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**The Informal Canvas: Murals and Participatory Planning in
Informal Settlements in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic**

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**The Informal Canvas: Murals and Participatory Planning in
Informal Settlements in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
Committee**

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my grandparents, los pachucos y sus dichos.

“Sana sana colita de rana

Si no sanas hoy

Sanarás mañana.”

~Grandma Mora

“Chale. My '88 Chevy.”

~Grandpa Mora

“Recuerdas, if it doesn't feel good, get out of it. Whatever it is.”

~Grandma Otero

“What's up, esa!? This is your grandpa. Call me back.

I love you, mi jita. Wueno-bye.”

~Grandpa Otero

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Abstract

The Informal Canvas: Murals and Participatory Planning in Informal Settlements in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

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Murals tell a story. Faced with such marginalization under neoliberal governance, artists and activists in Santo Domingo have engaged in a global conversation that challenges hegemonic¹ narratives of planning and urban development and that foregrounds traditional forms of knowledge through alternative forms of storytelling. These subjugated stories are increasingly becoming legitimized through digital and social media platforms. Murals, in particular, often serve as public expressions of the neglected experience of the subaltern. Subaltern populations thus use public murals as a multifunctional and unique strategy to assert agency—defined here as self-determination and political coalition building—from the margins and to create a public forum for sociopolitical demands. Because of these empowerment potentials, muralism can be seen as a global phenomenon connecting communities through digital media (when digital media is available).

¹ Hegemonic is defined as the dominant social and political context.

Ultimately, the marriage of paint and politics through murals has facilitated deep transformations that can be used as a powerful tool within participatory planning and public policy at both the local, community-level and in traditional, decision-making spaces. This is because murals are multifunctional in their potential to build social capital and create alliances. This potential is amplified through mural programs, organizations, and radical planners, allowing street art to exist semi-permanently within the legislated city while serving as a transformative practice for local knowledge and marginalized voices to participate in traditional planning processes. This is the story of Los Platanitos.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Este mural es el primer mural que estamos haciendo en nuestra comunidad y en muchas comunidades por aquí porque por aquí no hay murales en ninguna parte. Esto viene siendo como una primera vez de un mural en una comunidad de gente pobre, de gente muy pobre como somos nosotros casi nadie se fija en hacer un mural donde lo vemos los pobres... Pero demostremos nuestro sentir y nuestra idea a través del mural.

This is first mural we are doing in our community and in many communities around here because there are no murals anywhere. This is the first mural in a community of poor people, very poor people. Almost nobody notices a mural where we see the poor... But we show our feelings and our ideas through the mural. ~ Lucila “Cesi” Euleria Sánchez, Resident of Los Platanitos and member of Mujeres Unidas

Murals tell a story. Growing up in Albuquerque, New Mexico, I saw the stories of my city and the Chicano experience—a story I never read in standard public education books—performed in public spaces, in our barrios. The streets were our canvas and the stage our history book. The history of conquest and land struggle, figures of Spanish Catholicism, encrypted indigenous motifs, and the hybrid mestizo experience are painted on buildings and alleyways. When traveling internationally, I became fascinated with cities and the subaltern² experience, specifically how the subaltern used the arts to voice their overlooked experience. I observed a common subaltern paradigm echoed in public spaces. Although thousands of miles away in a different country, I observed that Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic shared a similar voice and Los Platanitos—an informal settlement in Santo Domingo Norte of approximately 2,000 residents—had a story to tell.

² Defined here as those of lower socio-economic status whose voice are excluded from cultural hegemony (dominant social and political context).

Santo Domingo is the capital and largest city (population 1,506,233) of the Dominican Republic. In the 1980s, the Dominican Republic adopted neoliberal governance, which included privatization of solid waste management and other public services and which was accompanied by a lack of urban improvement projects in informal settlements like Los Platanitos. However, while informal settlements like Los Platanitos lack rights and services, they have the capacity to co-create innovative planning practices and social infrastructures (Sletto ed., 2015; Bayat, 2000; and Kellett, 2005), and in Latin America, the major parts of cities are characterized by informal production of goods and services (Fiori and Brandao, 2010). This calls for a deeper understanding of informal practices in order to foster radical, participatory planning with marginalized populations in informal settlements.

Faced with such marginalization under neoliberal governance, artists and activists in Santo Domingo have engaged in a global conversation that challenges hegemonic³ narratives of planning and urban development and that foregrounds traditional forms of knowledge through alternative forms of storytelling. These subjugated stories are increasingly becoming legitimized through digital and social media platforms. Murals, in particular, often serve as public expressions of the neglected experience of the subaltern. Depending on who is telling the story, they visibilize, critique, and foster reflective dialogue about sociopolitical processes. Subaltern populations thus use public murals as a multifunctional and unique strategy to assert agency—defined here as self-determination and political coalition building—from the margins and to create a public

³ Hegemonic is defined as the dominant social and political context.

forum for sociopolitical demands. Because of these empowerment potentials, muralism can be seen as a global phenomenon connecting communities through digital media (when digital media is available).

However, in the case of Santo Domingo, I was struck by the fact that no murals appeared in Los Platanitos, nor in other informal settlements. If murals provide expression for subaltern populations, why were there murals in formally developed areas in the city, but not in Los Platanitos? Inspired by this puzzle, I decided to conduct research in Santo Domingo to better understand the role of murals in the city, and in Los Platanitos to inquire if murals could play a role in community development and empowerment efforts. Knowing the positive impact that the process of mural development can have on marginalized communities, I wondered if the political and economic isolation of informal settlements such as Los Platanitos hinders residents' capacity to develop agency and political expression through the arts. Furthermore, can the arts be used through the field of planning to counteract this isolation?

Coming from a marginalized background myself, I have used the arts and hip-hop culture as a means to navigate through other marginalized communities as I have traveled. I have felt at home abroad in spaces demonstrating unique culture through the arts. These spaces have been approachable and relatable. I saw how, much like in my home town, public spaces was utilized as the soap box for ignored voices speaking up for their rights to the city. Prior to entering Graduate School, I worked as an arts columnist in Albuquerque, where I “decoded” artistic expression to understand the socio-political needs and values of my community. I used my position as a journalist to document these

stories through print and social media and helped facilitate connections and collaborations. I was fascinated with how my community was using the arts to transform their space and everyday realities. As I wrote in 2014, “Artistic expression on walls has existed since ancient times. From prehistoric cave paintings, to Egyptian hieroglyphics, to contemporary graffiti, we’ve been expressing the human experience on the canvas of existence for centuries. Whether anonymous, radical or commissioned, these wall artists are revolutionary storytellers, documenting thoughts that go unsaid. Spray can in hand, following a long human tradition, the artist speaks on the walls through graffiti,” (Otero, 2014).

This previous research on political and decolonial consciousness, identity, and self-representation in Chicano culture, and my undergraduate minor in Chicano Studies, strongly influenced my interest in this research. When I first visited Santo Domingo, I wanted to know how subaltern stories of Los Platanitos—or what Scott (1990) would call “the hidden transcript”—were represented and woven into the city politics that dictated their urban fabric. Yet I could not find an obvious, visible, public expression nor space (such as public murals) to navigate by nor observe in Los Platanitos. This apparent lack of murals in Los Platanitos sparked the questions and goals of this thesis. The first goal of this study was to understand the politics and geography of muralism in Santo Domingo, and the second goal was to understand the potential role, use, and significance of murals in the informal city. I used an activist research approach to collaborate with the community-based women’s organization Mujeres Unidas in Los Platanitos to investigate how community-based murals could be used as a radical, participatory planning method

in informal settlements as a way to facilitate collective community agency amongst marginalized residents. My research in Los Platanitos was conducted in summer 2016 as a follow-up to my participation in the Dominican Republic practicum with Dr. Bjørn Sletto at the University of Texas in Austin.

I conducted my research in two phases to first document the geographies of muralism in Santo Domingo, and then to collaborate in the development of a mural in Los Platanitos. My research questions were as follows:

Phase 1

Research Question 1: What is the geography of muralism in Santo Domingo?

1. What are the principal styles and contents of murals in Santo Domingo?
2. Who are the principal sponsors for murals in Santo Domingo?
3. Where are murals located within the city?
4. In what spaces are murals located?

Research Question 2: What are the political dimensions of muralism in Santo Domingo?

1. How are mural sites selected?
2. What are the purposes of murals?
3. To what extent are murals used in Santo Domingo for political purposes?
4. To what extent are murals used to facilitate community agency?

Phase 2

Research Question 3: What are the potentials of muralism for community agency in informal settlements?

1. What are the role, use, and function of murals in the informal settlement of Los Platanitos, and how does this differ from the formal city of Santo Domingo?
2. How do the politics and geography of murals differ between formal areas of Santo Domingo and the informal settlement of Los Platanitos?
3. What is the role of gender in community-based mural development, and how does mural development shape gender-based community activism in Los Platanitos?

In order to conduct my study, I collaborated with the community-based women's organization, Mujeres Unidas, which formed in Los Platanitos in 2012. Women's knowledge, such as the experiences of the members of Mujeres Unidas, is often overlooked and marginalized (Gururani, 2002) due to patriarchal hegemony and unequal power dynamics. This undermining of women's knowledge makes it difficult to construct consensus around identity, vision, and goals as an organization. These are the daily challenges that the women of Mujeres Unidas face within a patriarchal society. However, this project helped to strengthen the voice of Mujeres Unidas within the community of Los Platanitos and visibilized their agency as an organization.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Emerging social movements have used the arts to engage in a global conversation regarding rights to the city and cultural, social, and environmental justice. Much of the supporting literature has emerged from research in the Global South and at the urban scale. This research project employed activist scholarship methods (Hale, 2001) to produce a case study that addresses the gap in literature pertaining to mural creation processes within informal settlements.

I engaged with literature that provides theory on murals as a transformative planning practice, place-making, production of formal and informal spaces, arts-based research, and community-based agency. This literature draws from a variety of disciplines including planning, geography, feminist epistemologies, sociology, and the arts to address key considerations of agency and social infrastructure; hegemonic

narratives and localized experiences; and socio-spatial justice. Due to the dynamic field of planning and the complexities of urban settlement processes and formation, a broad understanding of these key issues was necessary to address my research questions.

Theory Body 1: Storytelling as a transformative practice

Public murals have been used by subaltern populations as a “unique and effective tool with which to assert agency from the margins” (Latorre, 2008) and to highlight opportunities for social mobilization and socio-spatial justice. Murals serve as collaborative projects that mobilize communities towards social and political transformation (Greaney, 2002). Many studies have been conducted to analyze the function of murals in public space within an urban setting, yet research is limited on community-based murals within informal settlements, where public space is not formally planned.

Scholars such as Sandercock (2003), Smith (2016), Scott (1990), Ferrell (1996), and Cohen-Cruz (2006) provide insights on resistance and localized experiences within hegemonic narrative and planning practices. Resistance to domination is expressed through counterhegemonic discourse and “informal” acts of resistance, such as oral discourse or “the arts of resistance” (Scott, 1990). These arts of resistance seek to balance the scales of power that support equitable development. Arts-based strategies create spaces to reveal political realities through personal stories, and, thus, storytelling becomes a political act of resistance and a mode of solidarity for community development (Cohen-Cruz et al., 2006). Cohen-Cruz et al. (2006) sum up the potential of

underserved or impoverished communities developing agency through storytelling by claiming that “people may have limited material resources but are rich in experiences” (Cohen-Cruz et al., 2006). Testimony becomes agency and an opportunity to engage public spaces for socio-spatial planning.

Theory Body 2: Place-making in public spaces

Considering the function of public space for murals in urban settings, informal settlements can be understood as community-based productions of space. Phase two of this research project involved co-facilitating a mural creation through which I analyze the process and consider site selection, context, content, and actors involved.

Scholars theorize that the effects of capitalism and globalization have produced an era of growing marginalization in the global south. As a result of neoliberal governance, informal settlements lack rights and services to the city and are not involved in the traditional process of planning, which in turn limits their role in producing cultural spaces. In this thesis, I aim to demonstrate how the field of planning can engage with localized knowledge and alternative development practices in an era of global climate change, rapid urbanization, and increasing informal settlements, specifically by engaging with a community organization such as Mujeres Unidas to create a new community space for cultural expression. In doing so, muralism in places like Los Platanitos serves as a means to socially produce new, alternative geographies that challenge hegemonic space and dominant narratives through the processes of localized experience and place-making (Sundberg, 2014). Muralism thus can to facilitate connection between communities such

as Los Platanitos and political spaces by mobilizing and exposing marginalized experiences (Fiori and Brandao 2010, 202). In so doing, murals contribute to producing “emotional geographies,” which in turn challenge dominant forms of citizenship (Sletto and Diaz, 2015). Such “defiant geographies” of resistance, resilience, and belonging foster residents’ solidarity and agency to construct their own sense of participatory citizenship (Leu and McTarnaghan, 2015). Residents of informal settlements optimize limited resources that reflect their value systems and a person’s place in society through the concept of home, where site and dwelling are attached to memory and meaning (Kellett, 2005). As I will discuss in this thesis, the mural creation process demonstrated how a community-based, public mural can potentially “map” the geographies of place and space.

Theory Body 3: Arts-based Research

Arts-based research literature provides methods that have proven successful to facilitate in-depth conversations (or data gathering) that transcend barriers of language, age, culture, gender, and identity. Because of my own cultural experience, I am especially inspired by indigenous research, which emphasizes oral tradition and decolonized methodologies and which seeks to deconstruct western thought and dualistic classifications of space, often through artistic expression (Smith, 2004). Perhaps because of this fluidity that transcends binaries and boundaries, arts-based research facilitates understandings that transcend hard data and scientific methods.

Qualitative research through storytelling methods allows us to “hear the silences” of alternative stories through visual and performative approaches, which are collaborative by nature. Arts-based research for justice unveils oppressions in contradiction to dominant narratives (Foster, 2015), providing a deeper form of ethnography and analysis as the researcher becomes immersed in the storyteller’s world instead of objectively (or remotely) extracting data to support a theory. Furthermore, because storytelling is collaborative by nature it is central to participatory planning and radical/insurgent planning, and is a valuable method to document the stories of marginalized voices across the city.

RESEARCH METHODS

My research was conducted in two phases. In Phase 1, I used observation techniques to examine the geography and politics of muralism in Santo Domingo in order to document principal styles, content, sponsors, locations, and roles of murals in Santo Domingo. Using a structured protocol to guide my observations, I documented murals in the city through field notes, photography, and videography. I also conducted fourteen interviews with eight muralists based in Santo Domingo proper, two muralists based in the community of Los Platanitos, three organizations, and one municipal official.

Phase 1:***Observation & Mapping***

In addition to researching the history and social and political context of muralism in Santo Domingo, I used a structured protocol to walk around the city during Phase 1 to understand the current geography and politics of murals in Santo Domingo at large. I recorded the location, theme, and tag of each mural. I used the tag to identify the artist through social media to contact the artists for interviews. The tags identified independent artists or artists associated with organizations. Several of these organizations were involved in social movements, which supports my original claim that muralism has become a global phenomenon connecting communities through social media outlets. The first dozen mural locations were suggested by a local research partner Juan Torres. I took photos of murals throughout the city, geo-located the murals using Google Maps, and physically marked the murals on a map of Santo Domingo in order to see trends in the geographic location according to themes, organizations, and/or sponsors. Observing and mapping the murals on foot allowed me to come across additional murals beyond the suggested murals, as well as to get an idea of the physical and social landscape of Santo Domingo.

Semi-structured Interviews / “Storytelling”

The semi-structured interviews provided “the story” behind the murals. The interviews revealed three general categories: 1) independent or autonomous murals, 2) murals commissioned by the city, and 3) murals associated with an organization and/or social movement. These categories, in turn, helped me to navigate the politics of

muralism in order to prepare for planning Phase 2 to answer the question as to why there are fewer murals in Los Platanitos in comparison to Santo Domingo.

I identified Yo Amo RD (República Dominicana) as a prominent organization that sponsors Muralizando RD, which is a project that works to strengthen Dominican identity, connect local communities, promote civic responsibility, and embellish public spaces. I chose this organization because they facilitate the connection in scales by working directly with marginalized communities and the City. As an official organization, Yo Amo RD obtains sponsored materials through government authorities and the private sector, but the muralists donate their time because they believe that the impact of art and participatory processes heals communities. The interviewing and storytelling methods greatly enriched my data collection and provided a means to connect Los Platanitos to Yo Amo RD. My argument is that organizations like Yo Amo RD (Category 3) can help planners facilitate the connections between marginalized communities and municipal planning processes.

Phase 2:

Workshops

In Phase 2, I co-facilitated several workshops with Mujeres Unidas, which were intended to be participatory, activity-based, and exploratory to understand the potentials of muralism for community agency in Los Platanitos. Analysis of results from the interviews, focus group, and workshops assisted in understanding how the politics and geography of murals differ between formal areas of Santo Domingo and the informal

settlement of Los Platanitos, and made it possible to co-design a new mural in Los Platanitos.

Case Study –Mural Project

I performed activist scholarship through a co-facilitated mural project based on the interests and values expressed by Mujeres Unidas via informal conversations (“storytelling”), interviews, and workshops. This mural project also allowed me to analyze the potentials of muralism in Los Platanitos and other informal settlements like it. The co-developed mural project enabled the women to identify their leadership skills and connect them to outside organizations. Since this was my first time initiating a mural project, I emphasized to Mujeres Unidas that we were co-learning the process together so could develop other murals in the future, if they so wished (see Appendix A-C).

In my work with Mujeres Unidas, I following eight steps. Step 1 was designed to encourage female participation in community development projects such as this, Step 2 sought to understand the construction of space as it relates to identity and/or socioeconomic issues through the mural site selection process, and Step 3 aimed to understand motivation for and “the story” behind content development. This process facilitates broader community dialogue on self-determined storytelling as a mode of agency. Step 4 involved ongoing investigation regarding community-defined mural content in order to better understand the politics and geography of informal murals as it relates to a broader scale. Step 5 encouraged capacity building and empowerment through participatory planning in the project, and Step 6 carried the plan into action by painting the mural. Step 7 empowered community members through celebration and

promotion of a self-determined, community-based project. Finally, Step 8 reflected on knowledge production, community values, and awareness of the politics, geography, process of murals as a way of understanding to what extent murals on informal settlements facilitate agency.

PREVIEW OF CHAPTERS

Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the discussion. Chapter 2 discusses theory and attempts to define muralism and street art within three categories. This chapter discusses how subaltern classes use murals for expression, political purposes, and community building through practices such as street politics and hip hop culture. I continue by observing how muralism has transcended physical boundaries and has become a globally connected movement flowing through social media, yet some people and communities, such as Los Platanitos, are still isolated from this connection, which continues the discussion of muralism in the formal and informal city. This leads to the question of how planners can work with muralism to effect positive change, drawing on concepts of storytelling in planning and planning as storytelling.

