional, and mental development of all children and children with disabilities.

This great initiative aims to create a friendly, safe, and accessible space where children of all abilities can play, learn, and interact together. The playground features a variety of play structures designed to accommodate children with diverse physical, psychological, and sensory needs, with a particular focus on the needs of children with disabilities during playtime.

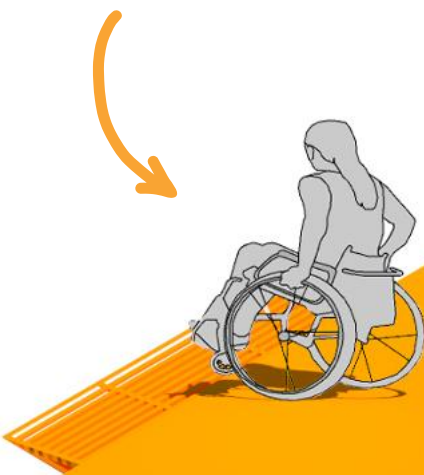
Van Mieu - Temple of Literature is located in Đống Đa district, an area with a high population density and a lack of public spaces for children. The project includes physical access for people with motor disabilities to the components within the site (including restroom),

and access for people with visual impairment with audio descriptions and audio guides.

The design of the renovations has been carefully consulted with members of the Đống Đa District Association of People with Disability, including both adults and children with intellectual and physical disabilities, hearing impairments, visual impairments, their families, rehabilitation therapists, and experts on children with disabilities.

Ramp

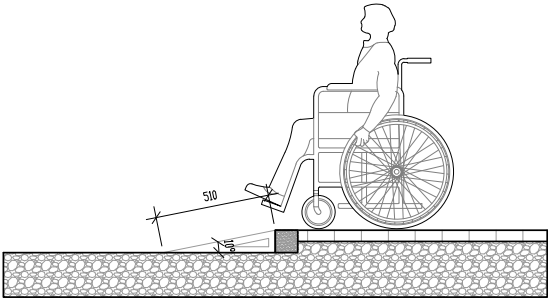
Adding ramps and prominent painted line marks at height differences to increase accessibility and visibility.



** The space could use a bookshelf.*

↓ Consultation with the **Đống Đa District Association of People with Disability** in preparation of the playground renovation.
Thánh Gióng Playground

Mong muốn có thêm tủ sách trong không gian này.*



The playground has been enhanced with several wheelchair ramps leading down to the playground level, safer swings and slides, handrails for difficult climbing areas, wind chimes and colours to help visually impaired children navigate, wheelchair-accessible tables and chairs, quiet spaces for children with disabilities and their caretakers to rest after playing, a book corner, and various other elements to meet diverse physical, mental, and sensory needs.

Most of the play structures have been added and adjusted from the original design to create a play space that encourages social interactions among children with different abilities so that all children have the opportunity to play together and learn from their playmates, such as the seesaw made from tires and wood.

The playground has also been equipped with an audio file system and QR code scanning, providing descriptions of each play area and how to play safely and enjoyably, and appropriate music selection to help visually impaired children visualise the playground.

This is also an effort by the design team to support parents and relatives of children with disabilities in instructing them on how to use the playground and care for them during this process.

