Let's Get Started - Planning in a Fast Forward Environment

Markus Appenzeller, MLA+, Netherlands
Martin Probst, MLA+, Netherlands

1. Hypothesis

This paper describes one aspect of a new planning practice that responds to radically changed conditions of urban planning – how to start into an open ended and complex transformation process.

Complexity not Rule Book

In the past planning was successful in defining rules to organize the spatial, economic and social development in a world that could still be well analyzed. Today the old rule books don't fit the challenge of development in much more complex conditions - between local identity, multi-faceted societies, modern technology and unifying global connectivity.

Transformation not Tabula Rasa

The rate of urbanization is rising around the world. However contrary to this development pressure the spatial expansion of cities is increasingly limited as we are more conscious that our resources are limited. Today urban planning is not so much about tabula rasa plans on green fields but deals with the more intricate transformation of already built up and inhabited areas under such topics as re-development, regeneration and or qualification.

Process not Big Plan

This transformation or modernization is not a "project" with a start day and a clear end.
It should be understood as a process that leaves space for learning, adjustment, responses to changing circumstance.

Curator not Technocrat

For the urban planner this is a radical change of practice, away from technocratic solutions towards the curatorship of a change process.

Let's get started

Traditional planning practice needs too much time to develop the big plan and agreement that responds appropriately to these complex challenges. Recently new actors and initiatives have shown how to act more quickly, sometimes precede planning or even make it redundant. A new planning practice needs to include strategies of how to start more quickly into a transformation process, while the more complex planning work is been developed.

2. Why? Future Planning in a Complex Environment

Planning was and still is the simulation of an outcome in a process with limited complexity. In the past that complexity was indeed relatively limited. With technology and political rule changing and the market economy kicking in money became the biggest decisive factor. With the end of the Cold War and the rise of the BRICS[i] countries and with them large parts of the second and third world, we have reached unprecedented complexity[ii].

ISOCARP
Knowledge for better Cities

This leads to a number of game-changing shifts:

– The number of potential actors in any process in higher and more divers.
– The ability to influence others by means of communication tools is higher and faster.
– Transparency is increased and almost everything becomes part of a public debate almost immediately.
– Knowledge is available to everyone in a more digestible way. People know more and can understand more. Better education and better presentation as well as media that can provide expert answers quickly improve the position of non-professionals in negotiation processes.
– More advanced societies tend to care more about minorities. in any given problem, groups that do not form the mainstream become increasingly important.
– Local events have a global impact. All networks are more and more connected across boundaries. Events in one place can have huge impacts elsewhere.
– Political leadership is increasingly guided by polls and daily problems and to a much lesser extent by the long term and what it needs.
– Each place is different on this globe but markets tend to categorize. As a result a trend to uniformity cannot be denied.

BUT IN PLANNING WE STILL ACT AS IF NOTHING HAS CHANGED.
We still do the simulation - our masterplans - as if complexity has not increased.
We still do masterplans in a way that does not reflect these changes.
We still exercise planning that largely focuses on what is desirable and put relatively little focus on what can realistically be achieved.
And even if we respond to the new circumstances, we try to do that with complex rules[iii] and complex tools that nobody understands anymore – not to mention their practical usability.
IN MOST CASES THAT IS.

But in recent years there are examples that take different approaches. They all have in common that they change a number of parameters and rules that characterize the traditional form of planning but maybe the most important new aspect is that the starting up of urban transformation can happen differently. While traditional planning is time consuming, these new approaches can start here and now and sometimes precede planning or even make it redundant. It is important to understand how they depart from common practice to use them consciously and actively.

