and may have varying preferences and concerns regarding safety, participation, privacy and other factors. For example, small children might be happiest when they can play close to their caregivers in small spaces, but older ones will need larger spaces for activities such as ball games. Reconstruction presents an opportunity to provide children and their families with control over planning and building their environment in a way that works for them. Specific spatial design elements that need careful consideration by planners and input from children and their families include health and safety features and accessibility.

One way to facilitate children’s participation as stakeholders is to ask them to collect information about their surroundings. Again, differing preferences must be considered. Some girls may be reluctant or unable to voice their opinions in a meeting where boys, men or even older women are present, for example. Children and their families can also be included in core planning groups, where those most interested in the development of their area can represent their community and take part in decision-making.

Placing children’s rights at the heart of urban policymaking, budgeting and planning would ensure that new proposals and completed projects are judged by their impact on children’s lives.

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Figure 4.3. Design scenarios for an informal settlement, showing the scale of change from maximum (high-level funding) to minimum (low-level funding) intervention

Source: Reproduced courtesy of Space Syntax Limited.