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**How to Improve Participatory Mechanisms
In Urban Redevelopment Processes:
The Case of Kowloon East (Hong Kong)**

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Acknowledgements

Abstract

Urban redevelopment processes involve the transformation of land use, social activities, and economic flows. Many social groups are affected by these changes. Some groups may accept planning regulations and projects, whereas others may disagree. Thus, social conflicts may be caused by various circumstances that can arise at different stages of these processes.

To mitigate the social and political implications of urban redevelopment, planners and managers can adopt participatory strategies. The same strategies may be employed by the social groups who are affected by urban development. Such strategies may vary, involving deliberative forums, litigation, disruptive forms of protest, and innovative use of the media to fuel public debate.

Nonetheless, some significant questions remain. For example, the issue of which participatory mechanisms in urban redevelopment processes are more effective and why. This requires identifying which mechanisms can be generalised as policy measures and which are dependent on a particular context; how they should be designed and implemented and under what conditions and principles; and how crucial they are for enhancing the perspective of inclusive democracy, social justice, and environmental sustainability within urban governance.

The present research focused on a specific area of Hong Kong—namely, Kowloon East—to understand the aforementioned issues and to offer concrete suggestions for improving urban redevelopment policies.

First, the report frames the topics of urban redevelopment and public participation within the context and past experiences of Hong Kong. Second, it reviews effective

participatory mechanisms endorsed by social groups who are involved in, or are concerned about, current urban changes. Third, it analyses the explanatory factors of the most salient participatory mechanisms under examination. Finally, the report concludes by presenting a number of policy recommendations that can help to improve participatory planning, both in Kowloon East in particular and throughout Hong Kong, where similar urban redevelopment processes occur.

Abstract in Chinese 中文摘要

城市重建的過程包括土地利用，社會活動和經濟流動的轉變。許多不同的社會群體受到這些變化的影響。雖然一些團體可能接受規劃法規和項目，但其他團體可能不同意。那麼，社會衝突可能發生在過程的不同階段，可能由各種情況引起。為了減輕城市重建的社會和政治影響，規劃者和管理者將進行更多的公眾諮詢。同樣，受城市發展影響的社會群體也可以採用同樣的戰略。這種策略可能會從審議論壇到訴訟，以及從破壞性形式的抗議到創新性地利用媒體來促進公眾討論。然而，重要的問題仍然存在。例如，城市重建過程中的哪些參與機制更有效，為什麼？哪些能夠被概括為政策措施，哪些依賴於特定的環境？如何設計和實施 - 在什麼條件和原則下？它們如何至關重要，以便在城市治理中提高包容性民主，社會正義和環境可持續性的觀點？ 本研究集中於香港九龍東的一個特定地區，以了解上述問題，並提出具體建議，以改善市區重建的政策。 第一，在香港的環境和過往經驗的框架內，勾劃出城市重建和公眾參與的主題。其次，它審查了參與或關心當前城市變化的社會團體所認可的有效參與機制。最後，它分析了檢查中最突出的參與機制的解釋因素。

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1. Introduction: Research Questions and Theoretical Background

Urban redevelopment processes involve the transformation of land use, social activities, and economic flow. Many social groups are affected by these changes. Some groups may accept the planning regulations and projects, whereas others may disagree. Thus, social conflicts may be caused by various circumstances that can arise at different stages of these processes.

To mitigate the social and political implications of urban redevelopment and governance, planners and managers typically adopt participatory strategies. The same applies to the social groups affected. Such strategies may vary, involving deliberative forums, litigation, disruptive forms of protest, and innovative use of the media to fuel public debate.

Thus, the following key questions have prevailed among the researchers in this field:

a) Which participatory mechanisms in urban redevelopment processes are more effective and why?

b) Which participatory mechanisms can be generalised as policy measures and which are dependent on particular contexts?

c) How should they be designed and implemented, and under what conditions and principles?

In the present study, we performed an empirical analysis in the urban area of Kowloon East (KE), Hong Kong, that was motivated by government plans to create a second CBD (i.e., Central Business District), which would entail crucial changes to the urban and social structure of this city.

In addition, we examined effective participatory mechanisms and their possible applications both to this situation and similar processes of urban redevelopment. This involved adopting a theoretical framework in which inclusive democracy, social justice, and environmental sustainability are the main dimensions for evaluating urban governance.

Participatory urban governance

Public participation and urban governance regimes have received increasing attention from numerous academic disciplines over the last two decades (Healey, 1997; Le Galès, 2002; Sclavi et al., 2002; Eckardt et al., 2009; Martínez, 2011). Underlying most contributions are three basic theoretical approaches: pluralism, elitism, and class conflict-based approaches (Alford & Friedman, 1985). The complexity of urban governance has led to the emergence of particular intermediate theories that intertwine these basic frameworks by emphasising, for example, the dominant role of governing coalitions or the actions and empowerment of urban movements (Judge et al., 1995; Friedman, 1998; Hamel et al., 2000; Stone, 2013).

The application of neoliberal policies to urban governance has generated a great amount of criticism regarding the problems of public–private partnerships, the privatisation of public services, outsourcing of public planning and management, entrepreneurial role of state institutions, spatial displacement of nonaffluent populations, and the manipulative nature of civic engagement in urban planning (Swyngedouw, 2005; Marcuse, 2010). The aforementioned academic contributions, by contrast, aim to assess the quality of democratic inclusiveness and the criteria for both enhancing social justice and preventing the environmental damage caused by urban and economic growth (Harvey, 1996; Fung and Wright, 2003a; Fainstein, 2011; Brenner et al., 2011; Künkel et al., 2011).

The shift from 'government' to 'governance' in urban affairs is usually conceived as a change from vertical and authoritarian forms of planning to more horizontal, transparent, accountable, inclusive, and participatory approaches. In this approach, collaboration between multiple public bodies, private interests, and civic organisations,

even based on weak ties, takes precedence over coercion (Davies & Trounstine, 2012, p. 58). Management and implementation obtain priority over planning. Co-ordination, negotiation, and consensus replace one-dimensional decision-making. Long-term processes of metropolitan planning and growth are replaced with short-term, more narrowly and geographically confined urban projects.

'Governance is defined as a process of co-ordinating actors, social groups, and institutions to attain particular goals, discussed and defined collectively in fragmented, uncertain environments. Thus, governance relates to all the institutions, networks, directives, regulations, norms, political and social usages, public and private actors that contribute to the stability of a society and of a political regime, to its orientation, to its capacity to direct, and to its capacity to provide services and to ensure its own legitimacy' (Borraz & Le Galès, 2010, p. 2). Accordingly, urban government is an outcome of a complex and uncertain governance process in which state institutions and officials are merely one element of the actors, rationales, and singular sociospatial circumstances involved. Consequently, analysis should focus on not only the state regulations of the urban development process but also their interactions with the market, social, cultural, and political rationalities at play.

Pierre and Peters (2012, p. 71) defined urban governance as 'the formulation and pursuit of collective goals at the local level of the political system'. They described 'governing mechanisms' as the essence of governance, instead of authority and sanctions imposed by local or supralocal governments; however, some leading roles are certain to be played by established political institutions, state officers, and elected authorities. Additionally, the economic, constitutional, and transnational constraints over local autonomy should examined. Governance, as a 'process of societal steering and coordination', does not replace the government but exhibits some hidden aspects of the governing styles and effective institutional capacities.

To systematically classify the modes of governance, Fung and Wright (2003b, p. 261) proposed the following general distinctions (Fig. 1): either the 'adversarial' versus 'collaborative' form of decision-making or the 'top-down' versus 'participatory' (bottom-up) approaches, depending on the actors making the decisions. 'In adversarial decision-making, interest groups seek to maximize their interests by winning important government decisions over administrative and legal programs and rules, typically through some kind of bargaining process. In collaborative decision-making, by contrast, the central effort is to solve problems rather than to win victories, to discover the broadest commonality of interests rather than to mobilize maximum support for given interests. In top-down governance structures, decisions are made by actors at the peak of an organizational structure and then imposed on lower levels; in participatory governance, decisions involve substantial direct involvement of actors from the bottom tiers' (Fung & Wright, 2003b, p. 261).