– They are place or idea related
  The alternative approaches are deeply rooted in a local context. They give answers to a particular problem or utilize a specific spatial condition.
– They use a different set of actors
  While traditional planning is a relationship between the political leadership, planning authorities and the planner (sometimes including the development sector), new forms tend to have more diverse groups of actors. Next to the old planning guard, businesses, community activists, social entrepreneurs, altruists, philanthropists, families, academics, artists, ecologists, minority groups... can and do play an integral role.
– They make decisions in a different way
  Decision-making also has to reflect the more diverse group of people. Conclusions are reached rather by consensus or democratic vote than by rule of power. This ensures that those involved in the decisions also back what has been decided.
– They tend to have a much more diverse set of goals

ISOCARP
Knowledge for better Cities

Only those who have an interest in a transformation process to happen will fully engage. While this leads to a joint overarching goal that is keeping the group together, each group member has his own agenda and a set of sub-goals that do not necessary comply with those of the other members of the group. The diversity of participants in a transformation process therefore also tends to lead to less uniform outcomes that better accommodate the needs and desires of the individuals but at the same time draw urban coherence and the esthetic of canonic order in the urban environment in question.

– They do not fully reflect society but reflect who has an interest in a transformation.
Who wants a place to transform engages in the process and who explicitly does not want it might also engage in fighting it. But the vast majority of people do not care. While previously everybody was excluded, now only pressure and lobby groups are included.

– They tend to be creative in introducing new, customized planning tools
A system that in each case works with different players cannot use the traditional planning tools only. Therefore Kick-starters have their own customized methods, processes and concepts that address and reflect the group's setup and the condition to be changed. This leads to a higher probability of new unprecedented outcomes.

– They tend to have a different balance between planning and procedural pragmatism.
Since transformations usually include those who want to actively change a given condition a players, the amount of planning necessary usually is smaller.

Most of these transformations are not initiated top-down but usually emerge bottom-up – often after failed attempts of the established planning system or due to a lack of focus on particular groups, aspects of development or simple lack of public funding.

But do these processes not hold more? Can't they also be seen as successful showcases of what planning could be in a complex world and at least show part of the way forward? Can't we learn from them and adopt principles and strategies for the planning system that help us to overcome the shortcomings of daily planning practice, namely the inability to book results quickly.

3. What? – How to Start into a Transformation Process

The start of traditionally planned urban transformations often is slow and the first steps take a long time – often too much time – to see real changes on the ground. During the long lasting process of creation plans regularly lose momentum. This leads to the usual accusations that money has been wasted or that nothing has changed. As a consequence plans often get jeopardized. This is quite understandable form the point of view of an outsider to the process since plan making knows forms of pubic consultation and raises expectations.

This can be avoided if plans do lead to instant results or manage to create ownership among the population. The question is how to get started quickly and how to deliver results almost instantly – how to 'Kick-start'!

Kick-starting only successfully works with a change of the established rules of play. People have to see new opportunities for themselves, for their businesses or for their neighbourhood. While the ingredients of a successful kick-start can vary they all use some of the aspects of alternative transformation outlined above.

ISOCARP
Knowledge for better Cities

3.1 Emergency Call – Ask for Support

Collaboration is needed for working on complex urban challenges. An early task will be to contact local actors that are interested to become part of developing the content and to support the transformation in the long run.

−   Local knowledge and resources are available but often remain hidden, unused or not well integrate.
−   Institutions such as universities, museum, festivals, (but also health providers, social services) are seeking possibilities to reach out and run related parallel programs on interesting topics that contribute to the transformation.
−   Agencies and professional organizations will put the topic on their agenda and are often have resources available, e.g. organize courses/workshops or to assign expert staff to join the steering group.
−   Government departments are normally the source of funding for transformation planning. Barrier between departments should be overcome or softened.
−   Non-profit organizations and engaged individuals that are willing to commit themselves to a transformation process or certain aspects that are close to their interest.
−   The professional and business world should be approached, because a wide process will need a larger number of professional experts
−   Citizens can contribute with everyday knowledge, ideas and concerns of the next generation.
−   Ethnic and minority groups are often excluded but have their specific demands in a complex society. Break the invisible barrier by making the first step and approach them

Early engagement and call for support will benefit the long term development of the transformation process.