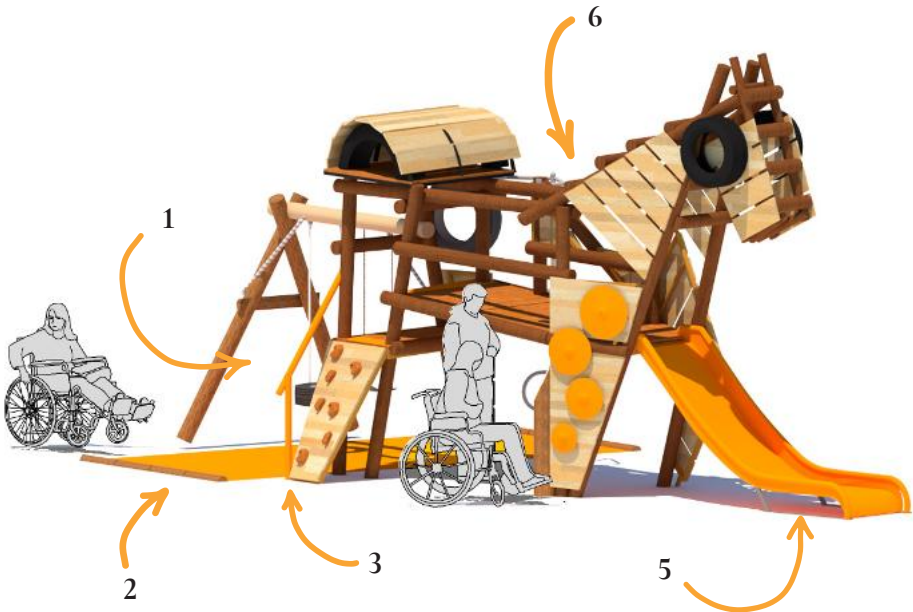
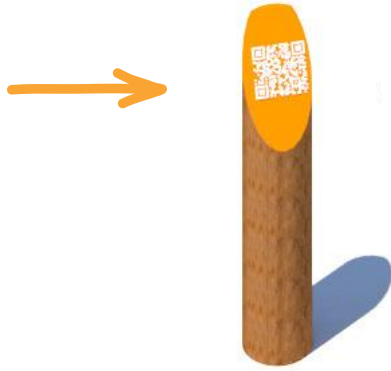
All renovations to the playground ensure aesthetic and architectural harmony with the verdant grounds of the relic complex and the playground's theme of the Thánh Gióng legend.

"This is the first playground that has been extensively consulted with children representing diverse disability groups in an effort to create the most inclusive playground possible. We hope that this model will make a positive impression on the local community and visitors to the Temple of Literature, and that it can inspire the creation of many other inclusive playgrounds across the country."

Mr. Nguyen Tieu Quoc Dat
Creative Director of Think Playgrounds

Horse

- 1- Swing seat width increased
- 2- Colored artificial grass carpet under the swing
- 3- Paint on steps and holds to help the visually impaired
- 4- QR code to provide additional information
- 5- Adding handrails, increase the width and flatness of the slide for more safety
- 6- Adding play equipment on the front legs of the horse so that children in wheelchairs can play





Picnic area

People with disabilities, limited stamina and accompanying caregivers need many resting spots. The inclusive playground needs to have many quiet spaces for this need.

A picnic area with swing seats, picnic tables with wheelchair clearance, and a mini library have been newly added.





March 2024

Phúc Tân Forest Park



EMBASSY
OF DENMARK



According to the UN Sustainable Development Goals 10 and 11, everyone, regardless of ability or limitation, has the right to equal access and enjoyment of public services. Public spaces, especially play spaces in cities like Hanoi, have received little attention to include people with disabilities. Perhaps this is the reason why many public spaces in Hanoi are not designed to be truly friendly to wheelchair users and groups with mobility disabilities, the visually impaired, adults and children with intellectual disabilities and autism, which are the groups that make up the majority of urban disabilities.



Since 2014, Think Playgrounds has been a pioneer in researching, designing and building nearly 20 inclusive play spaces for children in specialized schools, support centers, hospitals and public spaces in the country. These spaces are not only places for play, but also places to create spaces for interaction, meeting, therapy, supporting rehabilitation, helping children and people with disabilities to improve their physical and mental health.

In March 2024, a consultation to evaluate a model of Inclusive Public Space for People with Disabilities in Phúc Tân was conducted by Think Playgrounds with the participation of representatives of the United Nations Joint Project on Inclusion of People with Disabilities (by the United Nations Joint Office and the United Nations Development Program, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund and representatives of a number of organizations of people with disabilities, wheelchair users, visually impaired people, autistic youth and people with psychological and social disabilities.