The aforementioned 'ideal types' provide guidance for describing specific participatory mechanisms. The empowered participatory governance (EPG) advocated by the authors can be defined as a combination of 'popular participation, decentralized decision-making, practical focus, continuous deliberation and engagement, and cooperation between parties and interests that frequently find themselves on opposite sides of political and social questions' (Fung & Wright, 2003b, p. 263). However, the authors warned about contexts involving preexisting inequalities, with advantages and disadvantages that can undermine the potential of collaborative and participatory mechanisms such as EPG. This suggests that identifying the roots of the social conflicts that contextualise any urban governance process is necessary. Therefore, a thorough analysis of the types of negotiations and processes of institutionalisation can shed light on the specific modes of conflict resolution (Burstein et al., 1995).

Stakeholders, decisions, and acting out

A useful distinction of the forms of public participation in urban matters was first proposed by Arnstein (1969): manipulation, therapy, information, consultation, placation, partnership, delegation, and citizen control. Following further developments in the theory of deliberation and techniques to recruit participants and facilitate public meetings, other authors proposed participatory mechanisms according to dimensions such as: 'Who participates? How do they communicate and make decisions? What is the connection between their conclusions and opinions on one hand and public policy and action on the other?' (Fung, 2006, p. 67). The array of options in each crucial dimension, which allows the design and evaluation of participatory mechanisms of urban governance, are summarised in Tables 2–4.

Siu Yan TAM

Table 1. Governance Structures and Processes

		Character of decision-making process	
		Adversarial	**Collaborative**
Governance structure	**Top-down**	Conventional interest Group politics	Expert/elite problem-solving (e.g. negotiated rulemaking)
	Participatory	Some town meetings	Empowered participatory governance (EPG)

Refrence: Fung and Weight (2003b,p.262)

Table 2. Participant selection methods

Expert Administrators	Elected Representatives	Professional Stakeholders	Lay Stakeholders	Random Selection	Open, Targeted Recruiting	Open Self-Selection	Diffuse Public Sphere
State		*Minipublics*					Public
More Exclusive							**More Inclusive**
			degree of access to participatory mechanisms				

Reference: Fung (2006, p. 6)

Table 3. Modes of communication and decision

Listen as Spectator	Express Preferences	Develop Preferences	Aggregate and Bargain	Deliberate and Negotiate	Deploy Technique and Expertise
Least Intense					**Most Intense**
level of investment, knowledge and commitment required of participants					

Reference: Fung (2006, p. 69)

Table 4. Extent of authority and power

Personal Benefits	Communicative Influence	Advise and Consult	Co-Governance	Direct Authority
Least Authority				**Most Authority**
influence and impact on public policies' and participants' actions				

Reference: Fung (2006, p. 70)

On the one hand, participant selection requires the consideration of underlying conceptions of citizenship. For example, increasing mobility patterns suggest that the citizens affected by a particular urban development may extend far beyond the residents, land owners, private companies, state agencies, and local associations to include day labourers, occasional visitors, tourists, undocumented migrants, temporary dwellers, environmental groups, think tanks, professional organisations, temporary students and artists, illegal traders and dealers, beggars, and recyclers (Borraz & Le Galès, 2010, p. 4).

Schmitter (2000, cited in Swyngedouw, 2005, p. 1994) widened the notion of 'stakeholder' to include other possible categories of 'holders' entitled to participate in a public policy, by either claiming that status or by being assigned it:

- Right-holders participate because they are members of a national political community.
- Space-holders participate because they live in an area affected by the policy.
- Knowledge-holders participate because they have specific knowledge about the concerned matters.
- Shareholders participate because they own part of the assets that will be affected.
- Stakeholders participate because— irrespective of their location or nationality—they might be affected by change.

- Interest-holders participate on behalf of other people because they understand the issues.
- Status-holders participate on behalf of other people because they are given a specific representative role by the authorities.

On the other hand, participatory governance does not necessarily contribute to the regulation or resolution of social conflicts. Bargaining and negotiation processes may end in cooptation and neutralisation of opposing groups. 'Clientelism' and corruption are not only illegal means of attaining advantages but can also seriously constrain the public's views in a hidden manner (Borraz & Le Galès, 2010, p. 5).

Efficiency, democracy, and explanatory factors

Efficiency (or its absence) is typically the major concern raised when addressing participatory mechanisms. Participatory mechanisms are accused of consuming time and money, lacking representativeness, being devoid of necessary technical knowledge, and comprising 'dead-end avenues' involving conflicts of interest. However, owing to the following factors, nonparticipatory governance does not function more efficiently: technocratic decisions without sufficient public scrutiny that are subject to vested economic and partisan interests, lack of transparency and accountability, and strong dependency on hegemonic views of urban growth and global economic flows.

A common standpoint is that participation should be assessed exclusively in terms of its contribution to the democratic quality of the policy process, ignoring any rationalist appraisal focused on its function as a means to an end. Regrettably, this approach would consider equal treatment of all cases of participation. Furthermore, the 'democratic-quality' approach would not incorporate the positive feedback that public participation can produce regarding efficiency, such as speeding the collection of relevant information and innovative solutions provided by citizens (Kuokkanen, 2009, p. 56). Delays in the process or alterations of the initial goals do not necessarily imply direct inefficiency, but instead can involve an improvement of both the content and the outputs of the policy process. Moreover, the legitimacy of the public policy and satisfactory conflict resolution are viewed as gains that are achieved through participatory procedures, in addition to their promotion of inclusive democracy (Forester, 1999; Sclavi et al., 2002).

The most controversial aspect of the literature on public participation is the explanation of factors that are at stake. The relevant studies can be categorised into those that examine material trade-offs (e.g., compensations paid for displacement, professional and corporate interests in actual and potential rents, and economic functions played by the area under redevelopment) and those that focus on the sociocultural aspects involved (e.g., sense of place, preservation of group identities and existing social ties, culturally specific traditional retail activities, various evaluations and preferences regarding quality of life and desired environments, the social meaning of public spaces, and the democratic legitimacy of the planning procedures).

The key question that arises in this approach is to what extent social inequalities and differences can be transformed during the participatory process to remove conditions that impede the exercise of public participation as a meaningful and valuable process with positive outcomes for all.

According to our review of the relevant literature, three fundamental gaps in this field should be filled.

As previously mentioned, the social context of both material and sociocultural conditions of life experienced by different groups affected by and interested in the urban redevelopment process should be examined in every particular case. For example, women, children, disabled people, part-time workers, and cleaning staff live and partake in the urban space in different manners that involve a variety of perspectives. In some successful cases, participatory mechanisms have been designed by taking into account such social diversity (Montgomery et al., 1990; Healey, 1996; Forester, 1999; Fung & Wright, 2003a; Beaumont & Loopmans, 2008).

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The key question that arises in this approach is to what extent social inequalities and differences can be transformed during the participatory process to remove conditions that impede the exercise of public participation as a meaningful and valuable process with positive outcomes for all. This implies that the participatory process should be explained by emphasising the central role of intersectional class conditions (e.g., income, public resources and facilities, social capital, and networks based on trust and informal bonds, working conditions, and educational attainment) as determining constraints of democratic capacities and rights.

Some authors have argued that the participatory processes and mechanisms themselves create a particular institutional environment that can reorganise the power relations at play. For example, Lowndes et al. (2006) focused on the prevailing 'rules-in-use', whereas Becher (2010) drew upon the types of 'intermediation'—namely, representation, gatekeeping, and coordination. Institutional arrangements can create opportunities, enabling the expression of civic organisations, the provision of deliberative spaces, the defining committee types and flexible rules for voting, and the achievement of consensus. Thus, as a method, participation

necessitates the research of the micropolitics of these power relationships according to their effects on the development of urban governance and the concrete social groups involved. Consequently, local histories of contentious politics and former experiences of civic engagement should also serve to drive the analysis from a comprehensive perspective (Martínez, 2011).

The final dimension that has not been sufficiently appreciated in the explanatory frameworks of public participation is the sociospatial dimension. Urban space is produced under specific circumstances and within a dominant and more general mode of economic production (Soja, 1980; Harvey, 1996). From this perspective, spatial structures and infrastructures depend on how various social groups interact in their establishment, development, and transformation. For example, vacancy rates, far from being an indicator of a natural or merely economic behaviour, can be produced, regulated, and managed according to the interactions between the groups involved. The same holds true for the number of factories or industrial activities in a multifunctional area, decisions regarding bicycle lanes or pedestrian paths, and the proportion of public housing in new constructions. Environmental issues constitute a terrain of

overt and increasing contestation facing any prospective urban development. We believe that these aspects are crucial for understanding both the context and content of participatory mechanisms; however, conclusions regarding their influence may limit the scope of generalisation of institutional designs because no two urban areas are identical in a given city or metropolis with respect to their geographical location and functional combination.