−   An open call for support spreads the word.
−   It creates a sense of urgency. People get heard.
−   Early talks and discussions bring the relevant topics onto the table and can inform the path and agenda of the transformation.
−   Talking openly to all parties can be a way to open up bureaucratic and administrative boundaries.
−   Side lines to the main process can be initiated and produce early results.
−   The transformation process gets wider with inspiration from the "outside".
−   Additional financial and human resources will be integrated into the process.
−   Early alliances for a shared vision emerge.
−   With early communication you finds partners that will carry the project in the long run.

Example – Stadt Land Fluss. A literary investigation of the Rhine Valley

The Literature Society in the Austria region of Vorarlberg invited their members to reflect and write about life and future of an area that was to become the focus of a regional planning process and published the texts and photographs as a special edition of their annual book. This publication at the start of the planning process played a vital role in opening the discussion about the future of the area to non-professional circles. It widened the scope of the regional plan beyond spatial aspects and strengthened social aspects, such as elderly care and youth care. As a result some of the authors to became members of the expert panel on social development. The publication opened the topic and more cultural institutions started to run programs concerning the future development of the region.

Figure: Title page V#14 Stadt Land Fluss. Verein Literatur Vorarlberg. www.literatur-vorarlberg.at/

Example - Sugar House Studios, London UK

An island formed by roads and waterways just south of the Olympic Park of London, the Sugar House Lane area is undergoing rapid physical and economic change. Adjacent to Three Mills Film Studios and for over a century a centre of making, manufacture and industry, large swathes of the area are currently in suspended animation, awaiting large-scale redevelopment as a new residential and business neighborhood.

Sugarhouse Studios is on the north edge of the island, occupying an abandoned sign-writers workshop scheduled for demolition at some point in 2013. In the months before it joins many of its formers neighbors as rubble-awaiting-development, it will host a program of cinema, music, food and drink in celebration of the area's complex histories and in investigation of its myriad of possible futures. Alongside the event space, there is a workshop for small scale making and design and a cafe and bar.

Figure: Sugarhouse Studios
http://sugarhousestudios.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/IMG_008-e1338248090437.jpg

3.2 Quick Wins

We don't need to wait until the complex transformation process is mapped out before things are put in action. Right at the beginning one strand of work should be dedicated to work hands-on on the obvious to create early results that will inspire and encourage further participation.

- First steps can be small. There is no need to wait for more complicated projects to be organised.
- Changes to existing regulation will take time and often hinder quick changes. If solutions are temporary, they could be unconventional and might be possible "on the edge" of regulations.
- Immediate problems can often be solved at limited cost. Lack of care and maintenance often cast a dimmer light than need be.

- Quick results will get people excited about what is possible.
- They can create excitement and inspiration for more participation and support.
- Shows commitment from key players to deliver. Especially politicians need to show that they are creating results.
- Warning: be careful of hollow activism and "ruins" of temporary buzz. If first actions are out of place or left behind without care, this will cast a negative image on the transformation process.

Example - Perm Pedestrian Area, Russia
After approval of the strategic masterplan of Perm, one of the first moves was to create the cities first pedestrian zone at Kirova Street. By simple concrete guard rails the street was closed for cars and immediately people started using the street. Gradually formalizes the street today features small market stall, benches and many activities by local residents.

Figure: Perm Pedestrian Area. Photo by Author

Example - Hong Kong temporary street Markets, Hong Kong
The Kowloon Quarter of Hong Kong is short of space. Almost entirely covered with high density buildings, every street becomes a logistic necessity and cannot easily be replaced by alternative routes. Hong Kong therefore has adopted the strategy to temporarily give space to pedestrians to hold street markets. Following regular time schedules roads are closed down for a number of hours for commercial activity and pedestrians to take over. This changing use of streets leads to a different experience of streetscape and a different attitude and level of tolerance towards transport infrastructure.