Chapter 3 examines muralism in Santo Domingo, focusing on the history and influence of revolutionary muralists to the global flow of muralism with contemporary muralists and the categories of muralism I defined during my research. Chapter 4 describes Los Platanitos, illustrating how informal spaces are disconnected from (material) spaces of inclusion—the formal city—and disconnected from (virtual) spaces of connection—social media—and thus the flow of communication connecting social

movements. Chapter 5 describes the mural creation process with Mujeres Unidas in Los Platanitos, and Chapter 6 discusses how muralism served as a transformative planning practice in Los Platanitos. I conclude by discussing how planners may work with muralists to facilitate connection between isolated spaces and traditional planning practices.

CHAPTER 2: Muralism and Street Art

DEFINING MURALISM AND STREET ART

What is a mural? “The word mural originates from the Latin word ‘murus’, meaning ‘wall’. Today, we can define murals as any piece of artwork painted or applied directly onto a wall, ceiling or other larger permanent surfaces, flat, concave or convex, to be precise” (Kordic, 2015). The art of muralism boomed during the 1920s after the Mexican revolution, when murals emerged as a new form of visual communication containing social and political commentary. Mexican muralism included artists such as “the great three”: Diego Rivera, José Clemente Orozco, and David Alfaro Siqueiros, who, although politically controversial, were revered by the people for expressing themes of hope, freedom, and solidarity. Mexican muralism inspired other art movements internationally, including the Chicano art movement of the 1960s. As urban art has become more mainstream, murals have gained multiple purposes and continue to produce contemporary world-famous artists, such as Shepard Fairey and Banksy, the former of whom has collaborated with artistic social movements, such as Honor the Treaties—an art experiment created in 2010 to educate the public about Native American Treaty issues⁴. Today, murals are used as a method of socially engaging art that plays an important role in expressing the intersection between (street) art and politics (Young, 2014).

⁴ The artists I know from this movement are from New Mexico, my home state, reflecting the global flow of muralism.

Although my research focuses on murals, it is difficult to categorize “street art” in the contemporary city. Street art ranges from graffiti to guerilla art to writing political slogans and continues to diversify in its practice, making it difficult to define the activity, especially considering the debate over graffiti as art or crime (Young, 2014). Defining the politics of street art becomes more complex when considering the notions of public space, sociospatial politics, illegality, authenticity, and the “right to the city.”⁵ However, street art can be classified in terms of who does it and to what end. In my thesis, I discuss how street art is used by subaltern⁶ classes and by state/municipal authorities for different purposes through bottom-up (subaltern) and top-down processes (state/municipal authorities), conversely. This thesis also addresses how street art can be classified in terms of spaces in the formal versus informal city.

First, I argue that the subaltern classes use murals for expression, political purposes, and community building, e.g. street politics⁷ and hip-hop culture, in what Lefebvre would call the “lived spaces” of everyday life. Public murals have been used by subaltern populations as a “unique and effective tool with which to assert agency from the margins” (Latorre, 2008) and are thus an expression of “hip-hop culture.” “The hip-hop movement is rooted in a struggle for public space and a claim for street presence

⁵ “The right to the city is far more than the individual liberty to access urban resources: it is a right to change ourselves by changing the city. It is, moreover, a common rather than an individual right since this transformation inevitably depends upon the exercise of a collective power to reshape the processes of urbanization. The freedom to make and remake our cities and ourselves is, I want to argue, one of the most precious yet most neglected of our human rights” (Harvey, 2008).

⁶ Defined here as those of lower socio-economic status whose voice are excluded from cultural hegemony (dominant social and political context) (Gramsci, 1987)

⁷ “A set of conflicts and the attendant implications between a collective populace and the authorities, shaped and expressed episodically in the physical and social space of the streets” (Bayat, 2000).

(Rose, 1994)” (Lamotte, 2014). Hip-hop expressions call attention to socio-spatial justice and the decolonization and democratization of space. By reflecting everyday life in the urban environment, hip-hop provides both social critique and critical data for planners and policymakers.

Lamotte discusses Tricia Rose’s work *Black Noise* (1994)⁸, which analyzes hip-hop practices drawing on James Scott’s concept of the “hidden transcript”(1990). Scott terms “infrapolitics” as the strategies of resistance used by subordinate/oppressed, i.e. subaltern groups and their offstage critique of the power of superordinate/dominant groups. He calls this critique of power “the hidden transcript.” To add to Rose’s analysis of hip-hop as a hidden transcript, Lamotte claims that “hip-hop is rooted in an ambiguity between its inherent secrecy as a hidden transcript, and the task of becoming public in order to reach a larger audience and express emotions to others” (Lamotte, 2014). He uses graffiti as an example of a hidden transcript. I argue that graffiti as well as murals become “public transcripts” (Scott, 1990) because of its visibility in public space. Scott describes public transcript as the open and public interactions between dominators and oppressed. As a public transcript, I consider that graffiti and murals simultaneously enter the physical and metaphorical space of “street politics” (Bayat, 2000) and become a dialogue visible in public space. Graffiti thus serves to reclaim space through “inbetween spaces” (Gasparrini, 2014) as an “art of resistance” (Scott, 1990) and “right to the city” (Lefebvre, 1968).

⁸ Rose, T. (1994) *Black noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America*. Wesleyan University Press, Middleton, CT.

Considering that graffiti exists in an ambiguous, illegal realm, authorities will often commission street art in the form of murals. Authorities use murals to commission themes on education, nationality, the environment, or to commemorate an event or story, much like the controversial yet renowned Diego Rivera, who was internationally commissioned to paint his prominent murals. Diego Rivera, at times, took authority over commissioned murals, such as his “Detroit Industry” mural, whereby his rebellious honesty expresses his subjective opinion and social critique of Fordism as exploitive labor, sparking further social and critical dialogue (Hodges, 2015). This social, critical dialogue through murals, in turn, inspired art movements, such as the Chicano Art Movement.

MURALISM AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Current muralism traces its history to Mexican and Chicano mural movements in the U.S. The Mexican Mural Movement reached its high point in the 1920s after the Revolution (1910-1917)⁹. During the Presidency of Alvaro Obregon, in an attempt to restore the country through art, the Mexican government initiated a public arts program to make arts available to the general public in the streets and on public buildings instead of only in museums for the elite. The socio-political content of murals brought critical dialogue to public spaces and made audiences active participants in a more accessible format.

⁹ <http://teachersinstitute.yale.edu/curriculum/units/2006/2/06.02.01.x.html>

The Chicano Movement started after the Mexican American War in 1848 and became popular in the 1960s during the Civil Rights era¹⁰. Unlike in Mexico, early Chicano murals were not government-commissioned and -sponsored murals but mainly created by young, self-taught artists expressing political activism, Chicano pride, oppressed histories, and contemporary social situations on neighborhood walls, schools, and churches. The Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA) of 1973 was a federally funded government program that provided funding for painters, muralists, musicians, performing artists, poets and gardeners to work in schools, community centers, and prisons.¹¹ CETA facilitated community-based murals such as the “Wall of Respect” mural, created by William Walker, Eugene Eda, and others in Chicago in 1969. This mural incorporated themes of oppression and unity and contained the words, “We the People of this community claim this building in order to preserve what is ours” (Cockcroft et al., 1998), in an effort to reclaim space and community. Mural movements have influenced the development of mural programs and organizations ranging from top-down to bottom-up processes in many cities throughout the world. Muralism in Mexico was referenced by muralists in interviews for this research project.

Social Media as a Platform for Muralism and Social Movements

I have observed that because murals serve as collaborative projects that mobilize communities towards social and political transformation (Greaney, 2002), they have the ability to serve as expressions of critical dialogue and solidarity at the global scale due to the global phenomenon of social media outlets. Rolston and Berastegi urge us to “take

¹⁰ <http://teachersinstitute.yale.edu/curriculum/units/2006/2/06.02.01.x.html>

¹¹ <http://teachersinstitute.yale.edu/curriculum/units/2006/2/06.02.01.x.html>

murals seriously” because of their potential to work as a “visual in political mobilisation by social movements.” Drawing on the power of symbolism and potential for dialogue provided murals, authors suggest that “social movements should resort to painting murals” because of their ability to represent the struggles and ideologies of marginalized spaces outward to create public dialogue, awareness, and change (Rolston & Alvarez Berastegi, 2016).

As social media platforms have made murals more visible and its messages more accessible, artists have begun to organize social movements globally around shared paradigms of social, political, and environmental concerns in the face of increasing globalization. Through social media, muralists have expanded their local scale to global networks through community-based mural projects, such as Yo Amo RD (Dominican Republic) and Honor the Treaties (Native community), in order to call attention to a shared goal to action. However, some communities, such as Los Platanitos, are isolated from these processes despite the forces of globalization. Scholars theorize that the effects of capitalism and globalization have produced an era of growing marginalization and informal settlement development in the global south, leading to distinctions in the use of street art between the formal and informal city.

MURALISM IN PUBLIC SPACE IN THE INFORMAL VS. THE FORMAL CITY

I draw from theorists Felipe Hernández and Peter Kellett on their reimagining of the informal in Latin America. The informal has been characterized as incoherent in contradiction to the order, physically and sociopolitically, of the formal city. Since the

foundation of colonial cities, the informal has been seen as a dichotomy to the formal city, which has been presented as homogenous and legitimate through its design by professional architects and planners. The formal city renders authority and control while informal cities are constructed out of necessity by disenfranchised, marginalized, and excluded populations that lack rights to the formal city. Informal settlements have been perceived as a threat to social order and authority and thus unsupported or ignored by the government, leaving residents to fend for themselves at the fringe (Hernández & Kellett, 2010). However, because informal settlements are a growing phenomenon in Latin America, some theorists argue that informal settlements should be reimaged as new urban vernaculars. In 2001, over 128 million (32%) of Latin America's urban population were estimated to live in informal settlement housing conditions as well as participate in informal sector employment (Hernández et al., 2009), thus underscoring the need to understand the complexities and participatory planning potentials in informal settlements.

The production of space structures political life (Kudva, 2009). Kudva analyzes the everyday politics of informality and connects the economic processes of globalization and growing informality with exacerbating sociopolitical segregation (Kudva, 2009). I argue that the lack of large, public spaces in Los Platanitos stymies the ability to organize and produce representational space in the form of murals. The growing phenomenon of informality deepens the physical and socioeconomic segregation of cities with informal settlements on the periphery and formally planned, urbanized centers for the elite. Because of Los Platanitos' physical, social, and economic disconnection from urban processes, it has lacked the possibility for generating local knowledge, acts of resistance,

and change through such artistic expressions as murals seen elsewhere in Santo Domingo.

In this thesis, I have classified street art in terms of its use of space within the formal and informal city in the three categories: Category 1: “Illegal” urban street art, Category 2: City-commissioned street art, and Category 3: “Organized” street art. The construction of “illegality” to characterize certain categories of street art can be understood as production of “conceived space” by planners, architects, and state institutions (Lefebvre, 1991). Murals, then, can be understood as “arts of resistance”¹² that claim a “right to the city” (Lefebvre, 1968). The “defiant geographies” of place- and space-making through murals serve to foster solidarity and agency, constructing residents’ own sense of participatory citizenship and producing alternative space of resistance, resilience, and belonging (Leu and McTarnaghan, 2015).

MURALISM IN THREE CATEGORIES

Category 1: “Illegal” Urban Street Art

Street art: is it art or vandalism? Legal or illegal? And who determines if urban street art is either? Gasparrini states that “legal architecture produces a certain conceptualization of urban space: the ‘legislated city’, a space in which a particular kind of experience is encapsulated and produced through the regulation of space, temporalities and behaviors” (Gasparrini, 2014). The legislated city is governed by social policies, local law, and strategic plans, and is hence controlled and regulated. However, street art

¹² Resistance to domination is expressed through counterhegemonic discourse, through “informal” acts of resistance, such as oral discourse or “the arts of resistance” (Scott, 1990).

challenges notions of legality within the legislated city. Street art continues to exist as an expression of street politics and the subaltern within what Gasparinni calls the “uncommissioned city” and “inbetween spaces” (Gasparrini, 2014).

Within a dominant paradigm of property ownership interspersed with shared urban resources such as parks, piazzas, and plazas, Gasparrini describes “urban enchantment” as a collection of experiences and encounters of the everyday life within the legislated city, such as the emotion and delight of “discovering” street art on a walk home from work (Gasparrini, 2014). However, while some experience enchantment, others experience disapproval at the expression of uncommissioned work in public spaces. These artists create the “uncommissioned city” within the “inbetween spaces” (the spaces between ownership and the boundaries of properties) of the legislated city. Some choose to “unsee” or “unnotice” street art, such as a graffiti tag on a subway window, in these “inbetween spaces” (Gasparrini, 2014). However, the artist urges observers to participate in experiencing the city in a different way and explore the inbetween spaces of ownership to recognize that they have a right to the city. “As a legal concept, ‘the commons’ referred to land customarily held in common, giving rise to a range of rights available to its users” (Gasparrini, 2014). The street artist gives rise to the commons of the uncommissioned city as a right to the legislated city by producing what Gasparrini proposes as the “public city,” echoing Scott’s concept of public transcript.

However, an image placed in public without permission of the property owner is illegal. The anxiety around graffiti exists in part because of its mysterious nature (some appearing overnight), underground culture, at times illegible messaging, and association

with blight and vandalism (Young, 2014). Although both graffiti writers and street artists envision the extension of public space, street art has been accepted with more success in particular spaces, including through commissions or acquisitions by museums, while graffiti writers still struggle with the law, which treats uncommissioned street art as criminal because it challenges the conceptualizations of authority of space and ownership. Greaney cites Lohamm's distinction between graffiti and murals, stating that "unlike the graffiti that is usually applied to the landscape while most residents sleep, mural making is done openly and publicly, and interaction between artists and audience is common" (Greaney, 2002). Some graffiti writers have chosen to maintain their underground practice while performing in mural organizations for commissioned art, which brings us to Category 2: City-commissioned street art.

Category 2: City-commissioned Street Art

Although forms of street art are limited within the legislated city, social policy can mitigate the effects of the law. Young proposes partnership models for engaging with graffiti writers and street artists, creating access to spaces without fear of criminalization. Yet, graffiti that falls within the category of pieces, stencils, and slogans struggles to exist as "unauthorized street art." While some argue that street art is at its best when illegal, commissioned street art can have profound impacts on spaces through both the process of engagement with the community and through the cultural and political influences of the murals produced (Young, 2014).

Some argue that cities created mural art programs to eradicate graffiti by “‘replacing’ it with ‘art’...” because this was seen “by city officials as a way to improve public perception of the economic and social state of the city” (Greaney, 2002). However, I propose that urban planners can work more directly with artists who produce Category 3 (“Organized” Street Art) and thus leverage muralism as part of a transformative planning practice.

Category 3: “Organized” Street Art

I have observed that “organized” street art has emerged as a third category of street art by attaching itself to larger social movements (see interview with Mr. Letta in Chapter 3 regarding Muralizando RD as part of “the movement”). Category 3 street art practices can create spaces and processes of opportunity for Category 2 street art (city-commissioned murals) to work more intimately within the hidden transcripts and in-between spaces of Category 1 murals (“illegal” urban street art). Through virtual communication methods, “organized” street art groups such as Muralizando RD and Honor the Treaties collaborate internationally, thus forming broad social movements that foster paradigms of the subaltern. Because they can be commissioned, murals have the potential to create networks of opportunity through the development of “invented spaces” (Miraftab, 2004).

Invited’ spaces[1] are defined as the ones occupied by those grassroots and their allied non-governmental organizations that are legitimized by donors and government interventions. (However), ‘invented’ spaces are those, also occupied by the grassroots and claimed by their collective action, but directly confronting the authorities and the status quo. (1)

Furthermore, because murals require maintenance, they can serve as an ongoing community project, continually bringing in new participants to engage in the mural message and to further develop the message, if necessary. The continuation of the mural process breathes life and activity into the space, which can facilitate spaces of inclusion, connection, and transformation for isolated communities like Los Platanitos.

Storytelling in Planning/Planning in Storytelling

Murals tell a story. We can conceptualize muralism as a transformative planning practice through theories of storytelling in planning and planning as storytelling, where we consider the function of stories, the role of stories in planning practice, and planning as a form of storytelling. Sandercock (2004) uses a feminist epistemology to invite us to think of “story” as an epistemology and methodology in planning. The role of story has been marginalized because it has been seen “as ‘soft,’ as a woman’s way of knowing, as inferior, lacking rigor” (Sandercock, 2004). However, Sandercock argues that “stories are central to planning practice” and that “planning is performed through story” (Sandercock, 2004) by drawing on local knowledge and producing new knowledge. Power often influences which stories get told, as discussed in notions of the legislated city, but radical planners can help shape which stories get told through arts-based practices such as muralism. Planners, therefore, can create the invented spaces for marginalized stories to be heard.

How can we conceptualize the use of stories in planning? First, we need to understand how stories function. Stories can function as “core stories” and foundational stories to reproduce self and behavior through the telling and re-telling of story, which in

turn can facilitate collective memory, identity, and culture. Stories can be non-verbal yet communicative, such as street art, which transcends literacy and language barriers. Local community stories can serve to deconstruct and challenge the dominant narrative and facilitate critical dialogue across cultures and power (Sandercock, 2004).

Because stories are multifunctional and multicultural, they can serve a role in planning. The role of story in planning processes can be considered as a form of data-gathering, a catalyst for change, and an opportunity for community development. Sandercock's discussion on the role of stories in planning illustrates how storytelling can connect marginalized voices globally through social movements:

To discover that some other neighborhood or social movement in your city or country has won some similar battle can be inspiring and galvanizing, and I have found myself in the role of relating such stories and becoming a galvanizing agent. As the world gets smaller, being the teller of stories of how people elsewhere have faced similar or even more dire adversity, and triumphed, is a role I increasingly and sometimes surprisingly find myself playing. (18)

We can therefore consider planning as a form of storytelling. According to James Throgmorton and Peter Marris, stories can be functional/instrumental, profound and persuasive, and can therefore be used by planners as a "style for conveying the truth of planning action." Planning is a form of persuasive storytelling, where planners have the power of authors (Throgmorton, 2003) and thus the ability to democratize the planning process through arts-based approaches such as muralism. Planners can use stories in policy by listening to marginalized stories within the multicultural city and by making planning processes more inclusive of the hidden transcript (Sandercock, 2004).