Public participation in postindustrial areas

Regeneration of former industrial areas, particularly in Western countries, is one of the urban settings in which participatory planning has been implemented. The following two examples illustrate these precedents.

The French 'Lyon Confluence' project was intended to redevelop an area located on the fringes of Lyon city centre. It was previously dedicated to textile manufacturing and logistical activities in connection to the port. In addition, it hosted a small portion of the city's residential buildings. Until the late 1990s, the economic activity in the district was declining. Many industrial sites closed down and relocated to other areas. Numerous land holdings became vacant, and many abandoned buildings and properties became available (Kazimierczak, 2012). In 1999, the Metropolis of Lyon appointed SPL, a public redevelopment company, to oversee designing and conducting studies on a proposal to develop the area into a mixed-use area with the following features: 1) ecofriendly housing, 2) office spaces for multiple business purposes, and 3) large, attractive public

spaces. 'The revitalization process aims to restore the accessibility of this zone as well as to engage its space with an attractive range of services' (Kazimierczak, 2012, p. 16). Furthermore, the project emphasised the concept of a 'walkable city' by promoting bicycles, pedestrian pathways, and ecofriendly transportation between areas.

A large exhibition in 1998/99 marked the beginning of a continuous process of public engagement. The first public consultation received approximately 24,000 visitors and more than 1000 comments and suggestions (Lyon Confluence, 2016). Following this, two phases of regulatory consultations were created for further public engagement exercises. In 2003, public engagement exercises began with four large-scale public consultation meetings aimed at obtaining local inhabitants' perspectives regarding the use of public space. Moreover, six themed workshops were organised in conjunction with the tour exhibition 'My City Tomorrow' and an interactive online platform to enable the collection of more public suggestions. Additional consultation workshops were necessary in the following years (Lyon Confluence, 2016). For example, in the spring of 2016, a consultation named 'Let's open Perrache' received 247 written comments on the issues of public spaces and transportation systems. The topic of housing was also open to public comment. To facilitate accurate communication, a participative monitoring committee was established in 2006. This provided a forum to enable the members to receive the concerns from all the stakeholders in the neighbourhood. This committee organised meetings three times a year. In addition to the participation of the general public, consultation workshops were conducted for professionals to exchange ideas. The Lyon

Confluence project consistently used numerous social media platforms as a two-way communication system between authorities and other stakeholders, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, websites, and mobile apps.

Scholars evaluating the process observed that although the public authorities played a central steering role, the project provided sufficient power to the community in order to enable them to voice their concerns. Most comments and opinions collected from the consultation with local residents and users of the neighbourhood, irrespective of the form of citizen participation, were directly applied in the plans of SPL and the public authorities: 'Thus the participation mechanism has enabled the expression of fears and resistances of citizens vis-à-vis the project.' (Viel et al., 2012, p. 33). According to another researcher, 'The Lyon Confluence project illustrates a double movement: dialogue comes from above because it stems from a strong government commitment but it also emanates largely from the inhabitants and their mobilisations' (Durel, 2007, p. 61). Durel believed that the government operated outside the legal framework of regulated participation in order to guarantee the legitimacy and success of the project through a continuous and in-depth consultation.

Another appropriate example to analyse is the regeneration of east Manchester, England. This area of Manchester was an important base for warehouses and traditional manufacturing industries. Economic decline and deindustrialization in the late 20th century turned east Manchester into one of the United Kingdom's poorest and most disadvantaged areas (Blakeley &Evans, 2010; MCC, 2008). This resulted in a low-demand land

market and numerous brownfield, vacant, and underutilised properties (Farzanch, 2011). In mid-1998, the local government launched an ambitious programme of urban regeneration in the face of high unemployment rates and social exclusion (Carter, 2013). The project involved five main stakeholders (Manchester City Council, 2008): New East Manchester Limited (NEM, a large urban regeneration company), Manchester City Council (MCC), North West Development Agency, Homes and Communities Agency, and the residents' communities of east Manchester.

Blakeley and Evans stated that, at the beginning of the process, 'MCC was joined in the task by two new regeneration structures: the New East Manchester Urban Regeneration Company (NEM) and the New Deal for Communities (NDC)' (Blakeley and Evans, 2010, p. 326). As one of the largest urban regeneration companies nationally, NEM was mainly responsible for providing direction to the regeneration proposals in a position of leadership and for securing funds from both public and private sectors. Moreover, it provided opportunities and mechanisms for the engagement of the local population. In 1998, the NDC was established to improve the regeneration project through inter-agency partnership and community involvement. Rather than prioritising strategic regeneration in east Manchester, the NDC emphasized community involvement. 'In 2010 NDC merged with NEM. While NDC empowered local residents to become involved and to challenge MCC, both NDC and NEM staff were seconded from MCC. The independence of regeneration structures like NDC and NEM from MCC was limited.' (Blakeley and Evans, 2010, p. 326) According to external researchers, 'There are a multiplicity of opportunities in east

Manchester for residents to participate, ranging from organisations with a user-led ethos such as the tenants' organization of Eastlands Homes, organisations targeted at specific population groups such as the Older Citizens' Forum, to structures established by service providers such as the NDC task groups on crime, housing and the environment' (Blakeley & Evans, 2009, p. 17).

This participatory process also included a local newspaper established by NEM, which enabled the project managers to reach approximately 73,000 readers in the area, mainly for information purposes and for inviting people to attend participatory events. Furthermore, an electronic system, Eastserve, was created by NEM to enhance communication channels (Hacher & Van Dijk, 2000). Notably, operations in each area of east Manchester were driven by a neighbourhood planning approach, initiated by the local council. 'The Neighbourhood Planning (NP) process advocated by MCC appears to be inclusive and participatory. The procedure begins with the delivery of leaflets to all houses in a given area inviting consultation and encouraging the formation of a residents steering group.' (Blakely & Evans, 2010, p. 330) The representative groups operated in close partnership with the existing tenants' and residents' associations. 'These examples of participatory opportunities are numerically more significant than such formal structures as the respective Boards of the NDC and NEM on which local residents are formally represented after a process of indirect election' (Blakely & Evans, 2009, p. 18). During the process, only 8.7% of the local residents said that no opportunity to get involved was available. In addition, the establishment of local area partnerships (LAPs) to serve as workshops was significant in facilitating interactions with

local residents by integrating the authorities and service providers into the discussions. 'Local residents informed us that the Crime and Community Safety and the Housing LAPs are well attended and influential. LAPs allow residents to raise issues of concern which affect their lives. They have now been replaced and strengthened by Independent Advisory Groups.' (Blakeley & Evans, 2010, p. 330)

According to Farzanch (2011), the east Manchester regeneration project is a flagship example, in which public participation was included as an integral dimension. By contrast, other scholars were more critical: 'Some of the devices adopted in East Manchester to involve local residents enact participation in a symbolic way. It is particularly notable that types of formalised representation, such as residents sitting on the NEM Board, are not highly rated by participants, and meetings are characterised as information-receiving events.' (Blakely & Evans, 2010, p. 330) They confirmed that NEM introduced extensive consultation activities in 2007 (e.g., 30,000 households were consulted by post and 800 people attended meetings) but mostly to publicise their strategic regeneration framework.

Public participation in Kowloon East

The case of the redevelopment of KE is markedly specific to Hong Kong given the qualities of the area, which has a predominantly postindustrial profile. Moreover, the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) was not initially involved in the planning and management process. Notably, previous experiences of public participation in Hong Kong provide a crucial context, owing to these events having been highly

controversial and unsatisfactory for many of the social groups involved. The definition of stakeholders and the conceptual approach to public participation may be underlying problems of these urban governance processes, as reported in the literature on social conflicts and protest (Loh et al., 2003; Lam & Tong, 2007; Ma, 2009; Smart & Lam, 2009; Chu, 2010) and redevelopment and real estate markets in Hong Kong (Jessop & Sum, 2000; Adams & Hastings, 2001; Ng, 2002; Smart & Lee, 2003; Poon, 2006; Ley & Teo, 2013).

