



Laboratorio de Cambio Social

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TRANSPORT JUSTICE INDICATORS AND RANKING — KOOL ROUTES TO BETTER STREETS AND NEIGHBOURHOODS in Santiago Chile

Ten years of participatory action research (PAR), led by the Laboratory for Social Change (the Lab), have generated knowledge about how to frame and implement transport justice on neighborhood streets, when schools are open, on streets, even at home when strict pandemic measures have closed down whole cities.

Using mixed methods from planning, anthropology, physical education, art, architecture and transport engineering, with participation from community and pro-mobility groups, the Lab has developed and tested a robust package of measures for transforming streets, recovering their role as public spaces. The transport justice framework established qualitative and quantitative indicators and methods to evaluate baseline and progress toward greater transport justice in whole neighbourhoods, cities and regions.

In a developing country, such as Chile, “safety” has worsened significantly in recent years. Road violence kills over 2,000 people a year. Gender violence keeps women shut up and vulnerable in their homes, with low participation in the workforce and civic activities. Violence from crime has taken over whole neighbourhoods, as illegal parking — organized by informal “*estacionadores*” — linked with organized crime, forming dangerous networks of traffickers who defend their trade with knives and guns.

This triple load of violence takes place on roads “for cars”, choked by congestion and hostile to the free circulation of children, elders and people with disabilities. The lower the income, the worse the problem, as people living in overcrowded housing need quality public spaces most.

We started in 2017 as a Chilean adaptation of Safe Routes to Schools programs, applied in the Global North. School communities changed the name from “safe” to “Kool”. Experience in cities large and small has confirmed the importance of gender, art, and sustainability as intrinsic to teaching children to cycle, repair, draw, but above all map and imagine more just and sustainable cities.

During the pandemic, we moved the program into neighbourhoods streets and squares. We added a cycle-taxi for elders. We developed a citizen-driven *Plan Calles*, or street plan, based on traffic calming and measures to reduce traffic and parking and improve green space and safety.

Rooted in a citizens network for “Well-being”, el *Buen Vivir*, a traditional value among many of the Americas’ indigenous peoples, these experiences are now poised for uptake by a new wave of visionary municipalities, which are just one key result of the social “explosion” that began in 2019, bringing a new generation into local, regional and national politics.

This workshop is structured to share these experiences and discuss the implications of single bundles of multiple solutions to “wicked” problems such as climate change, inequality and loss of biodiversity. It will include time for reflection in small groups, sharing complementary experiences and building collective wisdom to inspire ongoing work.

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