Conceptualizing the role of stories in planning can help us understand how muralism can be used as a transformative planning practice in informal settlements like Los Platanitos. However, first we must understand the politics and geography of muralism within the formal city of Santo Domingo, which will be discussed in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3: Muralism in Santo Domingo

Phase 1 of this project explored the politics and geography of muralism in Santo Domingo through observation and interviews. Influential Dominican artists, such as Silvano Lora (1931-2003) and Ramón Oviedo (1924-2015) were referenced by some of the muralists I interviewed from Yo Amo RD. Historical and contemporary muralism in the Dominican Republic expresses themes of identity, social and political commentary and continues to serve as an expression of the subaltern.

Silvano Lora's art was influenced by Neorealism and Arte Povera, the latter meaning "poor art" in Italian. This trend, which began in the 1960s, used materials that were considered poor, easy to obtain, and therefore lacking value, such as wood, rocks, and waste. Lora's work was concerned with social and political justice and the human conditions of marginalized and exploited people. Lora considered art as "a free manifestation of man, and in this freedom must be total, because art is a testimony through which you can know man, love or detest him" (Menéndez, 2013), which resonates with art educator Cohen-Cruz's claim that "people may have limited material resources but are rich in experiences." Therefore, testimony becomes agency (Cohen-Cruz et al., 2006).

Many of Silvano Lora's murals were erased because of his controversial communist commentary. Lora was a radical artist who practiced the arts of resistance through productions such as Marginal Biennial, which was created as a protest against the restriction of national, official institutionalism. The Marginal Biennial aimed to create

space for and exhibit the artworks that were rejected by the Caribbean Biennial in 1992, in part because of its experimental artistic expression, which was considered outside of the “traditional” artistic media and Dominican President Joaquín Balaguer’s nationalist appropriation of the Columbus Quincentennial. Lora’s experimental art for the people/by the people was not accepted within the Caribbean Biennial’s conceptualization of “traditional” art, which in turn was influenced by colonial rhetoric. Lora withdrew from the space of official institutions and developed creative agency by making his anti-biennial accessible to a broader community on the peripheries of Santo Domingo, which included murals designed and produced by local communities and workshops open to all audiences (Garrido Castellano, 2017).

By withdrawing from an institutional space of predetermined “traditional” art, colonial logics, and the commoditization of Caribbean art, Lora’s anti-biennial critiqued limits to accessibility and instead sought to transcend national borders and institutional powers through collective agency (Garrido Castellano, 2017). Silvano Lora’s international exhibitions, socio-political criticism, and artistic practice still influence social art movements in the Dominican Republic today. In a similar vein, my research project aims to follow suit with the critique on the privileged determination of “official” political spaces and “traditional” forms of production. I similarly seek to develop collective agency by making processes more accessible to wider audiences in peripheral spaces.

Ramón Oviedo was another prominent artist concerned with the lower classes. Oviedo is famous for creating a series of posters and murals in 1965 during the April

Revolution of the Dominican Civil War as a denouncement of abuse against Dominican people by invading U.S. forces and as a statement of support of constitutionalistas' aim to return to the liberal constitution of 1963¹³. During the April Revolution, the constitutionalistas, workers, and farmers organized to transform society by becoming an independent and democratic country and stormed the capital to break free from imperialism. Many see the U.S.'s intervention as an invasion of a capitalist oppressor instead of as a liberator, and the invasion had long-lasting political and economic effects. Those most impacted include Haitians and Haitian-Dominicans who worked the sugar plantations that the U.S. invested in during the early 1900s. Haitians and Haitian-Dominicans make up the fifth largest group (over 200,000) of stateless people in the world when, in 2013, the Dominican Constitutional Court retroactively revoked citizenship for children born to foreign parents as early as 1929¹⁴, many of whom live in informal settlements like Los Platanitos.

Oveido painted about the truth of human history, existential themes, and Taino¹⁵ societies through his reinvented, versatile, and abstract styles. French Ambassador Jean-Claude Moyret stated that "he personified the story with the most important painting of the Dominican Republic of the twentieth century: 24 of April"¹⁶. His work "24 de Abril" was painted in response to the beginning of the movement to restore President Juan Bosch, the first democratically elected president to the Dominican Republic, to power

¹³ <https://enciclopediaipr.org/en/encyclopedia/ramon-oviedo/>

¹⁴ <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/the-dominican-republics-revocation-of-citizenship-creates-200000-stateless-people/>

¹⁵ The Taíno people were one of the largest of the indigenous peoples of the Caribbean.

¹⁶ <https://enciclopediaipr.org/en/encyclopedia/ramon-oviedo/>

after he was removed by a coup. However, their efforts were unsuccessful when the U.S. invaded the Dominican Republic to stop Bosch from returning to power. Oveido's "24 de Abril" is considered one of the masterworks of Dominican and Caribbean art because of its historical references. Like Lora, Oveido's art used a variety of materials, such as cord, paper, fabric, and plaster. Oveido is regarded as the most prolific Dominican muralist and remembered for supporting social movements of the lower class and using the arts to challenge political corruption.



Figure 1: Ramón Oviedo mural Category 1 at Universidad Autónoma Santo Domingo near Estación Amín Abel Hasbun. Photo by author.

Both Silvano Lora and Ramón Oviedo were influential in shaping contemporary muralism in the Dominican Republic. Muralists interviewed for this research project

referenced both artists for their profound impact on Dominican muralism, in addition to similar approaches used in Mexican muralism. According to an interview with Yo Amo RD, contemporary muralism in Santo Domingo has boomed in the last seven years and has been promoted through social media as a way to develop arts-based organizations and social movements. Like their artistic predecessors, contemporary muralists in the Dominican Republic critique current socio-political realities through themes of Dominican identity, education, and environment.

In the Dominican Republic, mural programs and organizations have recently developed to work with artists, schools, international universities, local authorities, and communities across the country on mural projects aimed to beautify spaces, facilitate community development, and share messages on education, environmental awareness, and history. In December of 2014, Dominican Republic Vice President Margarita Cedeño de Fernández, along with other government and local authorities, commissioned an 800-meter mural to promote environmental values. The goal of the project was to work with students of the Don Bosco School to make recycling a habit and create public spaces that raise awareness about the need to recycle. The mural is the fourteenth version of the Recycled City Center program, a program initiated by Centro León in 2009 which aims to raise awareness about the environmental benefits of waste reduction, creative reuse, and the creation of public spaces with recycled art techniques as a way to transform cities into more visually attractive places.¹⁷

¹⁷ <https://acento.com.do/2014/sociales/8204568-presentan-mural-colegio-don-bosco-que-promociona-los-valores-y-la-proteccion-del-medioambiente/>



Figure 2: Example of Category 1 mural at Colegio Don Bosco by Xaivier Ringer (and other artists). Photo by author.

Based on my research, I will group murals in Santo Domingo into three categories: 1) “illegal” urban street art, 2) city-commissioned street art, and 3) “organized” street art. I propose that urban planners work with Category 3 type murals to facilitate interaction between local, isolated communities, such as Los Platanitos, and top-down civic processes.

CATEGORY 1: “ILLEGAL” URBAN STREET ART

In an interview, graffiti writer Chanel Francisco Fortunato Gallard (aka Mr. “Letta”) said that it is important that various organizations have formed to enrich the mural scene in the Dominican Republic. However, he argued, “at times, (the muralist movement) has neglected the work that was started by the independent graffiti writers, who began to make murals in different communities of Santo Domingo and other provinces of the country without any sponsorship, just for the simple desire to express themselves and change the environment of these locations.” His crew “Graffiti Sapiens” has a strong presence in the city but is not tied to a particular organization or movement. The writers purchase their own materials and have a good relationship with the paint distributor Kobra Paint, which they tag in their murals to show support for the brand. Some of the crew’s work falls under Category 1 and are sometimes erased. According to Gallard, “many murals have been erased by political advertising, commercial advertising, or by the city council. The murals shout realities that the big media does not mention.”

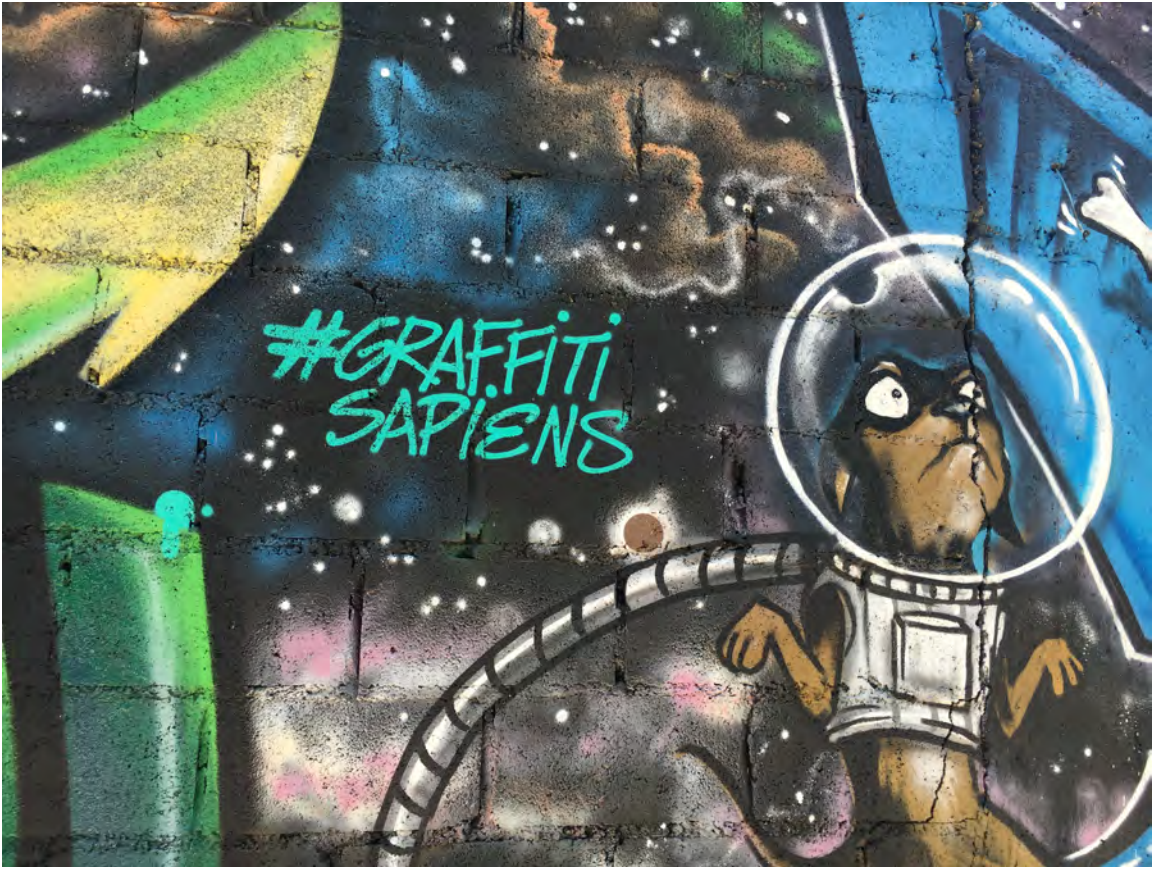


Figure 3: Graffiti Sapiens crew tag. Photo by author.



Figure 4: Kobra Paint reference in a Graffiti Sapiens mural. Photo by author.



Figure 5: Example of Category 1 mural near the malecon (seaside promenade) at Avenida Independencia and Calle Cayetano Rodriguez. Photo by author.

CATEGORY 2: CITY-COMMISSIONED STREET ART

While some argue that street art is at its best when illegal, commissioned street art, i.e. Category 2, can have profound impacts on the city. On July 25th, I interviewed Francisco de la Cruz (aka “Chuco”), CEO of Culture and Tourism in the municipality of Santo Domingo Norte. His office organized a competition for artists to participate in a multi-stage mural painting on the columns outside of the Peña Gomez metro station,

coincidentally near Los Platanitos. Each column shares a story: the Mirabel sisters (national heroines and symbols of feminist resistance); the tyrant Rafael Leonidas Trujillo (El Chivo), whose dictatorship is known as one of the bloodiest eras in the Americas; Dominican musician Juan Pío Brazobán of the Brotherhood of the Holy Spirit, declared by UNESCO as the "Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity"; scenes of sugar cane fields, and other Dominican stories. "There's a theme—each mural means something and has a story," de la Cruz said.

The ideas were selected by the Culture and Tourism Department "but also (through) suggestions from some muralists we have accepted. We are democratic; we accept any kind of suggestion or ideas as long as that idea benefits what is the embellishment of our municipality." Although de la Cruz says that they are democratic, the condition expressed in the last statement illustrates that it is still top-down commissioning within the legislated city. Despite the fact that several muralists from the organization Yo Amo RD (YARD) participated in the project, de la Cruz was not aware of YARD, which shows how planners can connect the processes between Category 1 and 2 type murals as proposed through Category 3.

However, de la Cruz did understand the power of murals as a sophisticated method of communication to the public. When asked about the importance of murals, he responded:

It is very important because people who have no education in a town that is in danger to live under slavery and crime, a mural will give an idea to citizens. For example, when you see Jesus Christ at the entrance of Guaricano, the human being feels so much joy and peace... when you see a mural of a child shining shoes but has in his mind that he wants to be president and is studying ... when

you see Jose Francisco and Peña Gómez calling the people to choose their democracy and their rights with the April Revolution... that gives strength to a man to fight for democracy, to fight and rise as a citizen... when you see Peña Gómez beside Leonel Fernandez and Balaguer, it is because he wants peace but the people want this war... the murals are subliminal, educational messages.

De la Cruz said that mural projects can cost RD \$15,000 to \$80,000 on average. A muralist can charge up to RD \$50,000, depending on the ability and experience of each artist. However, the muralists for this project worked for free and “out of the love they express from their brush.” He said the main messages (or perhaps he meant purposes) are the murals’ ability to communicate, to beautify the community, and to educate the population.



Figure 6: Example of Category 2 mural—The Mirabel Sisters. Photo by author.

CATEGORY 3: “ORGANIZED” STREET ART

Street art has become organized through mural art programs such as Yo Amo RD, the mural organization I worked with for this project and propose as an example for

Category 3. I propose that urban planners work with Category 3 murals to engage and mobilize communities through civic engagement and community development processes.

Yo Amo RD aims to promote street art by engaging youth and celebrating the Dominican identity. David Friedlander, founder of YARD, stated the following in an interview:

YO AMO RD is a brand that promotes the Dominican Culture in a fresh and positive way focusing on strengthening and promoting the best traits of the Dominican identity. We organize events and create content to engage with a younger population in the Dominican Republic and broadcast to the rest of the world what the Dominican Republic is today. Muralizando RD was a project we initiated to help achieve the objectives of the brand, such as strengthening the Dominican identity, promoting art and culture, creating a positive reference in the community, connecting with local communities, creating awareness of the artists' local talent, expanding the urban artist community, providing more opportunities for local artist to compete on an international stage, exercising and promoting civic responsibility, and embellishing public spaces.

Friedlander describes that initially, nobody had the confidence in the organization to allow the painting of murals, and it was particularly difficult to gain permission from the government, local authorities, and even the private sector when it was formed in 2012. However, after YARD's first Muralizando RD event, it became easier to negotiate permissions as others saw the great impact of the murals. The events now must be organized in collaboration with local authorities and community leadership in order to take place. Yo Amo RD chooses their sites based on communities with the highest interest and gives priority to the walls with the highest public use. The walls must be exclusively for public use. There must be a minimum of 4,000 square foot of walls to be painted. Regarding payment, the organization came to the mutual agreement that the

muralists would not be compensated for their art but instead would donate their time to the community effort. However, the organizers try to minimize the workload for the artists and provide what is needed to hold the event. They often receive support for their projects from government authorities and the private sector. They have received sponsorships from Orange, Brugal, Sherwin Williams, and Pinturas Tropical.

The central themes of Muralizando RD projects are Dominican identity and the identity of the city of the event. Friedlander revealed the following:

We sit down with the representatives of the department of culture at the local mayor's office in hopes of getting insights and useful information, which we draft up and share with all the artist prior to the event. In some events, we have involved curators to help us shape the message, but for the most part, the wall is painted with the artists' own will... The lack of government authorities in these communities allows them to create and maintain community leaders. We found that they have much more influence and capabilities to rally the population than elected officials.

This reveals how Category 3 murals can work more directly with community leaders than the top-down approach of elected officials of Category 1.

Although Friedlander stated that the wall is painted based on artists' own vision, most artists stated in their interviews that they work directly with community members to understand their goals for the project. "While in the projects of community muralism that I develop individually with the support of some institutions or NGOs, I look for communities with problems in which muralism has to be used to find solutions to these problems," said artist Edison Javiel Montero Lebrón (aka Eddaviel), who participates in YARD. "Muralism is a powerful communication tool, since an image can connect with

everyone regardless of age, gender, social status or educational level. An image can change lives when it is known how to be used.”



Figure 7: Example of Category 3 mural—Muralizando RD near the Kennedy station by artist Gabriel “Shak” Doñe of Yo Amo RD. Photo by author.

Another example of Category 3 street art is Acción Poetica, which has gained traction through social media outlets and has facilitated networks of artistic expression worldwide. Acción Poetica is a literary and artistic movement that was started in Monterrey, Nuevo León, Mexico in 1996 by Mexican poet Armando Alanis Pulido. Since its inception, Acción Poetica has expanded to over thirty countries through social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram.

In an interview, Sarah Miranda, Founder and CEO of Acción Poetica Santo Domingo, said that the organization currently consists of five people who raise funds for their own materials. Their first piece was created spontaneously “on December 30th, 2012 at 7:00PM.” They first heard about Acción Poetica through social media—Sarah’s friend saw a video on Facebook of Acción Poetica in Mexico, which inspired her to organize a group to replicate the action. Their first piece was created near Colegio La Salle because their friend lived next to the wall. However, she says, the owner of the wall must have grown tired of the painting as it is no longer there.

After this painting, they spent two hours on a Skype call with Fernando Rios Kissner of Acción Poetica in Argentina, the best friend of Armando Alanis Pulido, founder of the movement. Through this conversation, they learned how to perform Acción Poetica, which is not associated with politics, government, churches, or religions. To paint a wall, Acción Poetica asks for permission, paints during the day, chooses poetic quotes, and leaves the Acción Poetica signature instead of a personal signature. Acción

Poetica does not write political, religious, or musical messages. They simply practice positive messages. As Miranda said, “we emphasize poetry.”