To avoid similar shortcomings, we used the aforementioned theoretical framework as an approach to reviewing the conventional system of public participation in urban redevelopment in Hong Kong, and in KE in particular.

In this study, KE was defined as the urban areas consisting of the former Kai Tak airport (closed in 1998) and the increasingly deindustrialised areas of Kowloon Bay and Kwun Tong. Residential functions remain very scarce within this area (except for recently built estates in Kai Tak) given that most of the previous working class inhabitants have been accommodated in the surrounding neighbourhoods of Kwun Tong (e.g., Ngau Tau Kok and Sau Mau Ping), Wong Tai Sin (e.g., Diamond Hill, Lok Fu, and Wong Tai Sin), and Kowloon City districts. Commercial and office buildings have been gradually replacing many areas previously devoted to a buoyant manufacturing and storage sector from the 1950s to the 1980s. Despite the high economic specialisation of Kowloon Bay and Kwun Tong, tight connections with the neighbouring residents remain. Furthermore, Kai Tak is, in fact, a new urban development area, considering the void that remains as a result of the airport closure; however, it is

officially included under the umbrella of the 'strategic planning' of KE.

Although the Kwun Tong Redevelopment Plan was already defined in 2007, the urban redevelopment of KE was officially announced in the 2011 Policy Address. After the introduction of the 'Energizing Kowloon East' scheme (with the Energizing Kowloon East Office [EKEO] established in 2012), successive Energizing Kowloon East Conceptual Master Plans (CMPs) have been proposed. These plans explicitly aimed to increase the number of 'quality office spaces' available in Hong Kong, in accordance with the goal of enhancing the global competitiveness of the city. Since its inception, the EKEO has promoted the revision of land use, new urban designs, and plans to ameliorate all types of infrastructure and public spaces. To date, the two most salient examples of the actions undertaken in the area are the opening to the public of the Kwun Tong promenade (located beneath the Kwun Tong express highway flyover) in 2010 and the inauguration of the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal in 2013. Moreover, other minor measures for the improvement of pedestrian mobility or the organisation of art festivals have been initiated by the EKEO; further urban projects are currently being undertaken, such as the Environmentally Friendly Linkage System (EFLS), and those involving seawater cooling systems, support for green buildings, and the preservation of industrial heritage by its integration 'with creative design and public art'.

According to EKEO, 'The master plan will affect the lives of individuals, whose expectations for their future communities should be respected.' This report explores the scope, achievements, and limitations of their public engagement strategy.

2. Research Methodology and Data Collection

T his study was conducted by collecting both secondary and first-hand information. It mainly followed a qualitative approach. Discourses produced by the various stakeholders were the principal data sources. Several techniques were combined to achieve the research objectives. A critical perspective regarding analysis was adopted to review the academic studies, sociopolitical contexts, and materials gathered over the research period (September 2015–November 2016).

The secondary sources of research are as follows:

- Official documents, records, and reports
- Mass and social media news and online videos
- Documents produced by civic and private organisations
- Academic articles and books

The primary sources of research are as follows:

- Semistructured interviews of members of various social groups
- On-site observations, records, and transcripts of participatory events (i.e., workshops, exhibitions, discussions, and forums) and on-site visits
- Academic seminars
- Self-made video documentary and one deliberative workshop

The information gathered from the aforementioned primary and secondary sources forms the basis for fulfilling the following research goals:

- To learn lessons from past and present participatory experiences in Hong Kong, KE, and elsewhere.
- To contextualise the sociocultural and sociospatial circumstances of the groups involved.
- To identify the different types of participatory mechanisms adopted in KE.
- To distinguish the relevant explanatory factors of the participatory process.

In the following sections, a more detailed account is provided of the data collected.

<u>Data related to traffic and pedestrianisation improvement schemes</u>

The main targets of observation were the workshops organised by EKEO and the commissioned consultants to improve pedestrianisation, walkability, and traffic in Kowloon Bay and Kwun Tong. In addition to the documents collected and our participation in the workshops (2014–2016), we also attended conferences, fieldtrips, and exhibitions related to these topics. In particular, we gathered data from the following:

- EKEO-AECOM

  Kowloon Bay Business Area (KBBA) Pedestrian Environment Improvement Feasibility Study

  Stage 1 Public Engagement Digest

  http://www.ekeo.gov.hk/kbba-pedestrian/en/doc/digestr9.pdf

  Stage 2 Public Engagement Digest

  http://www.ekeo.gov.hk/kbba-pedestrian/en/doc/PE2_ED_1105_FINAL.pdf

  Stage 3 Public Engagement Digest

  http://www.ekeo.gov.hk/kbba-pedestrian/en/doc/AEC-3rd-Digest-r7-0516.pdf

- EKEO-ARUP:

  Pedestrian Environment Improvement Scheme for Transformation of Kwun Tong Business Area.

  Stage 1 Public Engagement Digest

  http://www.walkablekwuntong.hk/file/public_engagement_digest.pdf

  Stage 2 Public Engagement Digest

  http://www.walkablekwuntong.hk/file/pe2_digest.pdf

  Stage 3 Public Engagement Digest

  http://www.walkablekwuntong.hk/file/pe3_digest.pdf

- List of Participants of KBBA Pedestrian Environment Improvement Feasibility Study workshop in Stages 1–3.

- List of Participants of Pedestrian Environment Improvement Scheme for Transformation of Kwun Tong Business Area workshop in Stages 1–2.

- 2013 EKEO–Civic Exchange Exhibition and on-site visit

- 'Engaging the public in improving walkability' (October 2016), a paper presented by EKEO at the Walk 21 Conference

Data gathered from EKEO

EKEO has published numerous documents related to its redevelopment strategies in KE, including the four stages of the CMP. The brochures, booklets, exhibitions, and publications on their website were used as resources. In particular, the following sources were analysed:

- Energizing Kowloon East Office Conceptual Master Plan 1.0
  http://www.ekeo.gov.hk/en/conceptual_master_plan/master_plan_1/index.html

  Conceptual Plan 2.0
  http://www.ekeo.gov.hk/en/conceptual_master_plan/master_plan_2/index.html

  Conceptual Plan 3.0
  http://www.ekeo.gov.hk/en/conceptual_master_plan/master_plan_2/index.html

  Conceptual Plan 4.0
  http://www.ekeo.gov.hk/en/conceptual_master_plan/master_plan_4/index.html

- Environmentally Friendly Linkage System connecting Kowloon East pamphlet (October 2011)
  http://www.ekeo.gov.hk/filemanager/content/publications/common/files/EFLS_leaflet.pdf

- Energizing Kowloon East Pamphlet (June 2012)
  http://www.ekeo.gov.hk/filemanager/content/publications/common/files/Energizing_Kowloon_East_pamphlet.pdf\

- Energizing Kowloon East pamphlet (June 2013)
  http://www.ekeo.gov.hk/filemanager/content/publications/common/files/EKEO_pamphlet_CMP_3.pdf

- Energizing Kowloon East pamphlet (January 2015)
  http://www.ekeo.gov.hk/en/conceptual_master_plan/master_plan_4/CMP4.0_final.pdf

- Kowloon East Cultural Map (August 2013)http://www.ekeo.gov.hk/filemanager/content/publications/common/files/Kowloon_East_Cultural_Map.pdf

- The Civil Service Newsletter Issue No. 86 (March 2013) http://www.csb.gov.hk/hkgcsb/csn/csn86/86e/pdf/14_16.pdf

- Energizing Kowloon East pamphlet (October 2011) http://www.ekeo.gov.hk/filemanager/content/master_plan/common/images/master_plan_1.jpg

- Pamphlet 'The Spirit of Creation—Study on Industrial Cultural of Kowloon East' (September 2014) http://www.ekeo.gov.hk/filemanager/content/publications/common/files/Pamphlet_of_TSC.pdf

- Advocacy Statement of 'The Spirit of Creation—Study on Industrial Cultural of Kowloon East' (September 2014) http://www.ekeo.gov.hk/filemanager/content/publications/common/files/Advocacy_Statement_of_TSC.pdf

- Energizing Kowloon East pamphlet (January 2015) http://www.ekeo.gov.hk/en/conceptual_master_plan/master_plan_4/CMP4.0_final.pdf

- Three working meetings with EKEO (2014, 2015, and 2016)

Data from in-depth and semistructured interviews

For primary data collection, we conducted 44 recorded in-depth interviews with different stakeholders connected to the KE redevelopment projects from September 2015 to November 2016. Moreover, we conducted more than 10 informal interviews with 'creative professionals' involved in *Ngautrip* events. The interviewees included the following: civic groups (involved in fields such as environment, transportation, urban development, and sports), think tanks, district and legislative councillors, local residents and workers, artists and creative professionals, professional organisations, small business operators, and EKEO. Some potential interviewees (e.g., staff involved in the Kai Tak Office [KTO]) refused to hold interviews with our team. The exact figures are summarised in Table 5.