**In the past, very few people with disabilities participated in physical activities because of the prejudice that people with disabilities should stay at home. In reality, people with disabilities really need to participate in social activities, community, and have the need to communicate and chat. Therefore a space that is designed to be inclusive for people with disabilities like this is extremely good.*

***The space has a lot of fun activities and Hiếu can play on some equipment like the swing with a little help.*

Trước kia có rất ít người khuyết tật tham gia các hoạt động thể dục vì những định kiến NKT nên ở nhà. Trong khi thực tế NKT rất cần tham gia các hoạt động giao lưu, cộng đồng, có nhu cầu giao tiếp trò chuyện vì vậy một không gian mà thiết kế hòa nhập cho NKT như vậy là vô cùng tốt.*

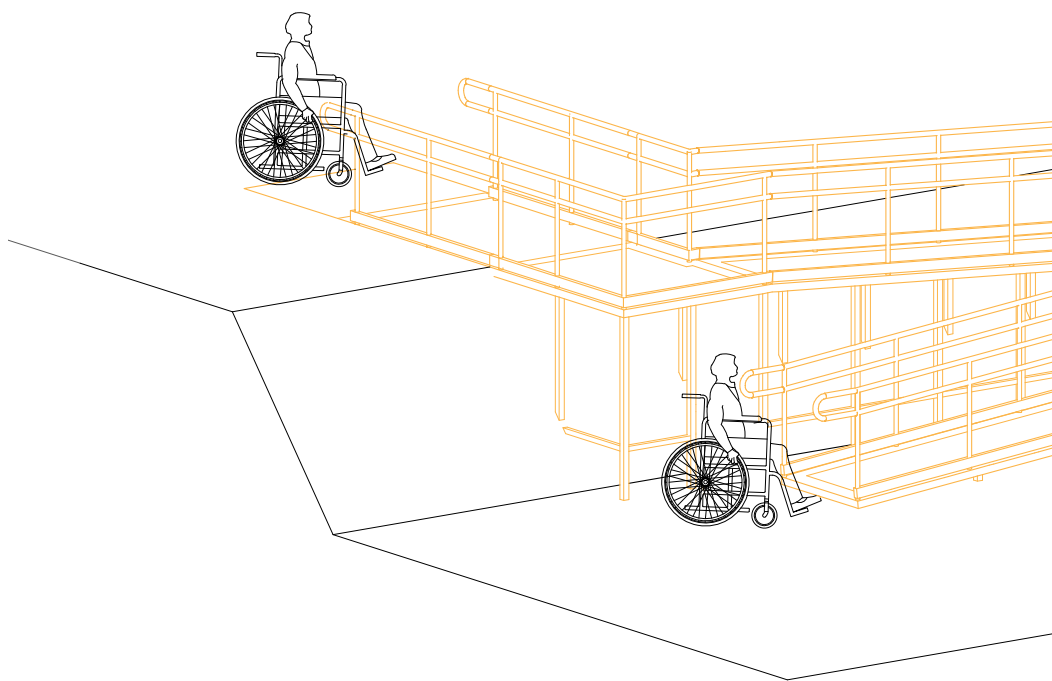


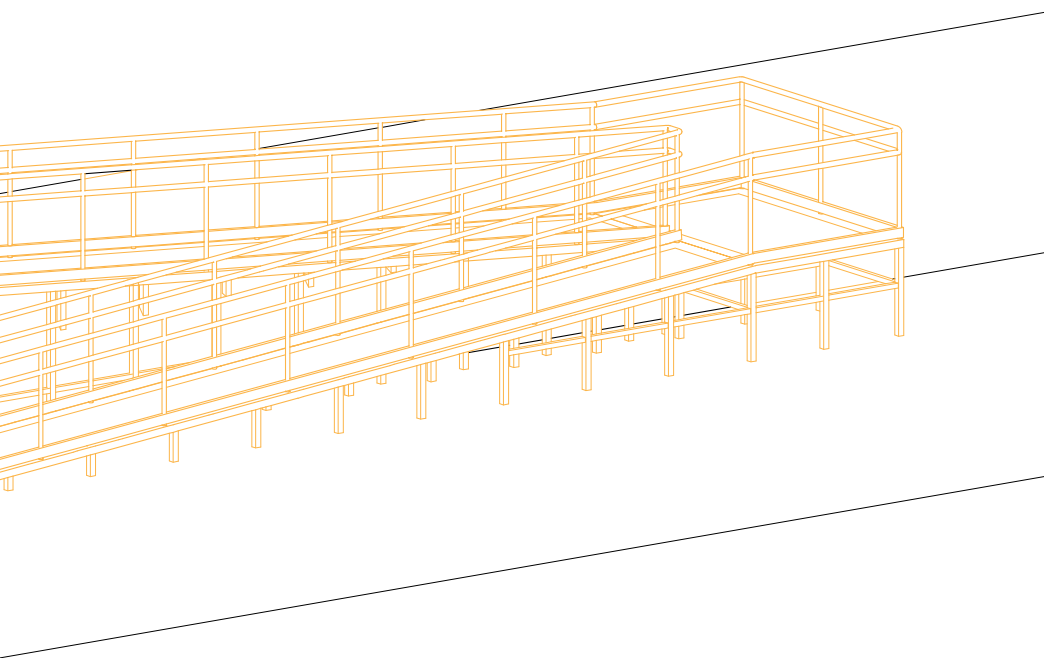


Không gian đa dạng các hoạt động vui chơi, một số trò chơi Hiếu có thể chơi được nếu có người hỗ trợ như xích đu.**

Phúc Tân Forest Park was designed and completed by Think Playgrounds in early 2024 with consultation with the community and local authorities.

The event emphasized the important role of consultation and participatory practices in collecting opinions from people with disabilities as well as providing more specific information to support renovation plans and proposals for planning inclusive public spaces for more humane urban areas in Vietnam.







June 2022

Sensory garden at the Chương Dương Forest Park



BRITISH VIETNAMESE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
HANOI
A NORD ANGLIA EDUCATION SCHOOL.



With more than 100 types of plants designed to stimulate the development of the 5 senses (hearing, sight, smell, taste and touch), the sensory garden at the Chương Dương Forest Park prioritizes native plants.

At the beginning in 2022, nearly 200 volunteers have joined hands to build the garden from the community of Chương Dương ward, students of international schools in Hanoi, and volunteers from the “For a Livable Hanoi” network.

From there, Think playgrounds continue to work with communities and different partners to improve the sensory garden to become a special educational, experiential and therapeutic space for children in the center of Hanoi.

The Chuong Duong Sensory Garden is a successful case study in prioritizing children with disabilities while creating positive outcomes for the entire community.