Acción Poetica has about sixty-eight pieces in Santo Domingo, but some have become eliminated. “We live in a country where people like the opportunity to get a clean (painted) wall for free,” Miranda said, and thus accept their offers to create a mural. Miranda and Acción Poetica member Nicolas Vera said it initially became trendy to participate when they shared their videos on social media, but now the group has dwindled to fewer participants. They are now seeking to work with other organizations and artists to reach more people through their positive messaging in order to transform communities. They believe it is important to practice this in Santo Domingo because poetry shares what it is to be human and to have dreams, and it provides hope. As Miranda said, “we do it because we love it.” When I asked if I could start Acción Poetica in Austin, Texas, they were open to the idea and agreed to mentor me in the process. This example demonstrates how social media can facilitate the creation of mural organizations and global social movements, which I will explore in Chapter 6.



Figure 8: An Acción Poética piece near my apartment in Santo Domingo. Photo by author.

It should be noted that although high visibility is common for all categories of muralism, they are found in different areas of the city. Although Category 1 struggles with illegality, it is not necessarily confined to a specific area. Category 2 murals were commonly found in public spaces or places to impress messages on people, such as institutional (education or government) buildings. Category 3 murals were found in more community-oriented spaces with high visibility and high pedestrian activity, which

became an important factor when deciding the location for the mural developed in Los Platanitos, which will be discussed in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4: Los Platanitos

THE WALK INTO LOS PLATANITOS

As discussed, street artists have been using arts in public spaces as their political expression for decades. What makes my project different is the creation of this process within an informal settlement Los Platanitos. To illustrate how isolated Los Platanitos is from the formal city where murals are commonly found, I will describe my route to get from my apartment at Apartamentos Johnny in the University Zone, in central Santo Domingo, to Los Platanitos, drawing on my field notes.

It is Saturday, June 25th, day 24 of my 60 days of research in Santo Domingo. It is another sunny and humid day in the capital. As I leave my apartment, I pass by Haitian¹⁸ construction workers in my neighborhood on my ten minute walk to metro station Casandra Damirón and greet the familiar workers with the few phrases in Creole that I learned from my roommate Jose Rubio Zepeda, who was also in Santo Domingo conducting his thesis research: “Salut. Bonjour. Ki jan ou ye. Na wé pita.” (Hello. Good morning. How are you? See you later.) I hop on the air-conditioned metro for a ten-minute ride to Santo Domingo Norte and get off at Estación José Francisco Peña Gómez, where I observe the murals on the columns described in my interview with de la Cruz (Chapter 3). My “seguridad”¹⁹ greets me at the station and we wait to cross through busy, intersecting lanes of honking traffic. The air is smoggy, hot, and filled with

¹⁸ Context: In 2013, Haitians and Dominicans of Haitian descent were stripped of their citizenship and rendered stateless, deporting many to live in makeshift camps in limbo at the border. Discrimination of Haitians and Haitian-Dominicans is apparent in Santo Domingo.

¹⁹ Walking into and around Los Platanitos requires accompaniment of a Los Platanitos community member, aka “la seguridad,” or “research partners,” for safety reasons.

bachata and dembow²⁰ rhythms bumping from trucks filled with platanos (plantains) and motos (motorcycles) carrying too many people and baskets of goods and produce. We cross into the upper part of the Los Platanitos neighborhood, where houses are large and well-maintained in keeping with the higher social class in this area. With concentrated effort, I descend the steep and slippery dirt and concrete stairway down into the barrio of Los Platanitos towards Pica's colmado (convenience store) and am greeted by the familiar faces of Mujeres Unidas members – Fany, Cesi, Evelyn, Marianela, Crismelda – and other residents – Pica, Benito, Elías, and Juan Correa. A blue, dilapidated building and the houses of Marianela, Fany and Pica, and Chucha encircle the area in front of Pica's colmado. Since 2014, this has also been the site of Mujeres Unidas vermicomposting space, where they compost household food waste in a process known as “vermiculture” which relies earthworms to speed up the decomposition process.

This area serves as a centrally located gathering space where business transactions, public meetings, and other social activities take place. The sounds of children playing, the occasional rooster, and ubiquitous Dominicana music fill the space, and yet the air still seems stiller and calmer down in the barrio than up near the metro. As I walk through the tight maze of colorful buildings, I keep my research question in mind: why are there few murals here – particularly murals containing social commentary? I see hand-painted signs for small businesses, but I would not consider this a mural for the purposes of this research. They can be considered commercial business

²⁰ Popular Dominican style hip-hop music (combination of hip-hop, rap, reggae, reggaeton, and mambo).

advertisements. However, they reveal that painting on walls is practiced in Los Platanitos.

STORYTELLING THROUGH POETRY IN THE FORMAL AND INFORMAL CITY

This story prompts me to think about spatial organization, and I compare my experience in my community of Albuquerque and observations in Santo Domingo proper: Los Platanitos is not a formally organized and planned space compared to traditional city layout. Los Platanitos was originally a landfill, and early settlers used piles of trash stacked into compact layers as a foundation for their houses. Residents say that Los Platanitos formed in the 1980s when houses were still “ojo de tanque” (or huts with banana leaves) and piles of trash were burned to make room for construction. Residents moved to Los Platanitos to own property because they heard that land and living was cheap albeit difficult. This raises the question of public and private space. Does the concept of formal, public space exist in Los Platanitos? And what spaces are accessible and function as a place to organize and create?

In contrast, in Santo Domingo proper, I remember running into two muralists from Medio Peso (a muralist crew) and my muralist friend Edison “Eddaviel” Montero in Plaza España in the Zona Colonial one night. Plaza España in Zona Colonial is often filled with artists, musicians, dancers, and youth performing, creating, and organizing. It serves as a landmark and meeting point and thus illustrates the notion of a truly public space. When I wanted to meet friends, we used this spot as a reference point or a place to meet. We would often run into other artists and performers that were involved in

grassroots organizing projects, demonstrating the opportunity of public space as a hub for connection and mobility. The example of meeting my muralist friends to brainstorm and organize a project in Plaza España illustrates how the space was formally conceptualized by planners and architects as a “representation of space, but is used by artists and performers as a representational space for murals and for performing acts of resistance (Lefebvre, 1991).

Despite our differences in origin, we shared this public space and freely observed acts of “public transcripts” (Scott, 1990): a musician singing about Dominican history, a performance artist dressed as a Taíno reminding us of Hispaniola’s indigenous past. Several muralists painted related stories on the plaza columns, including figures of women embracing their natural hair with phrases like “Yo amo mi pajón” (“I love my natural hair”) or images of Dominican identity and ecological environments. Thus the arts function in public space as stories intersecting in a visual dialogue. Space “has been the reservoir of resources, and the medium in which strategies are applied, but it has now become something more than the theater, the disinterested setting or stage, of action. Space does not eliminate the other materials or resources that play a part in the socio-political arena... Rather, it brings them all together and then in a sense substitutes itself for each actor separately by enveloping it” (Lefebvre, 1991). It is within these spaces and intersections that Yo Amo RD—the social movement organizations these muralists work together in—were formed.

In the spirit of performance in public space and an effort to share my story and relate my local experience to the muralists that night, I roughly spouted my ode

to chinola, a popular and delicious tropical fruit known as passion fruit in the United States and by many other names throughout Latin America.

Fruta apasionada
Florecida y jugosa

Regar el azúcar crudo
Edulis amarilla (trago *)*

Dulce y semillada
Corazón con necesidad

Hace una chingona quiere una
Chin-chin-ola

Impassioned fruit
Flowered & juiced

Sprinkle raw sugar
Yellow Edulis (*sip*)

Sweet & seedy
Heart gone needy

Makes a chingona want a
Chin-chin-ola

As I was hoping, the sharing of my story and experience fostered engagement and creativity. The arts has often served me as a smooth icebreaker, even if my ode was more odious than not. Nevertheless, I felt welcomed in the muralist circle – a cool, intellectual, and socio-politically critical crew of artists that shared their insight for this project. However, in contrast, Los Platanitos lacked formally planned public spaces like Santo Domingo's plazas. How does the lack of public space in an isolated community affect the ability to collectively organize, express their stories, and develop agency from within the margins, specifically through muralism?

I presented the idea of the mural project to Mujeres Unidas on Saturday, June 25th, 2016 to see if they would be interested in co-facilitating the process. Since I was not entirely confident with my Dominican Spanish, I wrote a poem to Mujeres Unidas to break the ice for the proposal of the mural project:

Hola mi nombre es Shavone
Pongamonos en acción
Voy a improvisar
La meta es un mural
Les gusta a toditos
Es en Los Platanitos
Ustedes son la voz
Podemos darle vida
Aquí en Los Platanitos
JUNTAS Mujeres Unidas

Hello my name is Shavone
Let's get to action
I'm going to improvise
The goal is a mural
All that they like
Is in Los Platanitos
You are the voice
We can give it life
Here at Los Platanitos
United Women together

I told Mujeres Unidas that I was inspired by Mujeres Unidas member and community elder and poet Filomena Polonia's poem:

A todas a las mujeres unidas no se cansen de luchar
Para cuando los Americanos vengan, haya cosas nuevas que enseñar
A todos los Americanos les tenemos que agradecer
Que nos haya enseñado cosas, que no sabíamos hacer.
Y muchas cosas nuevas no han dado a conocer.
Gracias, Americanos, por ser una enseñanza
Que han venido a traer
Que para las mujeres unidas que sea todo para bien.

Y a las mujeres unidas que podemos trabajar
Porque trabajando unidos que podemos lograr
A no y porque es en la lombricultura hemos tenido admiración
Porque lo que hemos aprendido a tenido mas admiración.
Y a todo los Americanos los estamos felicitando
Para que Dios los bendiga y que sean enseñando.

All of Mujeres Unidas do not get tired of fighting
By the time Americans come, there are new things to teach
We all have to be greeted by all Americans
That he has taught us things, which we did not know how to do.
And many new things have not made known.
Thank you, Americans, for being a teacher.
What have you come to bring
That for the women united it be all for good.
And to Mujeres Unidas that we can work
Because working together we can achieve
A no and because it is in the vermiculture we have had admiration
Because what we have learned has had more admiration.
And we are congratulating all Americans
For God to bless them and to be teaching.

Not only did this strategy serve as an icebreaker but it also demonstrated my argument in using the arts as a strategy for engagement and participation. I felt that Mujeres Unidas was receptive towards my mural proposal and agreed to co-lead the project, which will be discussed in Chapter 5.

MUJERES UNIDAS

In a patriarchal society, women's knowledge is undermined and labor divisions are gendered. According to a survey administered to women in Los Platanitos in 2015, 55.2% of respondents said that they do not read and write, reflecting the lack of access to in informal areas. The average daily budget for a family of 4.4 members in Los

Platanitos is approximately \$472 Dominican pesos (US \$10.31) (Sletto ed., 2015). Most of the women entrepreneurs in Los Platanitos are denied access to formal banks or government-administered micro entrepreneurship programs and rely on friends and family to contribute to their initial capital, creating a social infrastructure through household economies and enterprises. Despite these barriers, Mujeres Unidas was formed in 2012 to administer the community vermiculture project (a composting project using earthworms to speed up the decomposition process) and has continued as a capacity-building, entrepreneurial organization in the community (Sletto et al., 2015).

I first met Mujeres Unidas in January of 2015 during the Dominican Republic Practicum course and worked with two other classmates, Sam Tabor and Sarah McTarnaghan, to facilitate the entrepreneurial and organizational development of Mujeres Unidas. Initially, Mujeres Unidas lacked a shared vision of their mission as an organization, apart from generating income and community support. Through our series of workshops held during the Dominican Republic Practicum, Mujeres Unidas collectively developed the principles of their organization: motivation, organization, strategies for action, and community impact. Some women in Mujeres Unidas had experience organizing through their involvement with the local organizations Junta de Vecinos and Club de Madres. Our work with Mujeres Unidas focused on short-term microenterprise projects and long-term organizational development. The strengths of Mujeres Unidas are their deep social networks and spirit for community.

When I returned to conduct my individual thesis research the following year, I did not want to impose my research project on Mujeres Unidas, but I thought that it would be

a good opportunity for the group to achieve their own goal of long-term organizational development through a short-term project. However, as an activist scholar, it was important to me that I did not perform detached, ostensibly objective research to extract the experience and knowledge for my own academic gain. I wanted to employ participatory research methods and co-produce knowledge together with Mujeres Unidas, so that they could develop ownership of the project and perhaps replicate it in the future.

During the introduction workshop in June 2016, the women shared comments demonstrating their understanding of murals as a method of communication and education, and illustrating their interest in participating in my proposed project. A Mujeres Unidas member said, “Porque eso son los murales verdad. Porque por escrito los murales quedan en la persona y cada vez que yo pase por ahi, lo leo y llega un momento en que yo esa idea que está ahi me educa. / Because that is the truth. Because murals in writing remain in the person and every time I pass by, I read it and there comes a time when that idea educates me.” Another member said, “Cada mural de esos tiene su propio mensaje. / Each mural has its own message.”

CHAPTER 5: Making Murals in Los Platanitos

The activist and arts-based action research that I pursued was informed by theorists including Graeme Sullivan, Shaun McNiff, Jan Cohen-Cruz, and Leoni Sandercock. McNiff defines arts-based research “as the systematic use of the artistic process, the actual making of artistic expressions in all of the different forms of the arts, as a primary way of understanding and examining experience by both researchers and the people that they involve in their studies” (McNiff, 2013).

Arts-based research is focused on the mutually supportive process of coproducing knowledge. How do we make knowledge and the production of knowledge more accessible? What authority deems one form of knowledge and expression more legitimate than another? Artist and educator Graeme Sullivan argues that knowledge is kept within hierarchies and experiential knowledge is measured against traditional forms of knowledge (such as “expert” planning documents), which are inextricably linked to authority. Sullivan describes the cognitive model of learning and communicating through alternative modalities in a world where literacy and numeracy are seen as the dominant indicators of development. Art allows us to create new knowledge by exploring data outside of the limitations of language. Two such cognitive styles are performed through the symbolic competence of storytelling and drawing (Sullivan, 2014). It is within these processes that the opportunities to foster understanding, new knowledge, and change are created.

If legitimate knowledge is rendered in spaces of authority, how can subaltern communities develop agency to influence their livelihoods? How can planners engage

with subaltern communities in alternative methods of participatory and radical planning to demonstrate experiential knowledge as legitimate and valuable? Author and educator Shaun McNiff, an internationally renowned figure in the creative arts therapies, writes that arts-based research in itself has faced challenges within the academy as an epistemological and methodological mode of enquiry and trans-disciplinary process. More recently, arts-based research has become more accepted as methods of learning and inquiring for therapy, education, and social change. It is a physical, empirical process that creates opportunities for participants to engage and become co-researchers and co-producers of knowledge (McNiff, 2013).

By accepting experiential knowledge as testimony (Cohen-Cruz et al., 2006) and a legitimate form of data, storytelling as a form of arts-based research creates the opportunity for the storyteller to further residents' agency through a process of knowledge production. Residents in low-income, informal communities such as Los Platanitos constantly engage in storytelling in order to share the realities of their everyday lives. Planners can draw on community knowledge expressed through storytelling as a legitimate source of information needed for decision-making in spaces where empirical data and quantitative measures are not available. Planners can find a way to legitimize community voices in spaces outside the community through what urban planner and educator Leoni Sandercock calls "expanding the language of planning" to an "epistemology of multiplicity" (Sandercock & Attili, 2010, Intro; Sandercock, 1998). A participatory storytelling process carried out through creative ethnographic methods,

including muralism, is a way to legitimize these voices in spaces where they are traditionally disregarded.

Drawing on these principles of arts-based research, I used workshops to create spaces of inclusion and interaction while also forming a sense of collective identity and agency amongst the participants. Because a large percentage of the women members of Mujeres Unidas could not read or write, storytelling became a key strategy to achieving the objective of each activity and relating the collective story of the development and goals of Mujeres Unidas. On an individual level, storytelling empowered each participant to share her unique experience and develop agency as an individual community member. Likewise, it allowed the opportunity to gather data from voices that are excluded from traditional planning processes. Creating a safe space for sharing stories can become more important than the mere telling of stories because it promotes deep listening of neglected experiences and opportunities to heal. I will now describe the storytelling strategies we performed to collect the data for this participatory research project.

METHODOLOGY

The mural creation process was adapted from the Asian Development Bank's toolkit, "Community Mural: A Facilitator's Guide to Mobilizing Community Environmental Action" (Henderson, Ahmed, Shafeeqa, Riyaz Jauhary, & Smith, 2006). Drawing on this toolkit, I developed an eight-step process with nine activities. The activities were adjusted in real time as we performed the steps, per recommendation of

the group due to time constraints and the redundancy or inapplicability of several proposed activities.

On June 19th, Mujeres Unidas President Evelyn Hernández and I attended a Muralizando RD event in Herrera, where I had the opportunity to interview muralists Juan Miguel and Gabriel “Shak” Doñé. I introduced Hernández to Venus Patricia Díaz, president of Yo Amo RD. The event served as a networking opportunity for Hernández and Mujeres Unidas, demonstrating the opportunities that mural organizations can facilitate for local groups. Hernández and Díaz discussed a potential mural collaboration. Due to the paperwork required, the process to facilitate a mural in Los Platanitos with Yo Amo RD could take up to three months. However, Díaz was open to collaboration in the future.

On June 20th, I returned to Los Platanitos to discuss with Euleria Lucilla (Cesi) Sánchez and Evelyn Hernández a potential collaboration with Yo Amo RD and to plan for our first workshop. Sánchez is one of the more active and vocal members of Mujeres Unidas. Sánchez and Hernández enhanced their leadership and project management skills by co-facilitating this project. Sánchez’s determination for educational attainment and Hernández’s faith and leadership influenced the women’s key roles in organizing Mujeres Unidas and community members during the process. Mujeres Unidas also recognized the multi-generational knowledge exchange by expressing the importance of involving the children²¹. As Hernández said:

²¹ Per IRB restrictions, I could not invite the children to participate. However, they could participate if instructed by Los Platanitos community members.

In practice, we know who is the teacher and the skills that each of the children and women have. We are united women to be able to lead children and young people, and we are doing it in a constructive and participatory way. We involve them so that the process becomes more effective and more beautiful.

En la práctica, se sabe quien es el maestro y las habilidades que tienen cada uno de los niños y las mujeres. Nosotras las mujeres unidas para poder dirigir a los niños y a los jóvenes, y lo estamos haciendo de una manera constructiva y participativa. O sea que nadamás no somos nosotros si no que involucramos a ellos para que el proceso se haga mas efectivo y más bonito.

Sánchez envisioned the potentially wide-reaching scope of the project when she said, the following:

Look, those women are focused on your project. And that through the message, we project with the painting and the ideas that they have taught us, we can give them [ideas] to recognize or give us to recognize in another town, in another group in other countries, and in other communities.