Table 5. Interviews of stakeholders

Stakeholders types	Numbers of Interviewees
Civic Groups (CG)	12
District (DC)& Legislative Councillors (LC)*	4
Think Tanks (TT)	3
Creative Professionals (CP)	6
EKEO	2
Professional Consultants (PC) and Organisations (PO)	4
Small and Medium Businesses (SM)	3
Residents (R)	4
Residents & Workers (RW)	3
Workers (W)	3
Total	44

*One is a LC candidate; not elected

Data from guest speakers

To elucidate the public engagement process in Hong Kong, we invited three guest speakers to share their experiences of various aspects of Hong Kong redevelopment projects and public engagement. All presentations and discussions were conducted at the City University of Hong Kong (CityU) and involved professors of the Urban Research Group, PhD students, and interested members of the public.

- On April 18, 2016, Ms. Iris Tam Siu-ying, former managing director of the Urban Renewal Authority, presented her experiences of urban renewal and citizen participation activities. She introduced a 'tailor-made' public engagement strategy for the redevelopment of the declining areas of Hong Kong.

- A presentation by Mr. Tobias Zuser from the Hong Kong Baptist University was held on February 25, 2016. His speech was titled 'Hidden Agenda, cultural policy and urban development in Hong Kong'. He discussed the relationships between urban space, urban redevelopment, and cultural policy by focusing on the 'underground' live-music venue Hidden Agenda located in KE.

- Dr. Melissa Cate Christ from The Polytechnic University of Hong Kong and Benjamin Chiu-hang Sin from Caritas Hong Kong presented their knowledge and involvement regarding the Pokfulam village. Their talk 'Present, Past, Future: Collaborative action for a resilient Pokfulam village' was held on April 7, 2016. They focused on their achievements and lessons about public engagement while being engaged in the attempts to transform Pokfulam village from a 'squatters' settlement' into a resilient 'village'.

At another event we organised at CityU (19 Nov. 2016) with the intention of holding a deliberative workshop only three external guests attended (one planner from EKEO and two members of civic groups); they shared their various views on KE and participation mechanisms with our researchers.

All the aforementioned presentations and discussions were recorded, transcribed, and analysed as part of the primary first-hand discursive materials collected.

Data from official and legal documents

Official and legal documents included the following:

- Cap (545) - Land (Compulsory Sale for Redevelopment) Ordinance.

- Cap (124) - Lands Resumption Ordinance

- Cap (531) - Protection Of The Harbour Ordinance

- Cap (131) - Town Planning Ordinance

- Policy Address 2011-12, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016

- Urban Renewal Strategy

- Urban Renewal Authority Ordinance

- Comprehensive Feasibility Study For the Revised Scheme of South East Kowloon Development

- Legislative Council: Planning History of the Kai Tak Development

- Legislative Council: Legislative Council Panel on Development -Progress Report of Energizing Kowloon East Office and its Continuing Operation

- Legislative Council: Legislative Council Brief - People First: A District-Based and Public Participatory Approach to Urban Renewal and Urban Renewal Strategy

- Kai Tak on the Move (2016)

Data from corporate websites and mass media

- Kowloon East becomes a base of insurance industry [九龍東變保險基地]. (2012, August 16). *Oriental Daily*.

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- Hong Kong Culture Monitor. (2013, May 10) *Hong Kong Culture Monitor: When an outdated city planning meet non-outdated industrial buliding- impact of revializing Industrial Buldings in Kowloon East (香港文化監察：當過時規劃遇上不過時的工廈──活化工廈對九龍東的影響)*. Retrievedfrom http://www.inmediahk.net/node/1016526

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- Liu, S.T. (2013, November 12). 土地樓房短缺是港營商環境最大挑戰港府九大計劃增供商用地. [Shortage of land and buildings is the largest challenge to Hong Kong business environment. The government of Hong Kong increase supply of commercial land in 9 plans.] *Hong Kong Commercial Daily*. A01.

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- New Art Space under the the Flyover at Kwun Tong. Artists worry it becoming a "cultural fish tank" [觀塘天橋底再建藝文空間藝術家憂變文化金魚缸]. (2015, February 02). *Standnews*

- Living in kung tong . (2015, March 19). Energizing Kowloon East, the White Elephant of Art [起動九龍東文藝大白象]. Retrieved from http://www.inmediahk.net/node/1032544

- Living in kung tong . (2015, March 20). *Ten sins of Energizing Kowloon East [起動九龍東十宗罪]*. Retrieved from http://www.inmediahk.net/node/1032588a

- Project of improving back alleys in Kowloon East experiences objection, Living in KT, Victor Yuen: Smart City is not needed but an open city [起動九龍東美化後巷計劃反對聲音不絕「活在觀塘」原人：「不要聰明城市，要開明城市]. (2015, March 22). *Arts-news*.

- Rejecting Art When it Brings Imperfection to Life - Kwun Tong musician Ahkok Wong responds to participants in Back alley project [拒絕藝術，當它為生活帶來不完美 — 觀塘音樂人黃津珏回應後巷計劃參與者]. (2015, April 2). *Arts-news.*

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- Terms of Operation on the art space under Kwun Tong Flyover are criticized as too harsh. EKEO forbidden the awarded tender to visit. [觀塘天橋底藝術空間營運條款被指苛刻「起動九龍東」禁中標者受訪]. (2016, January 15). *Standnews*.

- Tender Disputes on Art Space under Kwun Tong Flyover. EKEO: the tender is no problem, and no tender was stopped from visiting [觀塘橋底藝術空間招標爭議　起動九龍東：標書無問題　無阻中標者受訪]. (2016, January 16). *Standnews*.

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Data from Ngautrip

We participated in two 'Ngautrip' events organised by the local 'arts community' on October 25, 2015 and September 25, 2016. Informal discussions were held with many small business owners, local artists, and the arts community (e.g., designers, musicians, theatre performers, and instructors in leather, wood, and cooking workshops). Moreover, we attended music events at Hidden Agenda and various festivals in the Kwun Tong promenade.

https://www.facebook.com/ngautrip/

3. Data Analysis

3.1 Local Context

This section presents the main traits of the context in which public engagement occurs in Hong Kong and their implications for the redevelopment of KE.

3.1.1 Public Engagement in Hong Kong's Urban Affairs

Public engagement in Hong Kong's policy process has been reviewed by a number of scholars (Fong, 2001; Ng, 2008; Cheung, 2011). In particular, environmental and urban matters within public policies have enjoyed substantial media attention because of activist campaigns and government responses. Moreover, broader social movements advocating for the democratisation of the political regime (in particular, the protests staged in 2003, 2012, and 2014 challenging the introduction of national security legislation, patriotic education, and the restricted nomination of the chief executive, respectively) coincided with the increasing engagement of Hong Kong society in public affairs (Ortman, 2015; Cheng, 2015).

Since the colonial era, participatory mechanisms have expanded substantially. Despite being subject to widespread criticism, some of these mechanisms eventually incorporated more activists' views and improved their regulatory provisions. Specific mechanisms such as

the elected but almost powerless District Councils (DCs) or the array of multiple statutory and advisory boards remained less accessible to the grassroots and under the scope of governmental control. Moreover, public consultation exercises were used by the colonial government before the 1997 handover of Hong Kong to the People's Republic of China as a means 'to legitimise policy decisions in an undemocratic political system' (Cheung, 2011, p. 114).