Figure: HK Kowloon Street Market. Photo by author

Example - Guerilla gardening / Pop up gardens, Germany
Starting as protest against surrender of public space to cars in 2000 on Parliament Square in London, Guerilla gardening has grown into a movement that seeks to beautify and soften cities by means of greening. Often set up as instant gardens, square, streets and residual space gets

used in a different way. One example is Wanderbaumallee by Munich based Green City Society. 15 mobile trees greened streets in the city and often were replaced by peranent ones. As a result of this initiative 150 new trees were planted in the last 10 years, partly funded by the city, partly by local residents.

Figure: Guerilla gardening. Source: www.greencity.de

Example - Favela painting, Brasil

The Dutch artist duo Haas&Hahn consisting of Jeroen Koolhaas and Dre Urhahn started working together in 2005, when they filmed a documentary about hip hop in the favelas of Rio and São Paolo for MTV. Inspired by this visit, they started bringing works of art to unexpected places, starting with painting enormous murals in the slums of Brazil. Unlike most artists, they did not work on their own, but involved local people. This not only leads to a reduction of social barriers, it also helps building skills and creating a viable economic basis for the local residents.

Figure: Favela painting. Source: http://latina-press.com/media/2010/06/favela-rio.jpg

3.3 Ideas of the Next Generation

Input to the transformation process can't be limited to established players. Work with young people and students can open up unexpected perspectives.

- The young generation is not yet influenced by the old system in transformation and will have a very natural view on things.
- Young people are creative, bring inspiration and free thinking.
- The young generations will be the ones that eventually benefit from the transformation. They naturally care if given the possibility to participate.
- Often the youth is seen as a problem. Engagement will bring the problem from their own perspective on the agenda.
- Involvement will be encouragement for the youth to become active and take responsibility for their interests and for the future of their living environment.
- Young people are positive duplicators and spread the word within their family and wider social network, e.g. recycling education in schools has positively influenced the recycling behaviour of the older generation.

ISOCARP
Knowledge for better Cities

Example - Umschichten, Stuttgart

Umschichten is an initiative of a number of recently graduated young architects based in Stuttgart that - instead of making lengthy plans and building skills as employees at a firm - immediately switch to implementation. Recycling as many products as possible and fully involving local people, they try to create urban spaces and interventions for a real market that exists. Next to projects for third parties they also run culture center Wagenhallen, where they educate other people in their hands on approach and hold workshops and symposia on the topic of instant urbanism.

Figure: Hermannschlachten theatre performance at Wagenhallen, www.umschichten.de

Example - Poolbar Festival, Feldkirch Austria

Annual music and culture festival ist held every year during the summer months and gives the youth culture space in an area far away from the global stages. The festival started in 1994 as a temporary program for a disused swimming pool at the edge of the city center. To stay fresh and young, Poolbar Festival holds competitions amongst young graphic designers and architects every year to renew the whole ambience of the festival. It is a platform where youth culture becomes recognized.

Figure: Poolbar Festival, Feldkich Austria   www.poolbar.at

Example - 72 hour urban action, Germany

Set up as the world's first real time architecture competition, teams have 3 days and 3 nights to design and build a project for and in the public space. Started in Israel, 72h urban action now organizes similar events in other cities. Urban Action is a civic design practice that involves residents, decision makers and professionals in a hands-on setup. It harnesses creative thinking and existing resources within a community to rapidly make places. Through its festival character, it encourages participation triggers a lasting change of perception. Through the extreme deadline, a tight budget and limited space, 72h urban action delivers results almost instantly. It triggers imagination and ideas for more to come.

Figure: 72 hour urban action   http://72hoururbanaction.com/

3.4 Invite Pioneers

Transforming areas will need a new perception, if the path of their development should change and they should re-emerge as areas with a positive future. This is especially true for areas with a problematic reputation, but also areas, that had a different use or where locked to the general public, such as industrial areas, harbours, military areas, etc.