The garden space is divided into auditory, tactile, gustatory, and olfactory zones. By dividing these plant groups, the garden provides a sense of security and

familiarity for people with visual and auditory disabilities because they can remember spaces by scent and sound.

In addition, exploiting sensory elements in the design benefits all children in the area in terms of cognitive, language, emotional development, stimulating creativity, and physical and mental well-being. Users with all physical abilities can participate and perceive the space with their own abilities.



The Sensory Garden has helped create a special urban green space that is both relaxing and therapeutic, and creates better access and inclusion for people with disabilities.

Each type of plant has characteristics that attract different senses in unique ways. There is nothing more exciting than walking into a garden where you can see and smell the fragrance of blooming flowers, touch the leaves with diverse shapes and textures, walk barefoot on the sensory paths, taste the sour, spicy, sweet flavors of flowers, fruits... and listen to the rustling of leaves in the wind, the chirping of birds, the chirping of insects... The sensory garden is a space designed to maximize the experience, helping people to immerse themselves in nature filled with colors, sounds, shapes, materials and flavors.



"The inclusion of the sensory garden in the second phase of the Chương Dương Forest Park is an example for the community, children and people of Hanoi to see a new way of thinking by treating public spaces through the Omniscape design language. Omniscape is a strategy that Japanese planners apply to create a connection between people and nature, especially in urban spaces. That is landscape planning associated with the five senses, something that no one has done in projects that have been implemented in Vietnam so far"

Mr. Nguyen Tieu Quoc Dat
Creative Director of Think Playgrounds



With the development of urban areas leading to a lack of spaces close to nature, the sensory garden is a pioneering model in urban green spaces for children to explore, play, learn and heal, thereby nurturing a love of nature and comprehensive development in cognition, language, creative emotions as well as social connection.

In 2022, Think Playgrounds initiated the idea of designing and creating a sensory garden space in the overall project of renovating Chương Dương Forest Park.