A yearly average of 20 public consultation processes was registered between 1997 and 2009 (Cheung, 2011, p. 114), a figure which has subsequently steadily grown. However, a parallel aspect, involving consultation fatigue and distrust of the Hong Kong government has also been observed. According to a recent study, 'Government consultation exercises are cumbersome and not user-friendly for youths. […] Consultation documents are lengthy and difficult to understand. […] It is like putting on a show. […] The government is all talk and no action.' (The Standard, 1 February, 2016) Moreover, Cheung confirmed that 'the government has dominated these exercises by setting the agendas and policy options for consultation, controlling the timing, and selectively reviewing the feedback from the community. […] There is no real dialogue between the officials and the people. The public are passively engaged and do not know whether their views have been incorporated or rejected, and on what grounds' (Cheung, 2011, pp. 115–116).

In 2007, the Hong Kong government acknowledged the dominant top-down

approach in policy-making while expressing its intention to reform. This led, for example, to the appointment of more activists and civic society representatives in consultative committees. Rising awareness of the need to preserve heritage buildings in close connection with emerging localist identity politics over the past two decades has challenged some of the URA projects. For example, following the claims of civic groups, the renewal of the Central Police Station Compound and the Police Married Quarters was partially modified (Cheung, 2011, p. 118). However, other renewal operations such as the removal of the Star Ferry Pier and the Queens' Pier despite protests that even entailed hunger strikes in the summer of 2007 were less satisfactory for activists. A case of more successful bottom-up influence was the early struggle to halt reclamation works in Victoria Harbour, which included lawsuits, objections to statutory plans, and the inclusion of environmental activists and professionals in the Harbourfront Commission (HC, previously known as the Harbourfront Enhancement Committee [HEC]). Discussions within this board contributed substantially to the alteration of the initial plans for the redevelopment of Kai Tak (the location of the former international airport), which preempted more reclamation (Ng, 2008).

Despite the successes and failures of the civic involvement in the protection of Victoria Harbour, it has been observed that

'a top-down approach in identifying redevelopment projects with little community input undermining local characteristics and residents' social network;

'the HEC experiments have provided living laboratories to help interested participants understand planning issues [such as] how envisioning should be done, reaching a deeper understanding of sustainability indicators and […] how to formulate spatial plans that reflect lived experiences and aspirations through more open, transparent and engaging planning processes. […] However [they] seem to be only a form of tokenistic participation, in that the HEC has failed to institutionalize other lasting changes' (Ng, 2008, p. 180). Therefore, advisory bodies with no legal capacities for pushing forward and enforcing their guidelines are always at risk of being dismissed by planning authorities or even by the highest ranks of the government. Kai Tak is also discussed here as an example of vibrant public engagement whose proposals were often 'screened out or downplayed because of their impracticability in the eyes of the vetting government officials' (Ng, 2008, p. 180).

Since 2001, the URA has been a key player in the urban redevelopment processes, continuing the work of the former Land Development Corporation (LDC), which was established in 1988. Up to June 2016, the URA implemented a total of 59 projects (URA, 2016, p. 16). Because of its enhanced capacity to initiate land resumption and to transfer construction rights to private developers or to partner with them, the URA notably sped up the redevelopment process (La Grange & Pretorius, 2016). Rapidly rising real estate prices caused by the government's management of land leaseholds enabled the URA to prosper financially. Regarding citizen participation, the central point at stake in URA-driven project deals was the economic compensation paid to residents, owners, and shop operators.

To address widespread dissatisfaction with their policies, the URA conducted a participatory review of their strategy in which they first collected the main criticisms aimed at their past activities: 'a top-down approach in identifying redevelopment projects with little community input undermining local characteristics and residents' social network; an imbalance in its 4R business strategy (i.e., Redevelopment, Rehabilitation, Revitalisation, and pReservation) with too much emphasis put on redevelopment; a lack of compensation options for affected property owners whose aspirations for maintaining their social network or sharing the potential value of redevelopment could not be met' (LegCo, 2010, p. 2). To respond to these criticisms, new measures were introduced, such as 'compassionate treatment' for the 'needy elderly owners who are relying on the rental of their rented out properties for a living' (LegCo, 2010, p. 10). Although compensations to former dwellers remain the main driver of civic engagement, the URA explicitly endorsed additional mechanisms for the improvement of participation such as District Advisory Committees; 'freezing surveys'; research

on community opinions prior to the announcement of new projects, discussions, and community workshops; liaison with DCs; and conventional public consultations.

One of the most salient cases in which the URA intensively engaged the community was the renewal of Kwun Tong Town Centre (also known as K7), which started with focus groups and interviews with 62 stakeholders in 2005 (Law et al., 2010, p. 24). These were followed by District Advisory Committees, 32 meetings between URA and specific stakeholders, 'participatory design' workshops, road shows, 39 briefing sessions at exhibitions, and explanatory publications. Nevertheless, a careful assessment of the whole process concluded that 'the compensation issue has haunted the whole redevelopment project' (Law et al., 2010, p. 36) despite the abundant participatory measures adopted. The consultation process was 'generally regarded as quite adequate. Apart from the general mistrust towards the genuineness of URA in the consultation process by advocacy groups, the major criticism is related to the lack of transparency in the financial projection.' (Law et al., 2010, p. 29) Furthermore, some conflicts regarding

the relocation of small-shop retailers, transport facilities, and the loss of social networks because of the displacement of neighbours led to dissatisfaction among some involved parties (e.g., https://kwuntong.wordpress.com).

In a more controversial case involving Lee Tung Street (also known as 'Wedding Cards Street' and H15, which is the URA acronym), first the LDC and later the URA launched a redevelopment project that was highly contested for not being sufficiently justified—the buildings were not older than 30 years, central location for small retailers was quite convenient, with many enjoying strong community ties. In addition to the usual struggle to obtain fair compensation, with the endorsement of the Wan Chai District Council a civic group called 'H15 Concern Group' submitted an alternative development plan to the Town Planning Board (TPB) that was inspired by principles of preservation and rehabilitation rather than renewal and redevelopment. This plan would have enabled traditional residents and shop owners to return to the area after the work had ended. However, the TPB 'rejected the plan on grounds that it was technically flawed and had insufficient documentation. The board also questioned the feasibility as more than half of the property rights now belong to the URA.' (Wissink, 2015, p. 330) Opportunities for civic participation narrowed down to the continuing acquisition of property rights and final land resumption by the URA. Before the demolition works were completed, activists attempted legal appeals, candlelight vigils, hunger strikes, and even clashed with the police. 'Lee Tung Street presents a painful example of the dispossession of underprivileged groups by capital; of a city for profit, not for people. In Hong Kong's expert-led development regime both

appropriation and participation by inhabitants are under pressure.' (Wissink, 2015, p. 332)

Gentrification, involving the displacement of poor households from old neighbourhoods and the transformation of these neighbourhoods into up-market middle- and upper-class communities is regarded as one of the consequences of the URA projects (La Grange & Pretorius, 2016, pp. 507–508). Furthermore, the legacy of housing stock that was poorly built 30–50 years ago combined with the highly substantial contribution of land-derived revenues for the government generates acute pressures to fuel urban development and redevelopment. Moreover, the URA's partnerships with private developers represent a typical neoliberal policy in which urban growth and the upgrade of derelict estates are the main drivers. Hence, although the URA was increasingly willing to listen to residents affected by redevelopment, the issues of compensation and relocation (Ley and Teo, 2013, pp. 10, 15) tended to dominate every attempt to introduce participatory mechanisms.

3.1.2 Urban Renewal and Redevelopment in Hong Kong

According to several studies (Adams & Hastings, 2001; Lee & Chan, 2008; Ley & Teo, 2014; La Grange & Pretorius, 2016), urban renewal and redevelopment in Hong Kong are common instruments for addressing specific geographical and historical constraints, such as the rapid population growth after 1949, the limited supply of developable land, and housing stock built up to 50 years ago rapidly becoming obsolete because of poor

construction and maintenance. Although slum clearance operations date back to 1884, the government's 'hands-off' approach to squatters' settlements and public housing changed drastically after the Shek Kip Mei fire of 1953. Subsequently, policies of urban development of new towns, public housing estates, and subsidised homeownership have paved the way for an essentially top-down approach to urban planning (Ho, 2012). Citizen participation, heritage preservation, and environmental concerns were widely neglected during decades of rapid spatial and economic growth. Furthermore, the colonial government developed a strong reliance on private developers and property operators following the delimitation and development of the areas because of the requirement for self-funding imposed by the British government (Tang, 2016).