Mira esas mujeres están enfocadas en que su proyecto. Y que a través del mensaje, nosotros proyectamos con la pintura y las ideas que ellos nos han enseñado, podemos darles [ideas] a reonocer o darnos a reconocer en otro pueblo, en otro grupo en otros paises, y en otras comunidades.

That is to say, despite being disconnected from virtual platforms, Sánchez understood the potential of global communication when I described how arts-based social movements were connecting in solidarity through social media.

On June 25th, we performed Activity 1 (“Who Should Be Involved?”). The objective of this activity was to encourage equitable participation and networking in the community. Instead of dividing into small groups as initially proposed, we held a more informal meeting to discuss project participation. I explained to Mujeres Unidas that I had read theories about the potential of murals facilitating community development but had not facilitated this process before. This would be a project that we would develop

together. Mujeres Unidas decided to lead the project, and I would act as liaison to potential outside partners. The women were open to other muralists and organizations from outside of Los Platanitos because they wanted to gain experience and knowledge. I noted that Mujeres Unidas saw the potential for this project to connect them to larger organizations, processes, and benefits. We set dates for activities from the mural toolkit for the next month. Mujeres Unidas was tasked with inviting more members of the organization to seek their support and involvement as well as explain the concept of the mural project to new group members. I asked them to emphasize in their outreach that we would co-develop this mural project.

From Activity 1, we determined who should be involved and created the following planning chart based on the mural toolkit (Table 1):

Table 1: Mural development process developed by participants in Activity 1.

Person/Organization	Why we want them to be involved	How will we involve them?
Mujeres Unidas	Mujeres Unidas is a key, networked organization to the community of Los Platanitos.	As leaders, decision makers, organizers, and facilitators.
Muralizando RD	We need their help to paint on a building. They may be able to help promote the project when it's completed. Maybe then can help us obtain paint and potential funds?	Invite a representative to be part of our mural planning team.
Daniel "Adonis" Fernandez + Gabriel "Gaby" de León	They are the two key painters in Los Platanitos. They have the insider	Invite them to participate in the project.

	knowledge on painting in LP.	
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For the second part of Activity 1, I presented photographs of murals I had documented around Santo Domingo. The women placed dot stickers on the pictures to select their favorite mural and then they explained their choice. A popular choice was muralist Evaristo Angurria's Doña Patria, which portrays a Dominican woman in rollers. In an interview, Angurria said Doña Patria was inspired by his mom's hair salon and by the women he saw with rollers when he was growing up. He said it is a hairstyle more commonly found in "los barrios." Angurria's style celebrates Dominican identity and culture. Mujeres Unidas related to this image of Doña Patria and described it as a strong and beautiful woman. They also selected muralist Lidesset Reyes' mural of a woman with flowing hair blowing flower petals in the wind. Another common selection was muralist Johann Dovente Baez's image of a young boy with a backpack and book on his left side and a shoe-shining kit on his right. This image resonated with the women because many of the children in Los Platanitos are faced with making the choice between educational attainment or working in informal jobs like shoe shining to support the family. Most of the murals the women selected were by artists from Muralizando RD projects of Yo Amo RD, whom I originally wanted to collaborate with for the mural in Los Platanitos. Several of the mural examples were of a Muralizando RD project near the Kennedy metro station, created in 2015 in collaboration with local authorities and community partners. The project included thirty-two murals across 8,000 square feet of walls and communicated the role of education as its theme.



Figure 9: Evaristo Angurria's (YARD) Doña Patria near Kennedy Station. Photo by author.



Figure 10: Lidesset Reyes' (YARD) mural in Herrera. Photo by author.



Figure 11: Johann Dovente Baez's (YARD) mural near Kennedy Station. Photo by author.

From this particular Muralizando RD project, Mujeres Unidas also selected Edison Javiel “Eddaviel” Montero Lebrón’s mural of a boy emerging through a book as an astronaut in color, leaving his life as a shoe shiner behind. Montero is a renowned muralist with experience leading mural projects with communities and children, and he became my primary source of information and assistance during the project. Montero described his mural as “... show[ing] the reality that many children live in my beloved Dominican Republic—who must go out to work as shoeshiners every day to get their livelihood and many times that of their family and thus be able to cover expenses during their studies. The work shows how education can make dreams come true, those that even in the worst moments of life, are taken with passion and become the engine that makes existence possible. In [the mural], you can see a child who dreams of being an astronaut and books are the guide to achieve them.”



Figure 12: Montero's (YARD) mural near Kennedy Station. Photo by author.

On June 9th, I came across American muralist Xavier Ringer's (aka "The International Muralist") mural which upcycled trash into mosaic designs, much like the Arte Povera movement that influenced Silvano Lora. Xavier created this mural in 2013 in a highly polluted area together with the organization Ciudad Alternativa and public school students to promote awareness about the environment. "Ciudad Alternativa wanted to provide a conversation around the issue and put the power in students' hands to promote what they want [to see and make happen] in their own community," Xavier stated in an interview. "With the recycled mural I wanted to communicate our ability to work together to improve and take care of our environment." Mujeres Unidas also valued the opportunity to use trash—what has been seen and experienced as a dire nuisance and hazard in the community—repurposed and managed as art and recycled materials, and by

the end of the workshop, Xavier's mural had received the most votes from Mujeres Unidas members.



Figure 13: Mural that Xavier Ringer participated in with Ciudad Alternativa. Photo by author.

Some of the concerns that emerged in the workshop included finding a permanent wall to paint the mural, since houses and walls could potentially be destroyed by government intervention. The group emphasized painting the mural on a high wall where everyone could see their message, which indicated that they collectively understood the power of murals as a form of communication to the public. Mujeres Unidas understood the impact of murals as communication and eventually elected to paint two murals: one

within Los Platanitos with a message intended for the community and a second higher up near a main street. This external-facing mural would communicate a message to the public and government about the conditions of Los Platanitos as an informal settlement facing health problems because of a lack of sanitation. However, per mural toolkit steps, mural location would not be decided until Activity 2.

On July 6th, we performed Activity 2 (“Los Platanitos Map” and “Ranking Values and Issues”). The first objective of this activity was to identify central values and issues in the community and to listen to people’s views. After ranking values and issues, we discussed mural site selection. Due to my urban planning training, I originally planned to utilize a map to select a site, but the women instead spoke about potential sites in terms of emotional and social relationships rather than geographic location.

Table 2: Summary of perspectives presented by participants in Activity 2.

Values	Concerns	Mural Site	Reason for Site Selection
Solidarity	Destruction of home	On a house	There is no solidarity if a house is destroyed
Collective work	Lack of will	Vermicomposting site	To talk with people about plants, to share knowledge, the benefits of working together
Shared vision	Contamination of the cañada (drainage channel)	On the canal structure	Solidarity for health
Faith	Lack of contact/interaction/integration	On the church	Without faith, we cannot live
Love	Stop believing	Everywhere in	If you don’t

		the community	have love, you don't know value
Leadership	Stop fighting for and believing in the future	Office of Mujeres Unidas	To reunite, converse, and have community
Ecological consciousness	Relocation		
Perseverance	Instability		
Perseverance	Losing interest		
Nature			

The group collectively decided that the mural should be painted on the wall of the vermicomposting site because it was a space where they could share knowledge and talk about plants and the value of working together. The site was valued for having high visibility as a social gathering space in front Pica's colmado and as an intersection of entry points into other parts of the community. The owner of the wall, Aquilino "Pica" Cueva, gave us permission to paint the mural. Pica and Mujeres Unidas said that they wanted to cut part of the wall on the left side to match the height of the wall on the right side and eventually turn the left wall into a vending space to support Mujeres Unidas vermicomposting microenterprise. However, this construction did not occur before our project, and we moved forward with a plan to paint the wall in its current dimensions.

It should be noted that this site originally had a mural of a superhero holding the world. This mural was painted in July of 2015 as a Proyecto Salud y Ambiente Sostenible en el Barrio Simón Bolívar (SAMBISO) project of Centro de Investigación y Acompañamiento a Mujeres y Familia (CIAMF). The project was funded by Sustainable Healthy Habitat Project (HABISO) from Ciudad Alternativa. The project was

coordinated by Marianela Pinales of CIAMF and facilitated by community partner Juan Torres. Artist Dahiana Lorenzo painted the mural and was assisted by Los Platanitos community member Melvin Hernandez. The words “Mujeres Unidas” displayed on the left side of the wall and “Preservan Medio Ambiente” on the right. The theme indicated values of environmental care, preservation, and Mujeres Unidas’ vermicomposting project as a recycling strategy. However, when my research project was initially proposed, this mural had not yet been painted. For the purpose of this thesis, I will focus on the more community-driven, participatory mural of the project I co-developed with Mujeres Unidas.

We skipped Activity 3 (“Chain of Events”) due to time constraints and because it was not applicable to the process. The objective of this activity had been to explain the links between values/issues, people’s health, livelihood, and well-being, and encourage participants to listen to other people’s views. (This activity is still valuable as a critically reflected process and is included in the mural toolkit for future mural projects.)

On July 15th, we performed Activity 4 (“Develop a Shared Vision”) and Activity 5 (“Communication for Change”). The objective of Activity 4 was to identify the value of having a shared vision to guide group action and to develop a shared goal through equitable participation by members of the group. This activity involved standing in a circle with each person’s back to the center of the circle, closing eyes, and holding the hand of the person standing next to the individual. Each person chooses a corner of the room in silence without saying which corner of the room the participant has chosen. At the count of three and without breaking the circle, each individual walks to the corner of

the room that she chose. The result is a circle of people being pulled in different directions and demonstrates the importance of communicating a shared vision. The women enjoyed the physical interaction of this activity as it enabled them to physically experience the concept of communication and group action.

The objective of Activity 5 (“Communication for Change”) was to explore the concepts of principal message, supporting messages, audience, motivating factors and proposed actions; to review example murals to identify the above concepts; and to create a communication plan based on the above concepts. The mural toolkit states that “the mural is intended to communicate a message to an audience that will contribute toward achieving the vision. In order for the mural to make an impact, it is important to consider the main message, supporting message, the audience, motivating factors, and proposed action,” as depicted in the graphic below:

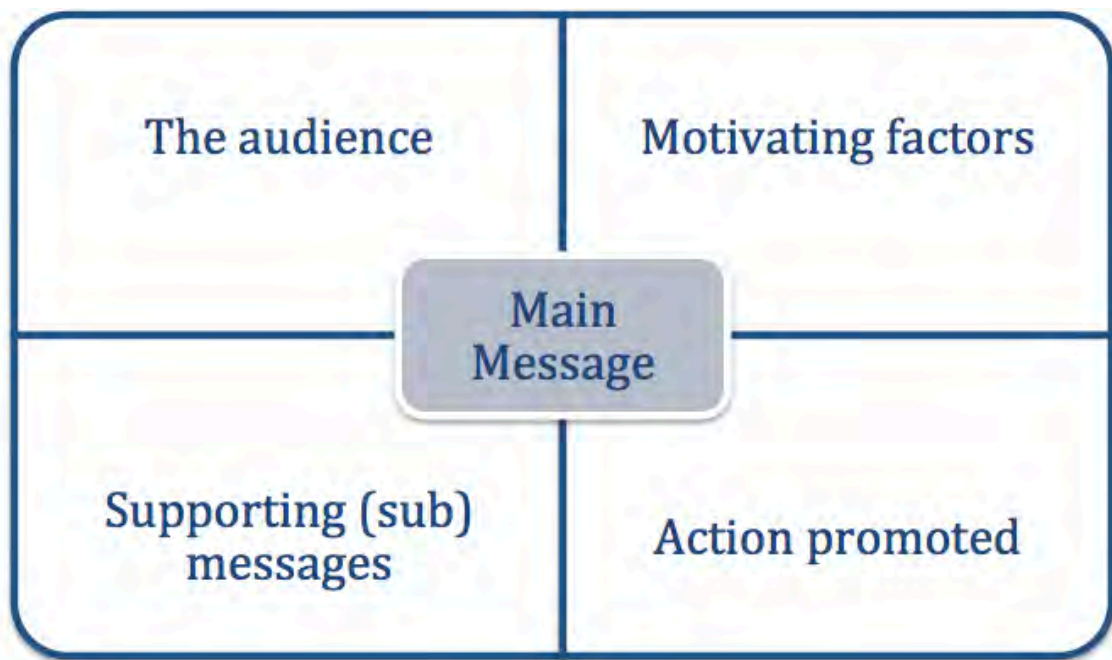


Figure 14: “Communicating a message” graphic adapted from *Community Mural: A Facilitator’s Guide to Mobilising Community Environmental Action*. Source by (Henderson et al., 2006).

Through this activity, Mujeres Unidas decided that the main message of the mural should be the following: “We need faith, love, and perseverance to achieve the objectives that we want.” The supporting messages included the following phrases: “Necesitamos mejorar nuestro ambiente/We need to improve our environment,” “Unidos juntos podemos lograr la solidaridad /United together we can achieve solidarity,” “Amor para luchar/Love to fight.” “Todos colaborando/Everyone collaborating,” la cañada/the canal, and earthworms, reflecting the vermicomposting microenterprise as the primary project of Mujeres Unidas. They collectively decided that the audience would primarily be the community of Los Platanitos, followed by the press, external visitors, and the government. The motivating factors to create the mural included improving the environment, communication with people in Los Platanitos, reflection of integration, and unity. The actions promoted in the mural would be to recycle trash, develop community leadership, promote learning, improve the environment with a clean cañada, and transform kitchen waste into compost. We discussed including the following symbols: a heart for love, an open Bible for faith, worms for perseverance, and a butterfly to represent the women of Los Platanitos. The activity helped Mujeres Unidas develop what could be considered a current mission statement and slogan for their organization.

On July 18th, Montero visited Los Platanitos to perform Activity 6 (“Design Your Mural”). The objective of this activity was to design the appearance of the mural based

on communicating a main message and to work collaboratively. Due to the rain and the subsequent flooding, we could not access the office of Mujeres Unidas, where we had been holding the workshops. Instead, we held the workshop on the patio of Pica's colmado. Montero explained the concept of the mural, and we distributed paper and markers to the group with the task of working together to produce a draft design and concept for the mural, considering the results of Activity 5. Some participants were intimidated at the idea of drawing, but through his experience in working with communities and children, Montero was engaging and encouraged the participants to share their vision. The drawings included butterflies to represent Mujeres Unidas, flowers, hearts, a clean cañada, a sun, children, and a recycling diagram of trash, earthworms, compost, and watering plants. After we finished Activity 6, we planned a date to paint the wall white in preparation for the mural.

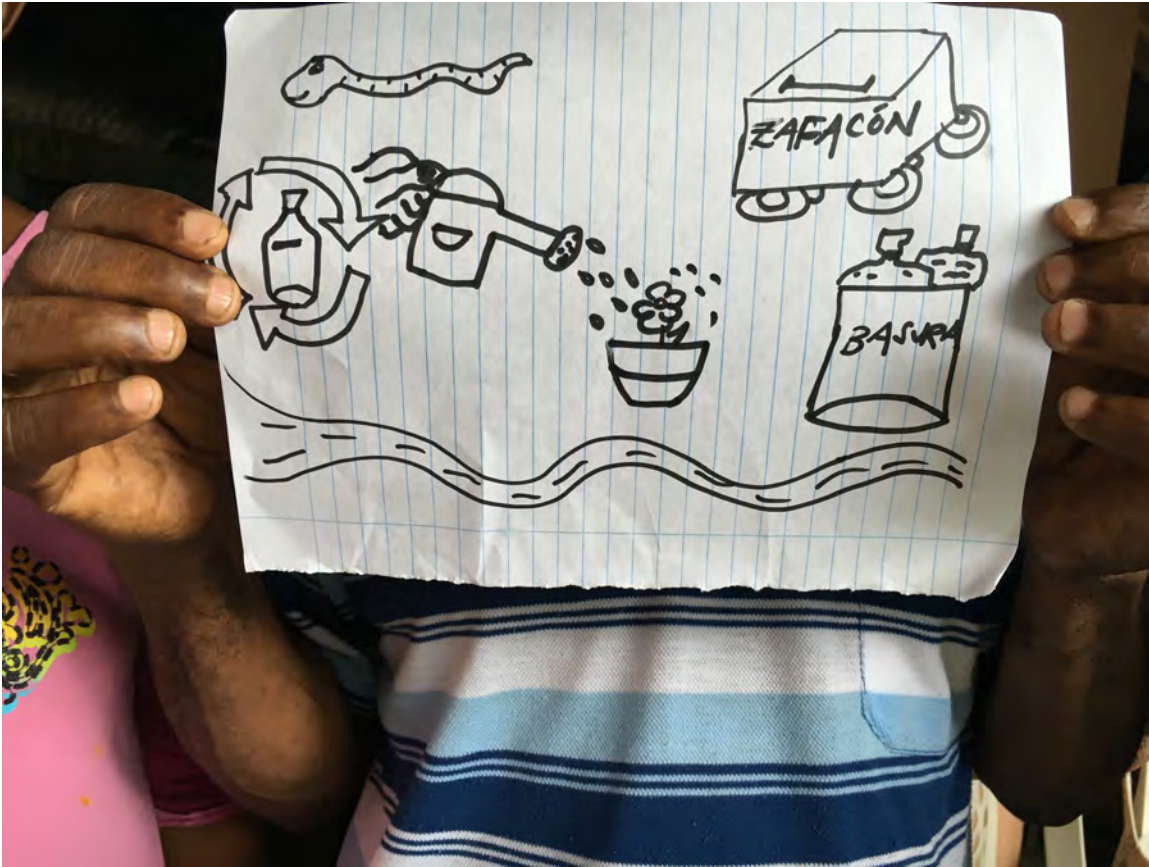


Figure 15: Los Platanitos community member's drawing from Activity 6. Photo by author.

On July 22nd, we met in Los Platanitos to paint the wall white. Hernández organized the children by age group. Twenty children participated, ranging from ages seven to sixteen. Because of the number of participants, the process was fairly quick, and the group disbanded upon completion. The following day would be the grand finale—the painting of the mural.



Figure16: In Activity 6, the wall was painted white in preparation for Activity 7. Photo by author.

On July 23rd, we performed Activity 7 (“Planning for Action”), i.e. painting the mural. I had previously purchased a gallon of several primary colors and paintbrushes for the children to participate in the process. However, upon arrival, Montero said that the paintbrushes were too big and the paint did not mix well to create other colors. Melvin Hernández, who had experience working with “Gaby” de León, a painter from the community, accompanied me to a “ferreteria” (hardware store) around the corner to purchase the right materials. Through this mishap, I learned that the materials were

available within the community but are too expensive to purchase if the work is not commissioned.