Think Playgrounds hopes to continue receiving support in order to continue completing the garden space by planting a variety of trees, practicing natural garden care methods (making organic compost, covering the soil with mulch...), creating sensory stimulating experience corners (sound games, sensory paths, insect hotels...).

↓ Information panel at the sensory garden



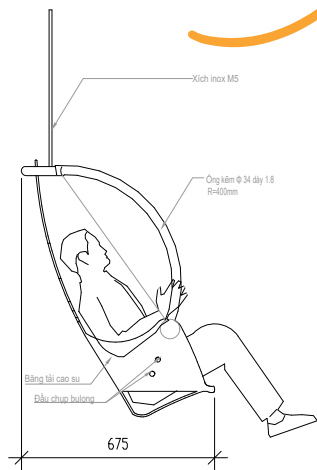
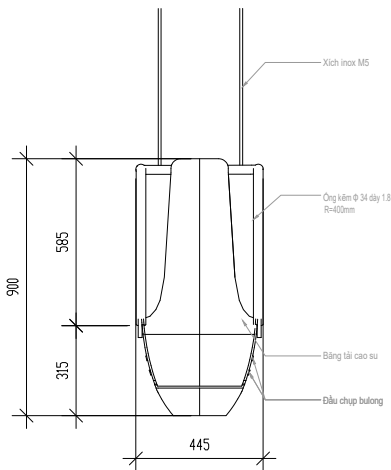
↓ *BVIS students plant trees with local community*



We especially hope to connect with schools to bring children together to learn, experience and contribute to a meaningful ecological space in the heart of Hanoi.

Following the typhoon Yagi that hit Northern Vietnam in September 2024, and the extreme floods that severely impacted the city and even more so the riverside urban areas of Chuong Duong, Phuc Tan, and others, Thinkplaygrounds has been renovating the Forest Park with support from UNICEF. This renovation not only included repairing existing infrastructure but also upgrading some to improve accessibility and inclusivity of the public space.

This included the addition of a seat on the swing, sensory play equipments, as well as handrails, ramps and floor markings to improve the safety of pedestrian using the space.







January 2024

Nhat Hong Center for the blind in Bắc Ninh



The playground proposed for the Nhat Hong center for blind children in Bắc Ninh is centered around a playhut shelter carefully designed to address the movements and spatial orientation of children with vision impairments. Its distinctive and contrasted design provides space for role play, as well as a protected enclosed space for privacy.

In addition, tactile areas with artificial grass surrounding and through the playground are a source for playing, discovering and information for blind children to orient themselves.

The wider slide can accommodate multiple children at the same time, or allow a helper to use the slide together with the kid. Clear color-coded paint helps children with low vision to differentiate the various planes and highlights areas that require attention like the steps or the entrance to the slide.

Tactile boards with mosaic materials and interactive sound equipment are also used to give more play opportunities to the children.



August 2021

Tan Mai market renovation



The project to renovate the Ngo 240 Tan Mai market is a collaboration between Think Playgrounds, Hai&Ikigai, Healthbridge, UN Habitat and local authorities during the time affected by Covid-19.

The project hopes to use design as a tool to change user behavior and bring a new, youthful look to the traditional market space.

The market's walkways were painted with eye-catching colors, dividing 3 lanes (2 stopping lanes and 1 traffic lane). The two stopping lanes are shown with evenly spaced circles to ensure a safe distance during the epidemic, and gradually forming the habit of standing in this box to buy goods and avoid spilling into the traffic lane.

The remaining lane is decorated with lines and arrows to create a reflex to move and avoid causing congestion. The creative design of the traffic flow has helped separate the moving lane from the pedestrian lane, making traffic in the market clearer and safer.