This legacy paved the way for the renewal and redevelopment policies of the 1980s. Urban decay first became an unexpected concern in many residential areas, in addition to increasingly affecting industrial hubs. The LDC was established in 1988 to address the issue of obsolescence. In accordance with the pioneering neoliberal approach of many public policies in Hong Kong, the LDC prioritised the policies projected to generate a financial return after contracting out the demolition and construction works. Therefore, 'the LDC sought to promote the redevelopment of valuable commercial sites for years constrained by multiple land ownership but then began to concentrate on more modest housing projects' (Adams & Hastings, 2001, p. 245). In addition, 'the private sector was unable to carry out effective renewal projects, due in part to the problems with private property rights and in part to the unreasonable amounts of compensation expected by individual property owners' (Li, 2012, p. 519).

Given the nature of the LDC, citizen participation in urban redevelopment was generally very limited and rare. Chan and Yung (2011) argued that the following two reasons impeded public involvement: (1) Residents living in anticipated redevelopment areas lacked the specialist knowledge necessary to become involved in the planning process; and (2) the LDC and the government adopted a hands-off approach and hence did not take the initiative to connect with affected communities. As expected, in addition to its poor financial performance, the LDC faced heavy criticism for their opaque decision-making process.

After the handover of sovereignty in 1997, the new HKSAR authorities decided to replace the LDC with the URA, which came into effect in 2001. The URA was regulated by the Urban Renewal Authority Ordinance (URAO) and the Urban Renewal Strategy (URS). A review of the URS rules and procedures in 2010, after another decade of various controversial redevelopment projects, forced the URA to concede to a higher involvement of stakeholders in their operations.

By excluding local communities from the general process redevelopment [was] a top-down exercise.

These stakeholders may include related government departments, relevant DCs, the housing authorities and services (e.g., the Housing Authority and Housing Society—particularly in the case of rehousing eligible tenants affected by redevelopment), the private sector (mainly that linked to the real estate market), professionals, NGO-civic groups, and

residents. During this time, the ambitious redevelopment of Kwun Tong Town Centre (K7), which involved the displacement of a large population, was underway. Furthermore, the severe criticisms received regarding the H15 project and other initiatives involving reclamation works in Wan Chai and Central were taken into account.

As noted, the URA possesses extraordinary powers for land resumption. This facilitates the acceleration of processes should reluctant owners resist them. Because the URA favours partnerships with private developers and real estate agents, a powerful pro-growth coalition is created with both the legal and economic powers necessary to expedite redevelopment projects (Ng, 2002, p. 145). To the extent that this is known by any stakeholders involved in the projects, the eventual participatory process is sharply conditioned from start to finish—it is the URA and their private associates who are granted with the last word in making decisions, who set the targets and boundaries of the projects and

who can rely on state backing to continue in case of disagreement. Public participation in a structure with such marked power differentials is highly unlikely to empower citizens and civic groups after they become involved.

Nonetheless, the URA's mission was redefined in 2010 as a 'people-centred approach'. The key principle of this approach was that 'residents affected by the redevelopment projects should be given an opportunity to express their views on the project' (LegCo, 2010, p. 4). This 'opportunity to express views' formalised the public consultation mechanism beyond the traditional recourse to legal 'objections' in case of statutory plans. Transparency, public understanding of the plans, and residents' eventual adhesion to them implied some progress in the URA's performance; however, their notion of participatory planning remained inadequate (Heung, 2016). Paradoxically, the review of adopted in the implementation of redevelopment plans.

Fig. 1 Kwun Tong Town Centre (K7) Community Engagement Process
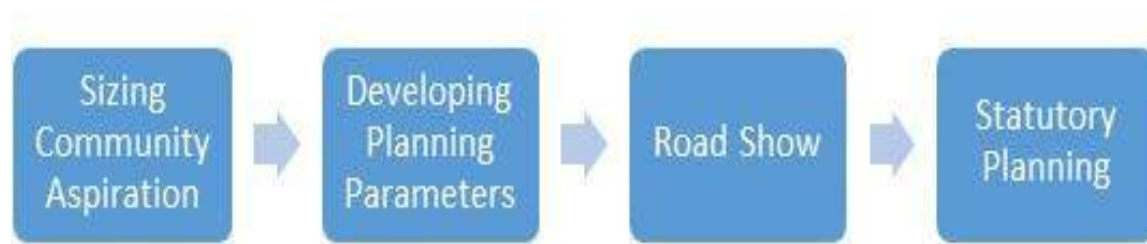
Reference: Law et al. (2010)

the URS between 2008 and 2010 entailed a considerably more participative process (envisioning, engagement, and consensus building) compared with strategies usually

In the singular case of Kwun Tong Town Centre (K7), initial studies from 2002 to 2005 suggested a favourable environment for commencing the redevelopment of the

neighbourhood (Law et al., 2010). The public engagement process was then divided into four stages (Fig. 1). The first stage included surveys, focus groups, and

more valuable to the community in addressing concerns and keep the community updated on the progress' (Law et al., 2010, p. 26). In the third stage, a road show was implemented to provide more information on the project to the area's residents. The final stage of consultation began with the submission of the District Scheme Plans and ended with the approval of the Master Layout Plans by the TPB.

According to some observers, rather than involving a truly 'people-centred' approach, the URA's practices followed a 'project-centred' strategy (Ng, 2002). In contrast to the URA endorsing a bottom-up planning process, 'the local communities [were] not involved in identifying redevelopment projects areas. By excluding local communities from the general process redevelopment [was] a top-down exercise. Residents [were] only involved when the project [was] actively implemented and landlords [needed] to be compensated and tenants rehoused' (Ng, 2002, p. 143). Regarding public engagement, compensation packages are the major contested issue. However controversies on this matter are typically strongly constrained by the entitled powers of the URA regarding land resumption and evictions, which can be implemented in the case of failed negotiations. Furthermore, even 'the final determination of the community needs still rests on the hands of URA rather than on the affected community. The need to re-establish the community ties is ignored.' (Heung, 2006, p. 123) This observation suggests that the new participatory attitudes and positive intentions are biased when the community

interviews. A planning parameter was also built based on the community's aspirations. A few more workshops were conducted in the second stage to render the '[URA] itself

begins to advocate for goals, procedures, and compensation that differ from those preferred by the URA and their private partners.

3.1.3 Kowloon East: Redevelopment of a Post-industrial Urban Area

The KE Business Area, formerly known as simply the 'industrial area', is located in the southeastern region of the Kowloon Peninsula. After the establishment of EKEO, the geographical boundaries of KE comprised the industrial, commercial, and business districts of Kwun Tong and Kowloon Bay in addition to the territory previously occupied by Kai Tak International Airport. With the exception of the original land reclamation of Kai Tak, which dates back to the 1920s, most of this land was reclaimed in the Victoria Harbour in the 1960s and 1970s.

The airport was removed from Kai Tak in 1998 and relocated to Lantau Island. The airport facilities were steadily cleared away. Following the closure of the airport, the government planned massive residential developments and new reclamations (Leung et al., 2006). The new reclamations were finally dismissed because of social pressure and a court ruling in 2004. The entire vacant area was used for temporary activities, such as bus depots and car sales exhibitions (Chow, 2014), until successive planning processes were implemented to redefine its future, and new buildings were erected; in particular, the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal was completed in 2015, and three sets of residential buildings (public housing

estates and 'flat-for-flat' resettlement for people displaced by the URA projects) were completed in 2013 and 2016. On the basis of the complete erasure of its past activities, it can be seen that this area was subject to more than a mere redevelopment intervention, but underwent a complete development process. Hence, this specific intervention has resulted in a weak relationship with EKEO, which is more focused on the potential redevelopment of Kowloon Bay and Kwun Tong, largely outside of the URA's concerns. To date, the main cooperation between the Kai Tak Office and EKEO has been the Kai Tak Fantasy project—an international competition of ideas for the design of a 'tourism node' between the Cruise Terminal and Kwun Tong promenade.