- Pioneers such as artists and galleries, party people, unconventional urbanites are often open to make use of unusual forms of urban spaces and buildings.
- Even government agencies and official institutions can act as pioneers.
- Cheap and unconventional spaces and accommodation is attractive to groups with lower budgets or unusual spatial demands such as students, the creative industry, some institutions.
- The temporary use can bring derelict land and buildings out of obscurity and should be encouraged.
- Be open for views from the outside. Undiscovered or hidden potentials can be activated.
- Make known, new image, new use, new visitors, new destinations routes

Example - Hoxton raves and galleries, London UK

After producing industry moved out of the premises in London's Hoxton neighbourhood following change in production methods and scale, by the early 1980s, these industrial lofts and buildings came to be occupied by young artists as inexpensive live/work spaces, exhibitions, raves and clubs occupied former office and retail space at the beginning of the 1990s. During this time Joshua Compston established his Factual Nonsense gallery on Charlotte Road in Shoreditch and organised art fetes in Hoxton Square. Their presence gradually drew other creative industries into the area, especially magazines, design firms, and dot-coms.

By the end of the 20th century, the southern half of Hoxton had become a vibrant arts and entertainment district boasting a large number of bars, nightclubs, restaurants, and art galleries and is a good example of successful regeneration.
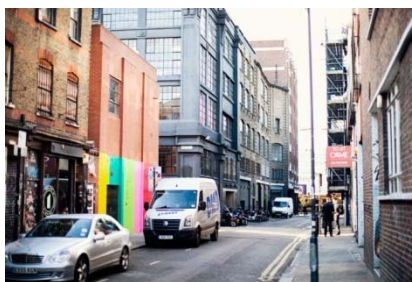

Figure: Hoxton East London
www.editer.com/peopleplaces/redchurch-street-restaurants-shops-hoxton

Example   –   Antikraak,   Netherlands
Started as a means to fight the semi-legal occupation of houses in the Netherlands in actively placing people in houses earmarked for redevelopment, Anti-kraak has grown into a viable means to stimulate activity in problematic urban quarters. Usually young groups of people - students, start-ups and people seeking alternative lifestyles tend to occupy these spaces. They not only live their lives but also have an impact on the surrounding areas. Often these properties become new centers of social and cultural activity.

Figure: Antikraak NL. http://www.studentenkrant.org/2011/04/de-beste-antikraakwoningen-van-groningen/erooks_sk_antikraakheinz/

Example – NDSM, Amsterdam Netherlands
After the closure of the shipyard in the late 1970's large parts of the premises of the Dutch Shipbuilding Company NDSM were not used for 25 years. Squatters started suing the place and gradually more formalized living and working spaces for artists, craftsmen and other small businesses were created. Together they formed the foundation 'Kinetic North' that received subsidies from the city to further develop the new forms of use of the area. In 2006 the foundation became owner of the property and since has developed their concept further. The reputation of the area as one of the breeding grouds for creativity was further increased by MTV Europe that moved their headquarters there.

Figure: NDSM Amsterdam. www.kunstinzicht.nl

Example - Les machines de l'ile, Nantes France
Started in 1999 in Nantes, Les machines de l'ile has introduced huge machines into the world of theatre and performance. Creating these kinetic sculptures requires enormous spaces to assemble them. Les machines de l'ile found a perfect spot in the former shipyards on the island of Nantes, France. Supported by the city of Nantes, next to a production place also an exhibition center could be realized that at the same time acts as the most important attractor and a key feature for the regeneration project on the island. It is a good example of the successful combination of market demand and public sector investment.

ISOCARP
Knowledge for better Cities

Figure: Les machines de l'ile, Nantes   http://tenva.files.wordpress.com/2011/10/nefs1.jpg

Example - National Trust Headquarters, Swindon UK

The new Central Office for the UK National Trust is a pioneer in the redevelopment of the industrial core of Swindon. UK. The site was the heart of Brunel's Great Western Railway complex, the largest railway works in Britain at the end of the 19th century. The form of the new building is reminiscent of the adjacent 19th century engine sheds. The new headquarter sets standards for sustainable office buildings and work places.

Figure: National Trust Headquarters   http://www.fcbstudios.com/

3.5   Pilot Projects

Actors of urban transformation processes need to learn how to do things differently. In order to overcome the worn out paths of action first projects might need extra initiative to get on the way.