Ringer and Montero, who coincidentally had worked on another mural project together, co-facilitated the design and painting process. Ringer worked with the children to paint bottle caps that were glued to add texture to the mural. Montero sketched the mural as a woman resting her head in the ocean with plantain leaves for hair. Montero said he was inspired by the rain the day that we performed Activity 6 and painted raindrops falling into the ocean. On the right side of the mural, he painted a boy in a paper boat fishing and sailing towards the sun. He suggested that we shorten the original message from Activity 5 to four words to be more concise and captivating. Mujeres Unidas decided on “con amor, fe, y perseverancia // with love, faith, and perseverance,” which was painted within big rain drops on the left side of the mural. Montero outlined the painting, styled final touches, and instructed the children to paint within the lines. The older children were tasked to lead the younger children in the process. Those who could write wrote values, such as love, friendship, family, and respect within the raindrops. M. Hernández used de León’s airbrush machine to paint the ocean. Ringer painted butterflies to represent Mujeres Unidas and the children glued bottle caps and old CDs inside the butterfly wings. We started the process at about 9:00 AM and finished around 4:00 PM. Ringer painted the children’s initials at the bottom right of the mural, a typical method used by mural artists. Although more children may have participated, twenty-six initials were written on the mural. Everyone was very pleased with the final mural.

Mujeres Unidas used some of the leftover materials to paint upcycled plastic bottles that were converted into animal-themed planters—an idea that I saw at a café and showed to Hernández as a potential Mujeres Unidas project.



Figure17: Initials of the children that participated in the mural project. Photo by author.

CHALLENGES

Although the process was successful and we accomplished our main goals, we faced several challenges. During Activity 1, because she had facilitated the previous mural, Marianela Pinales of CIAMF tried to assume a stronger role, but it was made clear that this would be a Mujeres Unidas-led project. However, she had pragmatic intentions

and encouraged the group to be organized as leaders, which they demonstrated throughout the process. Regarding scheduling of activities, at times it was difficult to coordinate with artists from Yo Amo RD to attend workshops and develop the final mural. Likewise, it was difficult for Mujeres Unidas members to participate in activities or find times to collectively meet due to their busy schedules working, child-caring, and attending church on weekends.

We originally tried to work with Yo Amo RD in order to connect Los Platanitos to Category 3 mural processes and to fund the materials. However, we learned that we needed at least three months' advance notice to work with the organization. Hernández established connection with Yo Amo RD president Díaz at the mural event in Herrera, and Mujeres Unidas established connection with Montero, an artist within the Yo Amo RD collective. Additionally, we tried to get press coverage of the event through journalist and Yo Amo RD muralist Kilia Lano, but she was unable to cover the story at that time due to her busy schedule. However, she was open to featuring a story in the future. Lano's contact, along with other mentioned key contacts, were included in the mural toolkit. Activity 8 revealed the bigger implications of this mural through reflection and evaluation, which will be discussed in Chapter 6.



Figure 18: The completed mural, which measured 4' by 24' (11.2 meters by 1.2 meters). Photo by author.

CHAPTER 6: Analysis and Discussion

The mural toolkit served as a useful guide to co-facilitating the mural project in Los Platanitos. The eight-step process helped us determine who should be involved in the planning process, and how, and empowered the women to become leaders of the project. Choosing a site for the mural revealed the opportunities to amplify the use of highly visible spaces as a production of representational space and hub for dialogue and action. Furthermore, Activity 2 (“Ranking Values and Issues”) ultimately led to the development of a shared vision and communication for change, and the process of developing the main and sub messages of the murals enabled Mujeres Unidas to articulate their values in an organizational mission statement. Designing the mural revealed that, despite the challenge of illiteracy, participants could communicate their vision and voice through art. Finally, creating the mural opened networks of opportunity through working with organizations and artists outside of Los Platanitos.

What are the broader implications of this mural project? After the mural was completed, I performed Activity 8 (“Reflection and Evaluation”) to critically assess the outcomes of our work. The objective of this activity was to reflect on the past in order to plan for the future and to develop listening skills. I asked the women to reflect on the following prompts: “because of the mural, I know, I can, I feel, I will...” The first statement relates to knowledge gained, the second to skills, the third to feelings and values, and the final to how the project may have influenced participants’ future actions or behaviors. To further understand the importance of the project, I interviewed the following six Mujeres Unidas members who were most active throughout the process:

Mariela Moreta, Evelyn Hernández, Lucila “Cesi” Sánchez, Santa Encarnación, Hernández Pérez, and Gilia Esmevlin.

Sánchez said she was ready to continue painting murals in other communities. “A través de esa pintura, yo envío mensajes positivos para las otras comunidades. // Through that painting, I send positive messages to the other communities.” Hernández commented on how using the trash as part of the mural would have a great impact and said that “something beautiful is starting in our community.” She reflected on how the process empowered every woman to organize around using their unique set of skills and experiences. Hernández described, “Me siento ‘jevi.’²² Me siento muy emocionada porque nunca había participado en un evento así. Me siento feliz porque nosotras trabajando juntas hemos logrado que al final de este evento. Hemos culminado de una manera eficaz y participativa a la vez e impactante. // I feel cool. I feel very excited because I had never participated in such an event. I feel happy because we, working together, have achieved that at the end of this event. We have culminated in an effective, participative, and impactful way.” Similarly, the youngest Mujeres Unidas member, Esmevlin, also reflected on how the mural helped them achieve their goals as an organization:

A través del proyecto del mural, nosotros queremos presentar nuestros objetivos. Nuestras metas, también expresar nuestros sentimientos y lo que sentimos sobre el mural demostrarl a las otras personas que estamos unidas y que podemos alcanzar nuestros objetivos y que podemos seguir adelante sobre todas las cosas.

²² Dominican slang for “cool.”

Through the mural project, we want to present our objectives. Our goals, we also express our feelings and what we feel about the mural demonstrate to the other people that we are united and that we can reach our goals and that we can move forward on all things.

Furthermore, Esmevlin understood how the mural enabled them to communicate and learn through alternative methods. “Pero a mi me gusta como se ve el mural, por ejemplo, porque los niños están participando adentro de las gotas en los valores de mujeres unidas. Porque yo sé que todos los niños no pueden leer o escribir pero es un proceso para comunicar. // But I like the way the mural looks, for example, because children are participating in the drops, which are the values of Mujeres Unidas. Because I know that the children cannot read or write, but it is a process to communicate.”

As Sandercock states, stories are a catalyst for change, and success stories serve as inspiration. Based on the success of this cross-cultural, community development project, I hope that Mujeres Unidas and the Los Platanitos community share this story as an inspiration to continue their goals as an organization and as a public message of calling attention to their rights as a community.

In addition to helping Mujeres Unidas achieve organizational development, the mural process also served to connect these isolated residents to municipal planning processes, as I had hoped. During my interview with de la Cruz, CEO of Culture and Tourism in the municipality of Santo Domingo Norte, Los Platanitos resident Catalino Hernández Pérez (aka “Benito”) accompanied me as security, which facilitated the impromptu opportunity for him to talk to municipal officials about Los Platanitos. During our conversation, I recalled an interview with “Gaby” de León, a muralist from

Los Platanitos, who worked with Gabriel “Shak” Doñe a muralist from YARD, on the commissioned mural project on the columns near Peña Gomez metro station. Through YARD, Doñe had the opportunity to work on this government-commissioned project and invited de León to help. de León, in turn, brought his assistant/mentee Melvin Hernández, Catalino Hernández’s son, to help. When discussing the project with de la Cruz, Hernández interjected that his son “is one of the best painters here” and said that he worked on the project. Because of my positionality performing this research, I was able to facilitate the space for Hernández to talk about his son and Los Platanitos. I ended the interview by mentioning that Dr. Bjørn Sletto’s UTSOA class would be returning to Santo Domingo the following January and March to potentially create another mural project and suggested that the Culture and Tourism Department sponsor materials and work with YARD, Mujeres Unidas, and UTSOA to create another mural in Los Platanitos, per Category 3 proposal.

Through the invaluable experience of producing this thesis, I have witnessed muralism as a transformative planning practice in an informal settlement. I recommend that planners work with Category 3 murals as a method of participatory planning to facilitate connection between isolated spaces and traditional planning practices. Category 3 murals create opportunities to facilitate connection to organizations in the formal “legislated” city with material opportunities, such as sponsorship to acquire the mural materials, and to connect to global processes, such as social movements, through the virtual opportunities of social media flow.

Murals as a voice

Storytelling is a transformational practice for both the listener and storyteller. Arts-based strategies create the space to reveal the political realities through personal stories, and, thus, storytelling becomes a political act of resistance and a mode of solidarity for community development (Cohen-Cruz et al., 2006).

Xaivier Ringer, who participated in the Recycled City Center program project and the Mujeres Unidas mural in Los Platanitos, stated in an interview regarding her participation with community members, “It allows you an opportunity to really converse and get to know the community. They protect the mural and their community better. I had an experience where the students I worked with were so inspired, they started cleaning their school grounds... I think murals provide the tools for communities to say ‘I exist/yo existo.’ There is nothing more powerful than to tell others you know your worth. I think that is what murals and public art does; they urge the public to look your way. Murals remind those involved of the exchange they had, and it allows many communities to beautify their space and take ownership of it and who they are... With the recycled mural I wanted to communicate our ability to work together to improve and take care of our environment.”

To quote Montero again, “I look for communities with problems in which muralism has to be used to find solutions to these problems. Muralism is a powerful communication tool, since an image can connect with everyone regardless of age, gender, social status or educational level. An image can change lives when it is known how to be used.” Category 3 mural processes thus facilitate the transfer of knowledge between

formal and isolated spaces and residents, creating a space for co-learning which in turn increases social capital.

Much like murals lie within the in-between spaces of the commons, Category 3 muralism similarly facilitates “in-between processes” within isolated spaces, such as informal settlements like Los Platanitos. Informal settlements are unseen and unnoticed within the legislated city, yet they are unequivocally part of the urban fabric and everyday reality of the public city. Informal settlements are created by residents through politics and processes that operate within illegal spaces, but invented spaces (Miraftab, 2004) such as mural projects can foster broader inclusion in civic engagement processes and expand the notion of politics, and hence serve as a tool for socio-spatial mobilization. Finally, such invented spaces of citizenship can expand beyond their physical dimension by entering the virtual space of social media and thus connect to the global flow of the street politics of the subaltern. Through this project, Los Platanitos now has connection to YARD, which claims to be “the largest network of Dominican cultural managers in the world.”²³ This presents the opportunity for Los Platanitos to emerge from its physically and virtually isolated space.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF CREATING MURALS IN INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

Its status as an informal settlement has served to disconnect Los Platanitos physically, socially, and economically from the legislated city, which, in turn, has ultimately limited residents’ opportunities for physical and socio-economic mobility.

²³ <https://yoamord.com/gestores-culturales/>

These realities of informal settlements does present challenges in creating murals, as revealed in an interview with Los Platanitos muralists Gaby de León and Daniel “Adonis” Fernández .

When inquiring about potential costs of the project, Fernández said that the mural would cost RD\$16,500 pesos based on the following calculations: a gallon of paint costs RD\$620 pesos, totaling roughly RD\$4,000, plus RD\$12,500 to pay him to paint the mural. However, Montero said that the project would cost only RD\$750 for the materials and that he would be able to donate his time, as is typical with most Muralizando RD projects. Perhaps this is the key difference as to why murals are not painted in Los Platanitos like they are around Santo Domingo. Because of the realities of their differing socioeconomic statuses, Fernández approached the project as a business opportunity to work for money, and Montero saw it from a community development perspective based on his previous experiences with community-based mural projects. I explained to Fernandez that the mural was a voluntary community project that would not pay participants. Fernandez said he understood this but that he nevertheless could not participate because he needed to make an income.

Sí por eso es que yo no trabajo más en cuanto a los murales, no pinto más por la falta de recursos. Si tuviera más dinero en mi tiempo libre, yo pintaré porque ami me gusta y me gusta crear dibujar. Pero por falta de recursos no puedo.. tu sabes que hay que tener pintura, pinceles, brochas, etc. y si no hay dinero no se puede pintar.

Yes that's why I do not work more in terms of murals, I do not paint more because of the lack of resources. If I had more money in my free time, I would paint because I like it and I like to create drawings. But for lack of resources I cannot ... you know you have to have paint, brushes, etc. and if there is no money you cannot paint.

In another interview, Los Platanitos muralist Gaby de León agreed that the lack of funding, communication, and organization amongst muralists prohibits their potential to create community-based murals. de León had experience working with Gabriel “Shak” Doñe, a muralist from Yo Amo RD on a project that was commissioned by the Department of Culture and Tourism. I speculated that because de León lived and worked closer to the main street where the city-commissioned project was located, he had more opportunities to connect with these processes, as opposed to Adonis, who lived deeper and lower in Los Platanitos and was perhaps more isolated from these processes.

Ultimately, in this paper I have sought to contribute to the conversation in radical planning scholarship by suggesting that muralism can be used as a participatory planning process within informal settlements. Because murals function as a method of transformative storytelling and since storytelling is central to planning, muralism can be used as a strategic method to broaden the scope of participatory planning within the isolated spaces of informal settlements. Since informal settlements constitute “unseen,” “inbetween” spaces (Gasparrini, 2014) within the legislated city, muralism reveals the hidden transcript and untold story of informal settlements and can thus serve to convey “the truth of planning action” (Throgmorton, 2003) through radical and insurgent planning.

I have argued in this thesis that the subaltern can reveal their hidden transcript through expressions of hip-hop culture, e.g. muralism, and in so doing create new spaces of insurgent citizenship. Likewise, Sletto draws on Simone’s (2008) conceptualization of

“interlocutors” who “open up the possibility of some alternative kind of communication that itself may generate new ways of working” (Sletto, 2013), which echo Sandercock’s discussion of planners as galvanizing agents within storytelling processes. This encourages us to understand the agency of all voices (Sletto, 2013) within the invented spaces of insurgent citizenship, beyond those with hegemonic power such as official planners and policy-makers. Muralism as an imaginative and radical method of participatory planning in informal settlements can serve to “decolonize the planners’ imagination,” allowing us to question how planning and policy relies on modernization and legitimation (Miraftab, 2016).

Ultimately, the marriage of paint and politics through murals has facilitated deep transformations that can be used as a powerful tool within participatory planning and public policy at both the local, community-level and in traditional, decision-making spaces. This is because murals are multifunctional in their potential to build social capital and create alliances. This potential is amplified through mural programs, organizations, and radical planners, allowing street art to exist semi-permanently within the legislated city while serving as a transformative practice for local knowledge and marginalized voices to participate in traditional planning processes.

Murals tell a story. This project was a transformational event for both Mujeres Unidas and myself, and it is an experience that I will carry with me in the field of planning and within my heart. This is the story of Los Platanitos, and I am moved that they are continuing to tell and retell their story through the continued upkeep of their mural con amor, fe, y perseverancia.

Appendix A

Co-facilitator's Mural Schedule (July) ²⁴		
Steps	Activities	Sessions
Step 1: Form a group to undertake the project	Activity 1: Who should be involved?	First Session (45 minutes)
Step 2: Select mural site	Activity 2: PART 1: Los Platanitos Map + PART 2: Ranking the content	Second Session (1-2 hours)
Step 3: Identify & explore mural content	Activity 3: Chain of Events (if applicable)	Third Session (3-4 hours)
Step 4:	Investigation and research	
Step 5: Planning for action	Activity 4: Develop a shared goal	Fourth Session (3 hours)
	Activity 5: Communicating the main message	
	Activity 6: Design your mural	Fifth Session (2 hours)
	Activity 7: Planning for action	
Step 6: Create the mural & the message	***Paint the mural***	Work in progress (dependent on project)
Step 7: Promote the mural & the message	Promote & celebrate completion of mural	Celebration & promotion (dependent on event)
Step 8: Mobilize the community	Activity 8: Reflection & evaluation (as survey)	Sixth Session (45 minutes)
	Taking the next steps	Session & time dependent on future plans

²⁴ The mural creation process is adapted from the Asian Development Bank's toolkit, "Community Mural: A Facilitator's Guide to Mobilizing Community Environmental Action" (Henderson et al., 2006) and seeks to understand the politics and geography of community-based murals in Los Platanitos with Mujeres Unidas.

Activity 1 – Who should be involved?

Objectives:

- Involve key people from the community who may benefit from or provide benefits to the project
- Encourage equitable participation and networking in the community

Time: 45 minutes

Materials needed: Paper, pens

What to do:

1. Divide into small groups (5-8 members)
2. In each group identify 5 key members of the community who could be involved in the mural project
3. Each group should report their recommendations to the whole group
4. The whole group should make a final decision on who else to involve in the project discuss why you want their participation generate ideas about how they can be involved
5. Record this information in a table (see below)
6. Invite these people to a meeting to seek their support and involvement in the mural project. Explain the concept of the mural project to the new group members. Emphasize that the mural is a learning project about community empowerment.

Person/Organization	Why we want them to be involved	How will we involve them?
E.g. Muralizando RD	We need their help to paint on a building. They may be able to help promote the project when it's completed. Maybe then can help us obtain paint and a ladder?	Invite a representative to be part of our mural planning team.

Activity 2: Part 1—Los Platanitos Map + Part 2—Ranking Values/Issues

Objectives:

PART 1

- Identify values/issues in the community
- Listen to and consider a range of people's views and work collaboratively

PART 2

- Encourage participants to express their opinions on a value/issue;
- Critically reflect on values/issues
- Make decisions about the relative priority of values/issues considering a variety of arguments and points of view

3

Time: 1- 2 hours

Materials needed: PART 1: Marker pens (provided), large pieces of paper (one sheet per group), maps of Los Platanitos; PART 2: Several sets of cards (one set per group) with one value or issue written on each card. Choose a selection of these, or other values/issues raised in the previous activities.

PART 1—What to do:

1. Divide the group into smaller groups of 5-8 members.
2. Identify a leader, a recorder and a note taker for each group, and distribute the paper
3. Each group should make a list of values/issues that are important in the community. Highlight places on the map where these values/issues are represented.
4. When the maps are completed, groups should present their map to the whole group, explaining the values/issues and where they occur.
5. As a group, discuss the following:
 - How does living in Los Platanitos affect these values/issues?
 - Which values/issues do you think are the most important? Why?
 - How do these values/issues affect people's livelihoods?
6. Walk around community and envision good sites for mural. Discuss why this would be a good site.
7. Choose three sites on a map (or one, depending on themes and feasibility with time) to paint mural.
8. Look into process for permission to painting mural on building wall (talk to owner of building, etc.).