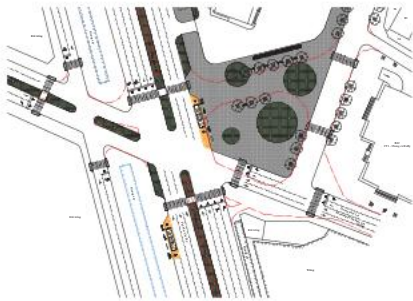
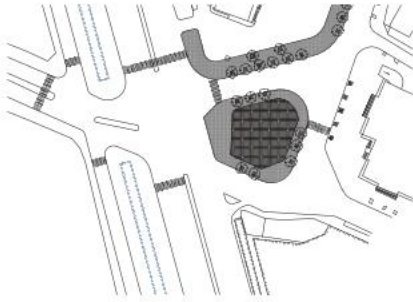


April 2023

Giang Bien roundabout renovation

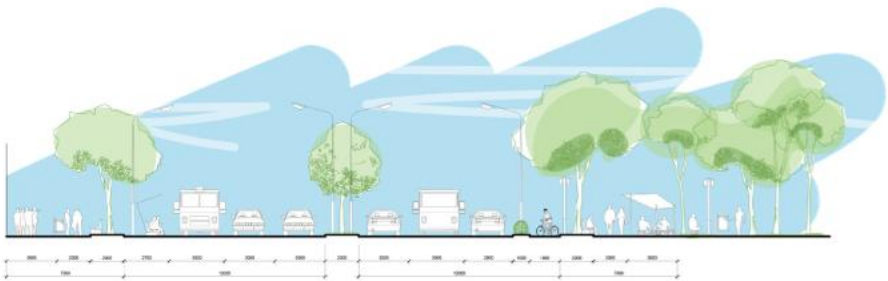


Giang Bien intersection currently has several traffic problems with a wasted unusable traffic island in its center. The idea was to renovate the area to increase clean, green space for community activities and make it more accessible for pedestrians, cyclists, wheelchairs, etc.



The proposed solution reconnects the central island area with the northern residential neighborhood in order to create a larger and more accessible public space for everyone. This space has the potential to transform into a community space, a green space for public recreation and relaxation for all residents living around the area.

To increase accessibility, the design also increases the pedestrian lane markings, redesigns the median strip to be wider for safety, and realigns the markings to match the new traffic flow. The design also adds bus stops, priority bike lanes, and more water-absorbing green spaces in the new public space.



April 2024



Water Playground at the Tân Bình District Support Centre for Inclusive Education

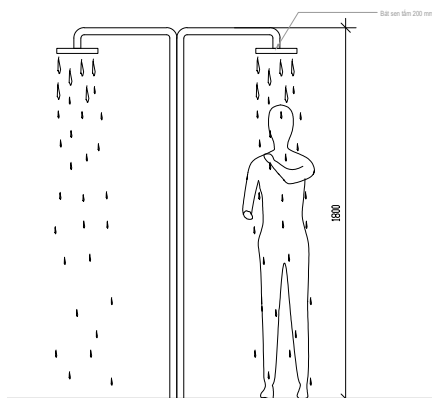


This project marks the first therapeutic water playground for children with disabilities in Viet Nam. It was designed specifically for children with intellectual disabilities at the Tân Bình District Support Centre for Inclusive Education. The playground positively impacts the physical and mental development of children with intellectual disabilities, as well as raising awareness about the value of water-based therapeutic design.

The Tan Binh District Inclusive Education Development Support Centre is a specialized educational facility under the Department of Education and Training of Ho Chi Minh City, established in 2008.

In fact, the center does not have enough personnel to offer inclusive education. Currently it only provides specialized education for students with disabilities.

The center has 2 facilities in Ward 2 and Ward 7, Tan Binh district. Both facilities have a two-storey block taken over from an unused preschool. In addition to classrooms, the center does not have function rooms such as rooms for music study, IT, or physical education.





“This is the first therapeutic water playground that Think Playgrounds has implemented. Through great collaboration with Ms Van and the Tân Bình District Support Centre, we have been able to combine our solid experience of designing playgrounds for children with intellectual disabilities with the energy and ideas of the Centre to create something that will benefit so many children and their families.

The playground has been consciously designed using soil, sand, water, wood and other natural materials in colors such as blue and green – known to stimulate flexibility and surprise. This encourages children to constantly explore and learn.”