- Pilot projects could sit temporary outside/on the edge of current rules and regulations, as these will need a longer time to formally change.
- Pilot projects could be a test bed for new design solutions, new delivery tools and different regulations.
- Pilot projects could set a new quality standard for following development and help to lift the transformation area onto a new level.
- Pilot projects are showcase of best practice elsewhere. They could proof that the local way of doing things Is not the only way and become inspiration for followers.
- As new typologies, pilot project could open up of markets that were formerly unseen.
- And in general: Only if we do something we can learn and grow.

Example – OCT, Shenzhen China

Once an industrial area, OCT (Oversea's Chinese Town) East in Shenzhen has been transformed into a cultural quarter in its own right and with a very unique atmosphere. Different to what is common practice in China today, buildings were not replaced, but reused. This leads to an interesting mix of typologies and a unique 'new and old' atmosphere that can only be found in very few places in China. OCT hosts exhibitions and offers offices and workspaces for smaller companies and creative enterprises. The physical transformation of the area has been mastered by one single architecture office – Urbanus – which is also based in the area.

Figure: OCT Shenzhen   www.shenzhen-standard.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/OCT-LOFT.jpg

Example – Schieblock, Rotterdam Netherlands

Large quantums of offices without tenants and the economic crisis lead to a delay of urban regeneration projects. In this economic climate, a big city block in Rotterdam, Schieblok, has temporarily been transformed into a cultural venue and a laboratory for urban development. Funded by the property owner, the city's development agency and private intitiative, a five year plan for the creation of a laboratory where alternative means of urban transformation can be developed and tested has been created. A continuous educational and cultural program, creative offices located in the premises and large scale events such as the Rotterdam Architecture Biennale established a highly animated and attractive urban setting for other investors to invest in projects in the vicinity.

Figure: Schieblock Rotterdam NL
http://architectuurfonds.nl/content/nws/i_068/Stedenbouw_Symposium_Schieblok.jpg

Example – Bauausstellungen, Germany

Since more than hundred years, Germany uses the tool of Bauausstellungen (building exhibitions) as a tool for the development of urban areas. Those exhibitions either focus on a particular programmatic problem – such as housing for the masses – or at places with problems – such as dilapidated former industrial areas. Over the course of several years, demonstration projects that can provide answers in a high quality way are funded by the public sector. Usually these building exhibitions are accompanied by lecture and discussion programs, workshops, masterclasses and a curatorial exhibition program that introduces amd explains the problem targeted as well as the place where the building exhibition takes place.

ISOCARP
Knowledge for better Cities

Figure: Bauausstellung IBA Emscher Park, ice rink at Zeche Zollverein
http://static.europan.no/535/4c1514b9-c998-4eec-a24e-69ba551347ac

3.6 Present, Communicate, Collaborate

Share, explain, learn, excite, encourage, belief, trust
As set out in the second chapter of this paper, sustainable transformation processes can't remain exclusive and behind closed doors. Only open and active communication fosters support and trust. Open communication plays a vital role.

− Open communication will multiply the positive effects if the steps taken, findings, visions and achievements are shared. More actors will benefit from the experience gained.
− An open and unprejudiced communication will lead to fruitful discussions that strengthen the process.
− Input during the process will allow to adjust the transformation to ever changing circumstances.
− An open attitude helps to break down barriers and create understanding that will open up collaborations and join forces.
− Long and complicated processes need renewed inspiration and renewed support throughout their delivery. Collaboration and open communication allows to stay fresh.
− Transparency can create rust and foster support.

Example - Schaustelle Potsdam, Germany

The German federal state of Brandenburg is building a new parliament that will be located in the rebuilt former castle of the Prussian kings in Potsdam near Berlin. The relocation of the parliament is only one important step of the reconstruction of the historic core of the city which was destroyed in World War 2 and thereafter by socialist planning. Schaustelle Potsdam, a multi-functional pavilion has been created on the main square of the reconstruction area to inform the local public and visitors about the plans. But Schaustelle does more. It organizes and hosts exhibitions on the history of the place, the Prussian kings and the various stages of urban development in Potsdam. In that function it becomes a public forum where plans for the future of the city are being discussed.