PART 2—What to do:

1. Divide the group into smaller groups of 5-8 members and provide each group with a set of cards.

2. Each group must place the values/issues in order from most important to least important. Each group is required to reach a consensus on their decision.
3. When each group has reached consensus (or agreed to disagree), ask the first small group to present their ranking of values/issues to the whole group – they must put forward an argument to support their ranking.
4. Allow other groups to ask questions. Then give each group time to reconsider their own order of ranking.
5. Each group will have a turn at presenting their ranking (and argument). Each time allow the other groups to reflect on the arguments and change their ranking (if they want to).
6. As a group discuss the following:
 - Did your group change its ranking during this activity? Why?
 - What were the strongest arguments that influenced your decisions?
 - Did you feel that you could have a say in your group? As an individual would you have made the ranking differently?
 - What were the benefits of having a range of different people participating in this activity?
7. Ask the group if they would like to use the number 1 ranked value/issue to be the focus of the mural project. If participants do not agree on the issue, then allow participants to vote on a range of options (e.g. out of the 3 top ranked issues).

Activity 3: “Chain of events” (IF APPLICABLE)

Objectives:

- Explain the links between values/issues and people’s health, livelihood and well being;
- Encourage participants to listen to other people’s views and work collaboratively

Time: 1 hour

Materials needed: Marker pens (provided), large pieces of paper (one sheet per group)

What to do:

1. Divide the group into smaller groups of 5-8 members.
2. Groups select one value/issue (see Activity 1) and write it at the bottom of a large piece of paper
3. Ask each group to consider the following question: What does this value/issue lead to? Write one impact on the sheet of paper above the value/issue (with an arrow connecting to the value/issue).
4. Ask each group to consider a further question: what further impacts does this impact lead to? Write these impacts on the paper and connect them with arrows. Continue with these questions until each impact is linked with a chain of connected events.
5. When the diagrams are completed, each group should discuss their diagram with the whole group.
6. As a group discuss the following:
 - Are these diagrams realistic in your community? Why?
 - How aware are community members of the links between the values/issues affecting livelihoods?
 - What actions have been taken in the community to celebrate these values or to solve these issues?

Activity 4 – Develop a shared vision

Objectives:

- Identify the value of having a shared vision to guide group action
- Develop a shared goal through equitable participation from the group

Time: 1 hour

Materials needed: Pens & paper

What to do:

1. Introductory game: Stand in a circle, each person holding the hand of the person standing next to them. Tell the group to choose a corner of the room (this must be done in silence and participants are not allowed to tell anyone else which corner they've chosen). When they have all chosen a corner explain the following: Everyone in the circle is in the same community, represented by linking hands (this is a rule!). You are not allowed to let go of the people standing next to you. On the count of three I want you to move to the corner of the room that you have selected...1, 2, 3, - go! When the dust settles, ask the group: Did you get to the place that you wanted to go? Who did get where they wanted to go? How? How did you feel if you were pulled into someone else's corner? Did the group have a shared goal? Allow the group to repeat the activity, this time encourage them to have a discussion and work out a shared goal before they start. Repeat the exercise when they are ready. Ask the group: Did you get to where you wanted to go this time? What was the advantage of having a shared goal?
2. Refer to the issue identified in Activity 4 to be the focus of the shared vision. Explain to participants that the object of this activity is to work together as a group to develop a shared vision for the mural project. The vision will be expressed as a "vision statement."

The vision statement is one sentence that captures the vision.

Divide participants into small groups and ask each group to produce one or more vision statements. Use the following prompts to assist the brainstorm:

- What do you want the situation to be like in the future?
- Who will be involved?
- Who will benefit?

When each group has prepared a vision statement, ask them to explain and share it with the whole group. Collate a list of vision statements and allow participants to choose the one that is most favored.

Activity 5 – Communication for change

The mural is intended to communicate a message to an audience that will contribute toward achieving the vision (as described in the previous activity). In order for the mural to make an impact it is important to consider the following:

- **THE MAIN MESSAGE:** What is the main message that you want to communicate to the audience? If the audience walks away from the mural and remembers only one thing from it, what would this one thing be? The main message is the biggest consideration when designing the artwork or writing in the mural.
- **SUPPORTING MESSAGES:** It is often beneficial to have several supporting messages that combine to provide the overall main message in the mural. These messages or ideas support the main message and are optional inclusions in the mural.
- **THE AUDIENCE:** Who is the mural message targeted at? This will affect decisions about the artwork, writing and placement of the mural. For example a mural aimed at parents might be placed on the wall of school.
- **MOTIVATING FACTORS:** What will motivate the audience to look at and consider the message in the mural? What message could motivate the audience to take action based on what they have seen? For example a message targeted at adult home owners might include images about saving money connected with taking action on an environmental issue.
- **PROPOSED ACTION:** What do you want the audience to do after viewing the mural? You should consider the value of not just highlighting a problem, but also directing the audience to an action that could contribute to solving the problem. For example, in addition to messages about the problems associated with contaminated well water, a mural could highlight an action such as increasing the storage of rainwater so that it is always available for drinking.

Objectives:

- Explore the concepts of main message, supporting messages, audience, motivating factors and proposed actions.
- Review example murals to identify the above concepts
- Create a communication plan based on the above concepts

Time: 1 hour

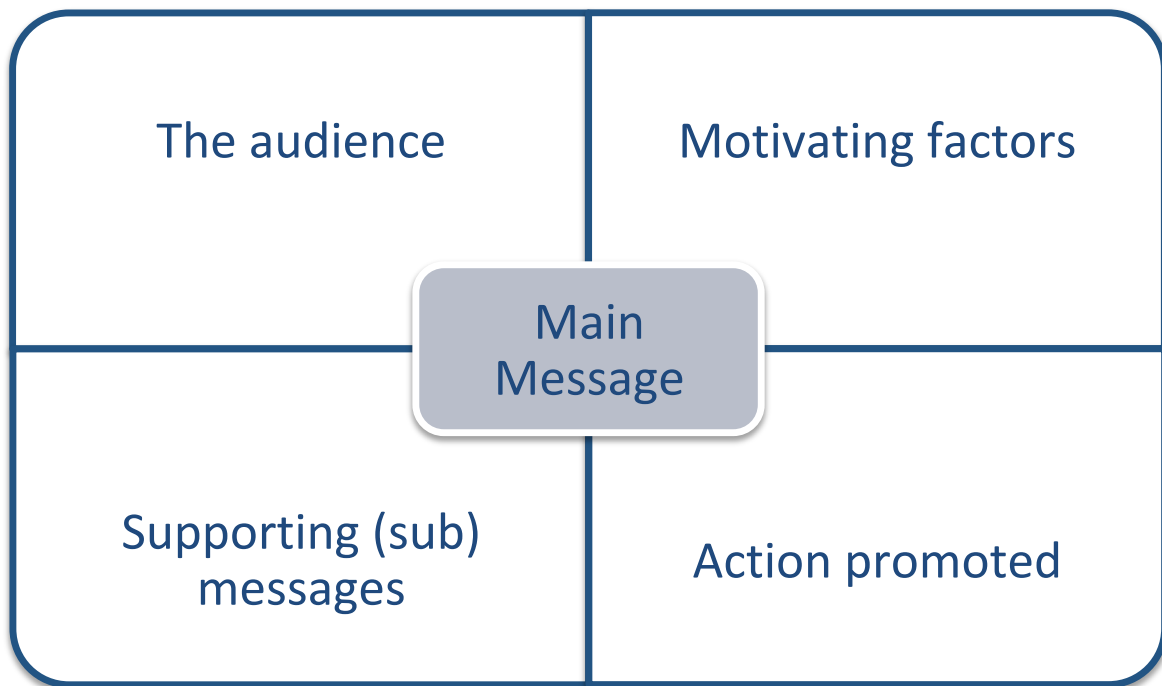
Materials needed: Communicating a message worksheet (appendix 2), example mural

What to do:

1. Examine the example mural. As a group discuss and identify the following: the main message of this mural, sub-messages that support the main message, the intended audience, motivating factors and proposed actions. Create a large version of the 'communicating a message' diagram on a white board or black board and work together to complete it. Alternatively this could be done as a small group exercise.

2. Divide the group into 2 or 3 small groups and provide each a copy of the 'communicating a message' worksheet. Display the 'vision statement' and reflect on what it means (see activity 5). Explain that the purpose of this activity is to create a communication plan for the mural, which includes a main message, supporting messages, audience, motivating factors and proposed actions. Give the groups time to create a communication plan using the sheets.
3. When each group is finished, ask them to present their communication plan. When all groups have presented their ideas, choose one of the ideas or a combination of them to be the communication plan for the mural.

For example:



Activity 6: Design your Mural

Objectives:

- Design the appearance of the mural based on communicating a main message
- Work collaboratively

Time: Variable

Materials needed: pencils, mural design worksheets

What to do:

1. Instruct the group that their task is to work together to produce a draft design or concept for the mural
2. Tell the group that they will work together without the support of an 'external facilitator'
3. Remind the group to keep focused on the main message that has been have identified. (Remember the importance of the shared vision!).
4. Explain that it will be up to the group to determine how they will work together to create a mural concept. For example they may want to produce many concepts and then choose the best one, or they may decide to ask a small team to produce a number of concepts to bring back to the group.

Activity 7 - Planning for Action

Objective:

- Develop a practical plan for organizing the logistics of creating a mural
- Utilize participatory planning processes

Time: 1 hour

Materials needed: Pens & paper, planning chart (see appendix 3)

What to do:

1. Work as a group to develop an action-planning chart. Ensure that everyone the group has a role to play. Remember to reflect on the overall vision statement when developing the tasks. See example below. A planning chart is included as Attachment # 3.
2. Identify the tasks that need to be completed
3. Decide who in the group will do each task
4. Decide when the task needs to be completed
5. Determine the resources (e.g. equipment) that will be needed
6. Use the action-planning chart to regularly

Goal Statement:			
E.g. Borrow a ladder from X	Evelyn	Friday, July 15	Ladder

Activity 8: Reflection & evaluation (ADMINISTRED AS SURVEY DURING & AFTER MURAL)

Objectives:

- Reflect on the past in order to plan for the future
- Develop listening skills

Time: 45 minutes

Materials needed: Copies of the reflection sheet

What to do:

1. Invite the people associated with the mural project to a meeting. Divide the participants into pairs.
2. Ask each person to close their eyes and think about the activities that they have been involved with while creating the mural. (Give a couple of minutes to do this)
3. Provide each pair with a 2 copies of the 'reflection sheet' (appendices # 4)

- *Because of the mural project, I know ...*

Explain what is meant by each statement. The first statement relates to *knowledge* gained, the second to *skills*, the third to *feelings* and *values* and the final question relates to how the project may have influenced participants future actions or behaviors.

4. Ask the pairs to interview each other (using the statements on the reflection sheet). The interviewee must finish each statement read out by the interviewer, who will write down the responses. The interviewer should be instructed to listen very carefully and write down the thoughts of their partner without interrupting.

5. When everyone has finished the exercise, ask for volunteers to share their 'reflections' with the whole group

6. Ask participants to fill out the project evaluation form, see attachment # 5

Contact Information			
Organization	Name	Email	Phone #
Muralizando RD	Venus Patricia Díaz		
Muralist (YARD)	Edison “Eddaviel” Montero		
Muralist	Xaivier Ringer		
Muralist (LP)	Gabriel “Gaby” de León		
Muralist (LP)	Daniel Adonis Fernandez		
Muralist/journalist (YARD)	Kilia Llano		
University of Texas	Shavone Otero		

Appendix B

Co-facilitador Horario del Mural (Julio) ²⁵		
Pasos	Actividades	Sesiones
Paso 1: Formar un grupo para llevar a cabo el proyecto	Actividad 1: ¿Quién debe participar?	Primera sesión (45 minutos)
Paso 2: Elija un sitio mural	Actividad 2: PARTE 1: Map de Los Platanitos + PARTE 2: Clasificación del contenido	Segunda sesión (1-2 horas)
Paso 3: Identificar y explorar el contenido mural	Actividad 3: Desarrollo de contenidos (si aplicable)	Tercera sesión (3-4 horas)
Paso 4	Investigación	
Paso 5: La planificación de la acción	Actividad 4: Desarrollar un visión compartido	Cuarta sesión (3 horas)
	Actividad 5: Comunicar el mensaje principal	
	Actividad 6: El diseño de su mural	Quinto sesión (2 horas)
	Actividad 7: Planificación para la acción	
Paso 6: Crear el mural y el mensaje	***Pinta el mural***	Trabajo en curso (en función del proyecto)
Paso 7: Promover el mural y el mensaje	Promover y celebrar la finalización del mural	Celebración y promoción (dependiente de evento)
Paso 8: Movilizar a la comunidad	Actividad 8: Reflexión y evaluación (como la encuesta)	Sexta sesión (45 minutos)
	Tomando los próximos pasos	Sesión y el tiempo depende de los planes de futuro

²⁵ El proceso de creación del mural es una adaptación del juego de herramientas del Banco Asiático de Desarrollo, "Comunidad Mural: Guía del facilitador para la Acción Ambiental movilización comunitaria" (Henderson et al, 2006) y trata de entender la política y la geografía de murales basados en la comunidad en Los Platanitos con Mujeres Unidas.

Actividad 1 - ¿Quién debe participar?

Objetivos:

- Convocar a personas clave de la comunidad con el fin que pueden proporcionar beneficios al proyecto
- Fomentar la participación equitativa y la creación de redes en la comunidad

Tiempo: 45 minutos

Materiales necesarios: papel, bolígrafos

Qué hacer:

1. Dividir en grupos pequeños (5-8 miembros)
2. En cada grupo se identifican 5 miembros clave de la comunidad que podrían estar involucrados en el proyecto del mural
3. Cada grupo pequeño debe reportar sus recomendaciones a todos los participantes del taller
4. Todos los miembros del taller deben tomar una decisión final sobre ¿quién? más debe involucrarse en el proyecto y discutir el ¿por qué? se requiere su participación y ¿qué? ideas puede generar en el proyecto.
5. Registrar esta información en una tabla (vea abajo)
6. Invitar a los participantes a una reunión para buscar su apoyo y participación en el proyecto del mural. Explicar el concepto del proyecto del mural a los nuevos miembros del grupo. Haga hincapié en que el mural es un proyecto de aprendizaje sobre el fortalecimiento de la comunidad.

Persona / Organización	Por qué queremos que se involucren	¿Cómo los implicar?
P.ej. Muralizando RD	Necesitamos su ayuda para pintar en un mural. Los participantes pueden promover el proyecto cuando éste haya finalizado. Luego, podría ayudarnos a obtener la pintura y una escalera?	Invitar a un representante para formar parte de nuestro equipo de planificación mural.

Actividad 2: Part 1—Los Platanitos Mapa + Part 2—Clasificación del contenido

Objetivos:

PARTE 1

- Identificar los valores/las preocupaciones (problemáticas) en la comunidad
- Escuchar y examinar una serie de puntos de vista de los miembros de la comunidad y trabajar en colaboración

PARTE 2

- Anime a los participantes a expresar sus opiniones sobre un valor/una preocupación;
- Reflexionar críticamente sobre los valores/las preocupaciones
- Tomar decisiones acerca de la prioridad relativa de los valores/las preocupaciones que consideran una variedad de argumentos y puntos de vista

Tiempo: 1- 2 horas

Materiales necesarios: PARTE 1—Marcadores (proporcionado), hojas grandes de papel (una hoja por grupo), mapas de Los Platanitos; PARTE 2—Clasificación de los valores/las preocupaciones

PART 1—Qué hacer:

1. Divida el grupo en grupos más pequeños de 5-8 miembros.
2. Identificar un moderador en el grupo, una persona que grabe la actividad y una persona que se encargue de tomar notas por cada grupo y distribuir el papelógrafo.
3. Cada grupo debe hacer una lista de los valores/las preocupaciones que son importantes en la comunidad. Resalte los lugares en el mapa dónde los valores/las preocupaciones se identifican físicamente.
4. Al término de la actividad, los grupos pequeños deben presentar su mapa a todos los asistentes del taller, explicando los valores/las preocupaciones y donde éstos se producen.
5. Como grupo, discutan lo siguiente:
 - ¿Cómo la vida en Los Platanitos afecta a estos valores/estas preocupaciones?
 - ¿Cuáles valores/preocupaciones cree usted que son los más importantes? ¿Por qué?
 - ¿Cómo estos valores/preocupaciones afectan a los medios de vida de las personas?
6. Paseo por la comunidad y elegir los buenos sitios para el mural. Discutir ¿por qué? éste sería un buen sitio.
7. Elija tres sitios en un mapa (o uno, dependiendo de los temas y de viabilidad con el tiempo) para pintar murales.
8. Pedir la autorización de dueño del lugar para elaborar el mural con pintura (hablar con el propietario del edificio, etc.).

PART 2—Qué hacer:

1. Divida el grupo en grupos más pequeños de 5-8 miembros y proporcionar a cada grupo un juego de tarjetas.
2. Cada grupo debe colocar los valores/las preocupaciones con el fin de más importante a menos importante. Se requiere que cada grupo para llegar a un consenso sobre su decisión.
3. Cuando cada grupo haya llegado a un consenso (o acordado discrepar), pida al primer grupo pequeño para presentar su ranking de los valores/las preocupaciones a todo el grupo - Deben presentar un argumento para apoyar su ranking.
4. Permitir que otros grupos puedan hacer preguntas. A continuación, dar a cada grupo tiempo para reconsiderar su propio orden de clasificación.
5. Cada grupo tendrá un turno en la presentación de su clasificación (y el argumento). Dejar cada vez los otros grupos para reflexionar sobre los argumentos y cambian su clasificación (si quieren).
6. Como grupo discuta los siguientes:
 - ¿Su grupo cambie su clasificación durante esta actividad? ¿Por qué?
 - ¿Cuáles fueron los argumentos más fuertes que influyeron en sus decisiones?
 - ¿Siente que podría tener algo que decir en su grupo? Como un individuo que ha hecho la clasificación de manera diferente?
 - ¿Cuáles fueron los beneficios de tener una gama de diferentes personas que participan en esta actividad?
7. Pregunte al grupo si les gustaría usar el valor/la preocupación número 1 en el ranking a ser el foco del proyecto del mural. Si los participantes no están de acuerdo en el tema, a continuación, permitirá a los participantes votan en una gama de opciones (por ejemplo de tres los valores/las preocupaciones de alta calificación).