Mr. Nguyen Tieu Quoc Dat
Creative Director of Think Playgrounds

The center has over 140 students with intellectual disabilities, autism and cerebral palsy, all of whom have disabilities ranging from severe to extremely severe, from 5 to 19 years old. About 50% of students are non-verbal or speak nonsense. 100% have mental ages from 24 months to 48 months old. Students are divided into 10 class groups: 6 class groups study the first grade of the general education programme for students with intellectual disabilities with adjustments to suit each child's ability and 5 class groups study skill educational programmes (mainly teaching self-care skills, vocational training and leading an independent life as an adult). All students come to the center 5 days/week. There is a boarding house for them to stay at noon. Students are completely exempt from tuition fees.



Water therapy through play is known as an effective method that provides numerous benefits for children's physical and mental health, especially for those with disabilities. However, there are currently very few outdoor water playgrounds in Viet Nam suitable for children with intellectual disabilities.

In February 2024, the Tân Bình District Support Centre for Inclusive Education collaborated with Think Playgrounds Social enterprise to build the first therapeutic water playground for 140 children with intellectual disabilities, designed with water play activities based on the water therapy method.

The outdoor playground covers an area of 72.5m² and features 8 water jets, 3 sets of showers with 4 shower heads each to spray a fine mist from above, and a wading pool with a water depth of 20cm suitable for the age of students at the center. It serves not only as a place for fun and entertainment but also where teachers can conduct physical therapy activities for students.

Some of the benefits of hydrotherapy include:





Social-emotional development

Children experience all their senses and their entire body with water, which reduces hyperactivity, makes them feel more relaxed, and makes them more interested in learning and practicing skills. It helps children relieve stress and negative emotions when they hit, pour, and splash water on each other. In addition, playing with water also helps children practice sharing equipment and materials with their playmates.

Develop problem-solving skills and help children develop a better understanding of science in a simple way

Playing with water is a great way for children to be exposed to different scientific and mathematical concepts such as: mass, measurement, estimation, physical properties, etc. Pouring, measuring, using water containers of different sizes helps children understand concepts such as full, empty, more, less, etc. When children play with water, they begin to learn how and why things happen.

Develop language skills

Playing with water allows children to experience and learn new words that are rarely used in daily life. It is also the time when children interact with each other through language, while playing together.



Develop motor skills and improve children's physical health

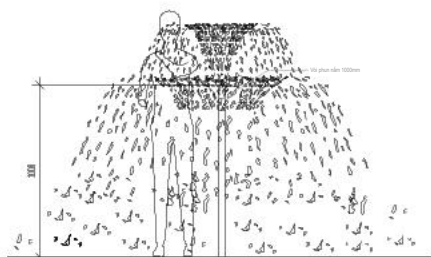
Children are splashed in water, walking in water from top to bottom, up and around to help develop motor skills and hand-eye coordination, feel the spray of water on the whole body to develop tactile sensation.

Playing with water has a therapeutic effect, reduces pain and rehabilitation for children with cerebral palsy, creates good sleep for children with sleep disorders. Water generates a relaxing and pleasant environment, stimulates refreshment. The force in the water helps strengthen muscles, helping the body regain balance. The respiratory organs are forced to work more underwater, helping to strengthen natural antibodies with long-term benefits to regain balance, eliminate stress and fatigue.

Under this project, a training workshop was also held to strengthen teaching capacity for children with intellectual disabilities and autism spectrum disorders on behavioral adjustment and development through hydrotherapy for 56 teachers and management staff at the Tân Bình District Support Centre for Inclusive Education Development as well as at other specialized educational centers and facilities in Ho Chi Minh City, Da Nang, Dak Nong, Dak Lak and Tien Giang.

“With the new facilities, they will not only have fun playing with water in a familiar space, but also improve their physical and mental health through therapy. It provides a comfortable and pressure-less environment to reduce stress and hyperactivity. The playground is designed for children with different capacities to play together, and will help them develop social communication skills and self-care skills.”

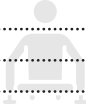
Ms. Ha Thi Thanh Van
Director of the Tân Bình District
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Notes







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Thư Viện Pháp Luật

Thông tư 06/2024/TT-BXD về QCVN 10:2024/BXD Quy chuẩn kỹ thuật quốc gia về Xây dựng công trình đảm bảo tiếp cận sử dụng do Bộ trưởng Bộ Xây dựng ban hành.

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