ISOCARP
Knowledge for better Cities

Figure: Pavillion Schaustelle Potsdam
http://www.maerkischeallgemeine.de/cms/beitrag/11762674/62249/Der-Neuaufbau-des-
Landtagsschlosses-in-Potsdams-Mitte-kann.html

Example - HafenCity Hamburg, Germany

One of the reasons for the success of Hamburg's HafenCity is the way the scheme is presented. Unlike in other developments a big emphasis was put on the communication of the plans to a large variety of groups early on in the process. This was not only done to inform them about what will happen in the future, but also to start making the place – even before it exists as an urban environment. Large groups of people were attracted making HafenCity the number one tourist destination in Hamburg.

Gradually the information, communication and education programme has been extended. Today four different exhibition centers show different aspects and projects in HafenCity. Each of them has its own programming where visitors cannot only learn about the project but – like in a science center – also can acquire general knowledge about ecological, technical, historical or societal challenges.

Figure: 1 of 4 HafenCity Exhibition Centers   www.hafencity.de

Example - Jane's Walk, USA

Named after Jane Jacobs, a famous American writer that published "The death and life of great American cities" in 1961, in which she advocated Walkable neighborhoods, urban literacy and cities planned for and by people. Started in 2007 in Toronto, Canada, Jane's walk has grown into a global movement for local ownership of urban space. Set up as a series of free neighbourhood walking tours, Jane's walks help put people in touch with their environment and with each other. The events bridge social and geographic gaps and create a space for cities to discover themselves.

Figure: Jane's Walk. Source: www.janeswalk.net

3.7 Parallel Track

While this paper focuses on how to kick starting a transformation processes, it should be clear that this is only one aspect of a revamped practice of urban planning in an age of new complexity. In parallel to the early initiatives described here work on the more complex topics should begin.

3.8 Benefits of Starting Early

In summary the key benefits of starting early are:
- To build up local people that will remain and carry on
- To learn by doing
- To set examples in practice that all can experience
- To create local experience and knowledge that feeds into the complex planning process that starts in parallel
- To create a more sustainable transformation process that is based locally

3.9 A Celebration

Every learning process should include moments where achievements are recognized and celebrated. Only if you start immediately you can celebrate something together soon.Let's get started.

4. Postscriptum

What does this require from us as planners and urban designers?
It means nothing less than a total revamp of the entire profession. Where once plans were the most important tool, they have become one in a series we should use.

Where in the past we had an intimate and exclusive relationship with the client or the authorities, we now need to be more independent - but still need to make sure those who pay get value for money they invest. Where in the past design skills were key, today communication skills are probably even more important. Where planning processes were relatively. 'plannable' in the past, today we have to accept that transformation processes are much more volatile and less predictable.

What transformations need is moderators that steer the discussions and make sure stakeholders are enabled to make their points. But they have another important role: -one of the biggest shortcomings of participatory transformation processes is that only a select group is represented

on the discussion table and makes itself heard, the silent majority is not. Therefore the moderator also should be an attorney of the greater good.

Ideally these moderators have cross-disciplinary knowledge to be able to value different aspects and make the interests of those outside the process heard. We as planners have the big opportunity to - for the first time in decades - extend our field of work. As experts in cross disciplinary thinking, we can fill in that role almost ideally.

Endnote

[i] BRICS stands for Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa as the fastest growing emerging economies at present.

[ii] For increase of complexity please see: McGrath, Rita – in: Harvard Business Review Blog Network, August 31st, 2011 - http://blogs.hbr.org/hbr/mcgrath/2011/08/the-world-really-is-more-compl.html

[iii] an overview of integration of data to form complex rules can be found in Waddell, Paul; Ulfarsson, Gudmundur Freyr: Introduction to urban simulation: design and development of operational models, University of Washington, 2011

ISOCARP
Knowledge for better Cities