Actividad 3: "La cadena de eventos" (si aplicable)

Objetivos:

- Explicar los vínculos entre los valores/las preocupaciones y de salud de las personas, medios de vida y el bienestar;
- Anime a los participantes a escuchar otros puntos de vista de los pueblos y el trabajo en colaboración

Tiempo: 1 hora

Materiales necesarios: Marcadores (proporcionado), hojas grandes de papel (una hoja por grupo)

Qué hacer:

1. Divida el grupo en grupos más pequeños de 5-8 miembros.
2. Grupos seleccionar uno de los valores/las preocupaciones (ver Actividad 1) y escribirlo en la parte inferior de una hoja grande de papel
3. Pida a cada grupo que considere la siguiente pregunta: ¿Qué hace este cable de los valores/las preocupaciones? Escribir un impacto en la hoja de papel por encima del los valores/las preocupaciones (con una flecha que conecta con los valores/las preocupaciones).
4. Pedir a cada grupo a considerar otra pregunta: ¿qué impactos más hace esto posible impacto? Escribe estos impactos sobre el papel y conectarlos con las flechas. Continuar con estas preguntas hasta que cada impacto está relacionado con una serie de eventos conectados.
5. Al término de los diagramas, cada grupo debe discutir su diagrama con todo el grupo.
6. Como grupo discuta los siguientes:
 - ¿Son estos diagramas realista en su comunidad? ¿Por qué?
 - ¿Cómo son conscientes de miembros de la comunidad de los vínculos entre los valores/las preocupaciones que afectan a los medios de vida?
 - ¿Qué medidas se han tomado en la comunidad para celebrar estos valores o para resolver estas preocupaciones?

Actividad 4 - Desarrollar una visión compartida

Objetivos:

- Identificar el valor de tener una visión compartida para guiar la acción de grupo
- Desarrollar un objetivo común mediante la participación equitativa del grupo

Tiempo: 1 hora

Materiales necesarios: Bolígrafo y papel

Qué hacer:

1. Juego de Introducción: se colocan en círculo, cada persona de la mano de la persona de pie junto a ellos. Dile al grupo que elija una esquina de la habitación (esto debe hacerse en silencio y los participantes no pueden hablar con nadie más que esquina que han elegido). Cuando todos ellos han elegido una esquina explicar lo siguiente: Todo el mundo en el círculo está en la misma comunidad, representada por la vinculación de las manos (esto es una regla!). No se le permite dejar de lado las personas que se coloca al lado de usted. A la cuenta de tres quiero que se mueva a la esquina de la habitación que ha seleccionado ... 1, 2, 3, - Go! Cuando el polvo se asiente, pregunte al grupo: ¿Recibió al lugar que quería ir? ¿Quién lo hizo llegar a donde querían ir? ¿Cómo? ¿Cómo se sintieron si estuviera tirado en la esquina de otra persona? ¿El grupo tiene un objetivo común? Permita que el grupo repita la actividad, esta vez les animan a tener una discusión y elaborar un objetivo común antes de que comiencen. Repetir el ejercicio cuando están listos. Pregunte al grupo: ¿Llegaste a donde quería ir esta vez? ¿Cuál fue la ventaja de tener un objetivo común?

2. Consulte la cuestión identificada en la Actividad 4 a ser el foco de la visión compartida. Explique a los participantes que el objetivo de esta actividad es trabajar juntos como un grupo para desarrollar una visión compartida para el proyecto del mural. La visión se expresa como una "declaración de visión".

La declaración de visión es una frase que captura la visión.

Dividir a los participantes en pequeños grupos y pida a cada grupo para producir una o más declaraciones de visión. Use las siguientes instrucciones para ayudar a la lluvia de ideas:

- ¿Qué desea que la situación es similar en el futuro?
- ¿Quién participará?
- ¿Quién se beneficiará?

Cuando cada grupo haya preparado una declaración de visión, pedirles que expliquen y compartirlo con todo el grupo. Recopilar una lista de declaraciones de visión y permiten a los participantes elegir el que está más favorecida.

Actividad 5 - Comunicar el mensaje principal

El mural está destinado a comunicar un mensaje a un público que va a contribuir a la consecución de la visión (como se describe en la actividad anterior). A fin de que el mural para hacer un impacto, es importante tener en cuenta lo siguiente:

- **EL MENSAJE PRINCIPAL:** ¿Cuál es el principal mensaje que se quiere comunicar a la audiencia? Si el público se aleja de la pintura mural y recuerda una sola cosa de ella, lo que sería una cosa ser? El mensaje principal es la consideración más grande en el diseño de la obra o por escrito en el mural.
- **MENSAJES DE APOYO:** A menudo es beneficioso tener varios mensajes de apoyo que se combinan para dar el mensaje principal general en el mural. Estos mensajes o ideas apoyan el mensaje principal y son inclusiones opcionales en el mural.
- **LA AUDIENCIA:** ¿Quién está dirigido el mensaje mural en? Esto afectará a las decisiones acerca de la obra de arte, la escritura y la colocación del mural. Por ejemplo un mural dirigido a los padres podría ser colocado en la pared de la escuela.
- **FACTORES DE MOTIVACION:** ¿Qué va a motivar a la audiencia a la vista y considerar el mensaje en el mural? ¿Qué mensaje podría motivar al público a tomar medidas basadas en lo que han visto? Por ejemplo, un mensaje dirigido a los propietarios de viviendas para adultos podría incluir imágenes sobre el ahorro de dinero relacionado con la adopción de medidas en un problema ambiental.
- **ACCION PROPUESTA:** ¿Qué quieres que haga la audiencia después de ver el mural? Usted debe considerar el valor de poner de relieve no sólo un problema, sino también dirigir a la audiencia a una acción que podría contribuir a solucionar el problema. Por ejemplo, además de los mensajes sobre los problemas asociados con el agua de pozo contaminada, un mural podría poner de relieve una acción como aumentar el almacenamiento de agua de lluvia de manera que siempre está disponible para el consumo.

Objetivos:

- Explorar los conceptos de mensaje principal, mensajes de apoyo, audiencia, factores de motivación y acciones propuestas.
- Revisión de ejemplo murales para identificar los conceptos anteriores
- Crear un plan de comunicación basado en los conceptos anteriores

Tiempo: 1 hora

Materiales necesarios: Comunicar una hoja de cálculo de mensajes (apéndice 2), ejemplo mural

Qué hacer:

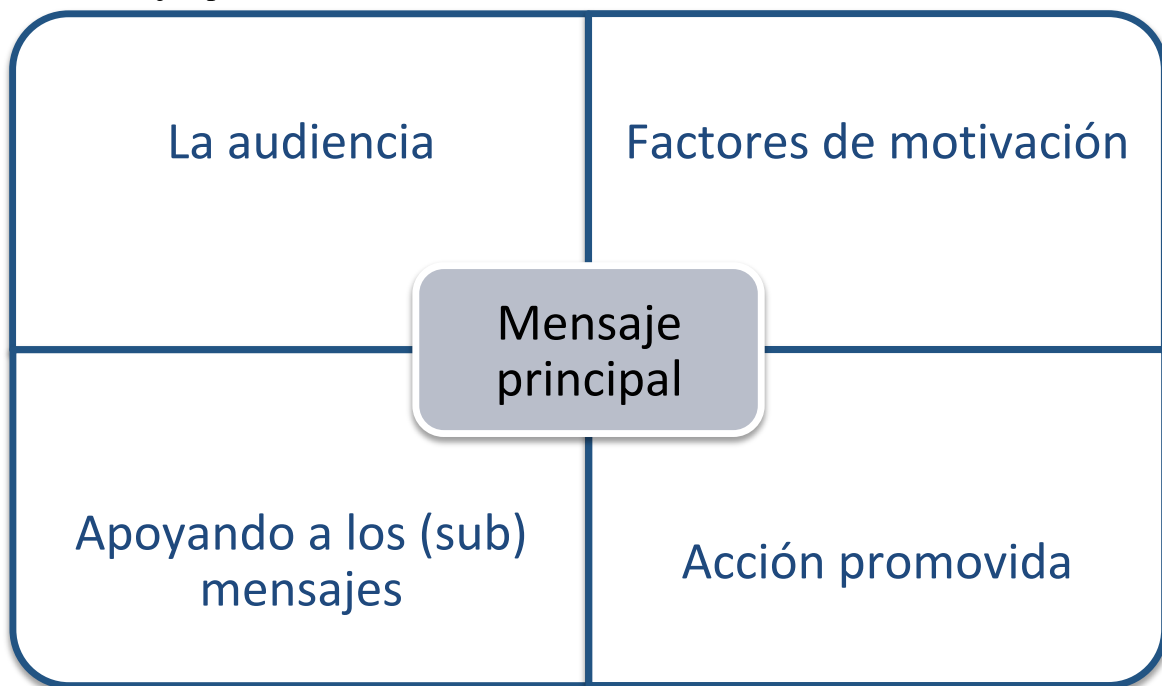
1. Examine el ejemplo mural. Como grupo discutir e identificar lo siguiente: el mensaje principal de este mural, sub-mensajes que apoyan el mensaje principal, el público objetivo, los factores y las acciones propuestas motivador. Crear una versión ampliada

del diagrama 'comunicación de un mensaje' en un tablero blanco o negro de la tarjeta y trabajar juntos para completarla. Alternativamente se podría hacer como un ejercicio en grupos pequeños.

2. Divida el grupo en 2 o 3 grupos pequeños y proporcionar a cada uno una copia de la hoja de cálculo 'comunicación de un mensaje'. Que muestre la 'declaración de visión' y reflexionar sobre lo que significa (véase la actividad 5). Explica que el propósito de esta actividad es crear un plan de comunicación para el mural, que incluye un mensaje principal, mensajes de apoyo, audiencia, factores y acciones propuestas motivador. Dar tiempo a los grupos para crear un plan de comunicación utilizando las hojas.

3. Una vez finalizada cada grupo, pedirles que presenten su plan de comunicación. Cuando todos los grupos hayan presentado sus ideas, elegir una de las ideas o una combinación de ellos para ser el plan de comunicación para el mural.

- Por ejemplo:



Actividad 6: El diseño de su mural

Objetivos:

- Diseñar la apariencia del mural basado en la comunicación de un mensaje principal
- Trabajar en colaboración

Tiempo: Variable

Materiales necesarios: lápices, hojas de trabajo de diseño de murales

Qué hacer:

1. Instruir al grupo que su tarea es trabajar juntos para producir un proyecto de diseño o concepto para el mural
2. Diga al grupo que van a trabajar juntos sin el apoyo de un «facilitador externo»
3. Recuerde al grupo para mantener centrado en el mensaje principal que ha sido haber identificado. (Recuerde la importancia de la visión compartida!).
4. Explique que va a ser de hasta el grupo para determinar cómo van a trabajar juntos para crear un concepto mural. Por ejemplo, pueden querer producir muchos conceptos y luego escoger la mejor opción, o pueden decidir que pedir un pequeño equipo para producir una serie de conceptos para traer de vuelta al grupo.

Actividad 7 - Planificación para la acción

Objetivo:

- Desarrollar un plan práctico para organizar la logística de la creación de un mural
- Utilizar los procesos de planificación participativa

Tiempo: 1 hora

Materiales necesarios: Bolígrafo y papel, la planificación de la carta (véase el apéndice 3)

Qué hacer:

1. El trabajo en grupo para desarrollar un diagrama de acción y la planificación. Asegurar que todo el mundo el grupo tiene un papel que desempeñar. Recuerde que debe reflexionar sobre la declaración de visión global en el desarrollo de las tareas. Consulte el siguiente ejemplo. Un gráfico de la planificación se incluye como Anexo #3.
2. Identificar las tareas que deben completarse
3. Decidir quién en el grupo va a hacer cada tarea
4. Decidir cuando la tarea debe ser completado
5. Determinar los recursos (por ejemplo, equipos) que serán necesarios
6. Use la tabla de planificación de acciones para regular

Declaración de la meta:			
P.ej. Prestada una escalera desde X	Evelyn	Viernes, 15 de de Julio	Escalera

Actividad 8: Reflexión y evaluación (Administrado por Shavone como studio durante y después mural)

Objetivos:

- Reflexionar sobre el pasado con el fin de planificar para el futuro
- Desarrollar la capacidad de escucha

Tiempo: 45 minutos

Materiales necesarios: Copias de la lámina de reflexión

Qué hacer:

1. Invitar a las personas relacionadas con el proyecto del mural a una reunión. Divida a los participantes en parejas.
2. Pedir a cada persona que cierre los ojos y pensar en las actividades que han sido implicados en la creación, mientras que el mural. (Da un par de minutos para hacer esto)
3. Proporcionar cada par con 2 copias de la "hoja de reflexión" (anexos # 4)

- *Debido al proyecto del mural, lo sé ...*

Explicar qué se entiende por cada declaración. La primera declaración se refiere al conocimiento adquirido, la segunda a las habilidades, la tercera a los sentimientos y los valores y la última pregunta se refiere a cómo el proyecto puede haber influido en los participantes acciones o comportamientos futuros.

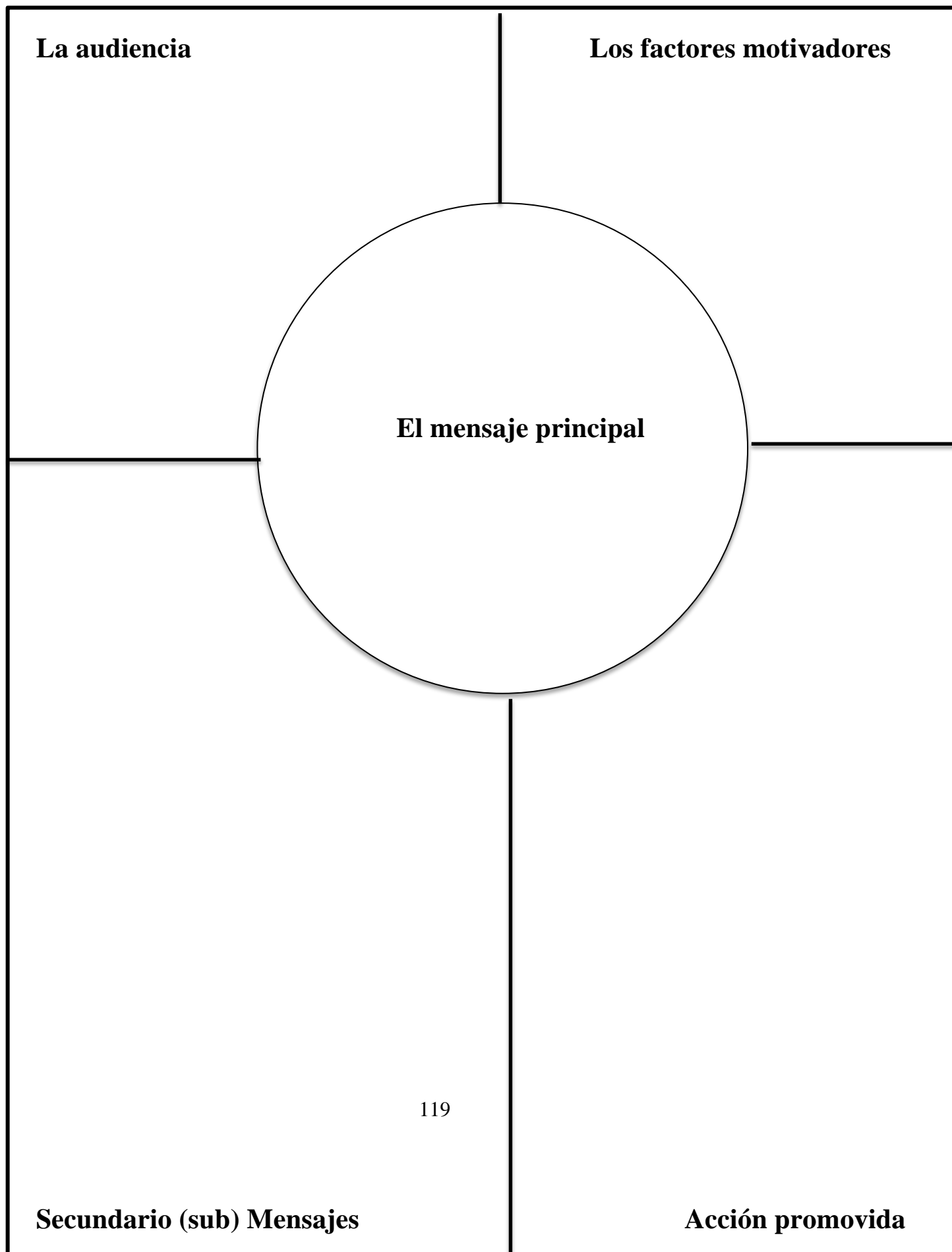
4. Pedir a los pares de entrevistar entre sí (mediante las instrucciones en la hoja de reflexión). El entrevistado debe terminar cada declaración leída por el entrevistador, el cual escribirá las respuestas. El entrevistador debe ser instruido para escuchar con mucha atención y anotar los pensamientos de su pareja sin interrumpir.
5. Cuando todos hayan terminado el ejercicio, pida voluntarios para compartir sus reflexiones " con todo el grupo
6. Pedir a los participantes que rellenar el formulario de evaluación de proyectos, ver adjunto # 5

Información del Contacto			
Organización	Nombre	Correo Electrónico	Número de Teléfono
Muralizando RD	Venus Patricia Díaz		
Muralista (YARD)	Edison “Eddaviel” Montero		
Muralista	Xaivier Ringer		
Muralista (LP)	Gabriel “Gaby” de León		
Muralista (LP)	Daniel Adonis Fernandez		
Muralista/journalist (YARD)	Kilia Llano		
Universidad de Tejas	Shavone Otero		

Appendix C
Anexo 1: Matriz de socios - hoja de trabajo

Personas/Organización	¿Por qué queremos estar involucrados?	¿Cómo vamos a involucrarnos?

Anexo 2: Comunicando un mensaje



Anexo 3: PLANIFICACIÓN DE LA CARTA-Hoja de Trabajo

Declaración de la visión:			
Tarea/Papel	Responsabilidad	Fecha Límite	Recursos

Anexo 4: Proyecto de Diseño del Mural-Hoja de Trabajo

Mensaje Principal	Audiencia Principal
	Proyecto de Diseño

Nombre:	Fecha:
<i>Debido al proyecto del mural, ya sé ...</i>	
<i>Debido al proyecto del mural, ya puedo ...</i>	
<i>Debido al proyecto del mural, me siento ...</i>	
<i>Debido al proyecto del mural, voy a...</i>	

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Vita

Shavone Otero grew up in Albuquerque (“Burque”), New Mexico, where she was the first in her family to attend college and earn a Bachelors of Arts from the University of New Mexico in English with a minor in Chicano Studies. Her experience hearing people’s personal stories as an arts columnist in her Burque community inspired her to understand how the built environment affected people’s livelihoods and socioeconomic mobility, particularly in marginalized spaces. She currently lives in Austin, Texas and enjoys being an active member of the Austin community, partaking in the arts, and DJing with Chulita Vinyl Club (an all Latina vinyl collective). ¡Órale!

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This dissertation was typed by the author.