During the peak of the industrialization period, between the 1960s and 1970s, KE played a central role because of its privileged location compared with other industrial hubs. The advantages of its location were twofold: centrality and proximity to populated working class neighbourhoods (mainly Nga Tau Kok, San Po Kong, and Kwun Tong). Industrial activities throughout Hong Kong declined dramatically following the economic reforms in Mainland China that began in 1978. Many companies and investments shifted to more convenient places in the Pearl River Delta, where labour and land were cheaper and environmental regulations were less restrictive. This resulted in an accelerated post-Fordist process of industrial and spatial restructuring, first at the scale of the built sites. After the vibrancy of manufacturing activities was lost, vacancies increased drastically, rental prices decreased, and other economic actors exploited the disinvestment gap (Cheng, 2015; Jayantha et al., 2016). In addition to small- and medium-scale companies (related to storage, food production, workshops, and car repairing), a community of creative professionals and artists migrated in the late 1990s, lured by the affordable rental prices of the former industrial premises.

The new activities quite frequently failed to meet the zoning regulations. Nonindustrial activities such as management, trading, design, performance, and book selling conflicted with the legal licenses of the eldest and cheapest buildings. Moreover, residential activities were observed occasionally in the area. However, authorities ignored these activities for many years unless lawsuits or official inspections targeted specific cases (e.g., the music venue Hidden Agenda; Zuser, 2014). The grey area of governmental tolerance to the legal infractions contributed to a buoyant economic revitalisation of the area, which soon attracted wealthier investors. The erection of these new high-rise office buildings convinced the HK government that a potential second CBD could replace the postindustrial remnants. For example, two newly constructed commercial buildings at One Bay East were purchased and occupied by multinational corporations, Manulife and Citibank, which was a breakthrough for the property and building industry, which noted that 'This is a significant purchase by a major company that highlights the increasing importance of Hong Kong's CBD-2 project' (Pacific Rim Construction, 2013). Moreover, in recent years, new shopping malls have been constructed in this area. The openings of Megabox and APM (within the Millennium City 5 development) are flagship projects in the revamping of KE: 'APM had brought in a new epoch to Kwun Tong District, it makes the district more energetic and revitalised.' (Wong, 2009, p. 79)

The 2012 Policy Address disclosed a figure of 1.4 million square meters actually dedicated to Grade A office spaces in Kwun Tong and Kowloon Bay after a decade of increase by 2.5 times. In the same document, the HK Chief Executive set a target of 4 million square meters for additional office floor area in the coming years. This indicated that the government was determined to facilitate this radical conversion of land use in full measure, irrespective of other opinions and proposals. EKEO was primarily established to fulfil that goal, noting that a CBD-2 would 'support our economic growth and strengthen our global competitiveness' (http://www.ekeo.gov.hk). Instead of a conventional planning strategy, EKEO adopted a postmodern approach focused on place-making and place-branding. A CMP was released at various stages (up to version 4.0 by 2016) because it 'is always evolving to provide an update on work progress and incorporate public views and opinions' (EKEO, 2013a, Conceptual Master Plan 3.0) and 'highlights the latest initiatives that are crystallised from our continuous dialogue with the community to bring this vision to fruition' (EKEO, 2015a, Conceptual Master Plan 4.0). This indicates a direct interest in and attention to public engagement in a very loose and broad manner (compared with the consultation processes linked to URA-driven projects and statutory plans). Simultaneously, EKEO planners and managers actively devoted themselves to associating strong images and concepts (namely, 'connectivity', 'diversity', 'design', and 'branding') with the area to consolidate the trust of future investors in the emerging office enclave. Symbolic and cultural reframing of KE was thus placed at the core of both the redevelopment project and any possible participatory scheme.

Regarding the material and spatial assets of the area, old industrial multistorey buildings comprise the main scattered features of the urban form. The government has attempted to increase the flexibility of the use of industrial buildings by relaxing regulations since the 1990s (Xian & Chen, 2015, p. 300); however, criticisms were still received for 'bureaucratic inflexibility and official inertia' (Lai, 2013). In one respect, the government relied on the invisible hand of the 'free market' to renovate and revitalise the industrial buildings. However, it launched specific initiatives to encourage owners of industrial buildings to improve or transform their premises. For example, the land-use rezoning initiative in 2001 aimed at facilitating the shift from 'industrial' to 'Other Specified Uses' annotated 'Business' use (HKIS, 2016). Moreover, to address many technical difficulties (e.g., access, ventilation, and fire safety) and the typically fragmented ownership, the Lands Department (Development Bureau) introduced a 'three-pronged approach' in 2010 that increased the incentives for redevelopment or conversion of industrial buildings older than 30 years. The policy involved 'lowering the ownership threshold for redevelopment [from 90% to 80%], allowing tailor-made lease modifications and giving owners the option to pay the land premium in instalments for five years'(Xian & Chen, 2015, p. 300). This policy ended in 2016 with 226 applications for wholesale conversion (104 effectively approved) and 22 for redevelopment (21 effectively approved): 'For the applications for wholesale conversion approved by the Lands Department, most of them are located in Kwun Tong and Kwai Chung, and the major proposed new uses for the converted buildings include office, eating place, shop and services, and hotel. For the approved applications for redevelopment,

they are situated mainly in Kwun Tong, Yau Tong, Cheung Sha Wan, Kwai Chung and Wong Chuk Hang, and the proposed new uses after redevelopment include residential, commercial and hotel' (Development Bureau, 2010).

As observed in 2013 (Xian & Chen, 2015: pp. 301, 302) and frequently noted in the interviews we conducted, even the modest figures of the 'revitalisation' policy for industrial buildings, particularly those more focused on wholesale conversions than on redevelopment (demolition and reconstruction), caused an immediate speculative surge in the local property market. The first victims of the rapid increases in selling and rental prices were the less wealthy artists and small companies, as well as the illegal residents. Paradoxically, artists—the natural allies of EKEO in forging a cultural and creative brand for KE—are being more rapidly displaced to remote, less centrally located areas of the city. This effect contradicts the 2013 Policy Address by the Chief Executive which aimed at identifying 'sites to support the development of arts, culture and creative industries, with a view to turning Kowloon East into a distinctive business area' (HKSAR, 2014, p. 130).

Although crucial in KE, the redevelopment of the industrial buildings policy is beyond EKEO's reach and URA's scope of responsibility. This has resulted in the detachment of various social communities of inhabitants (e.g., workers, professionals, small retailers, and civic groups) from most branding and participatory activities promoted by EKEO. Upgraded shopping malls and office buildings and tourism and recreational functions appear not to engage the postindustrial working- and middle-class populations that remain in the area. Their substitution and displacement highlight a gentrification process that is becoming more explicit every day. This outcome appears to have been far from the government's intentions, unless we remember how focused policy was on producing a second CBD.

Heritage preservation, as one of the four key drivers of the URA, might also be relevant for industrial buildings and culture in KE after sensible rehabilitation and implementing policies that allow affordable occupancy—such as those implemented at other sites (e.g., the Jockey Club Creative Arts Centre in Shek Kip Mei, ADC Artspace in Aberdeen, and the Cattle Depot Artist Village in Mau Tau Kok).

http://gfgc-goldinfinancial.com/kowloon-east-cbd/energising-kowloon-east/

A *laissez-faire* approach such as that applied in the case of the industrial buildings of Fo Tan (Sha Tin) may enable artist communities to engage and flourish; however, it prompts real estate speculation and poor interactions with the nearby residents. According to Tang (2016), 'The recent government proposal of promoting creative industry must then be interpreted as rhetoric. It is a cosmetic measure to quiet any possible challenge to the regime and its representations of space.' (p. 162) In 2012, EKEO supported educational activities such as maps, on site visits, and exhibitions to revive the industrial culture in Kwun Tong (in partnership with Hulu Culture). This support continued in 2014 with the transformation of Tsun Yip Street Playground into 'Kwun Tong Industrial Culture Park' and the promotion of 'creative industries' under the Kai Tak Fantasy project (EKEO 2015a, Conceptual Master Plan 4.0). In a follow-up project entitled 'The Spirit of Creation. The Past and Future of Industries in Kowloon East', the branding process enhanced the aesthetic appeal of icons on the verge of being lost: 'Many old factory buildings and unique architectural features may be changed or lost due to redevelopment. The EKEO has commissioned a professional team to document this rich industrial culture in the urban fabric as the area transforms. The result of which will help inheriting the Spirit of Creation of the old Kowloon East and extending the spirit into the future development.' (EKEO, 2016c) Therefore, a double-track operation occurred as follows: a) the displacement of active artists from the area; and b) recuperation of industrial heritage as a means to redesign and introduce artistic characteristics to entice future tourists, corporate staff, and investors. Superseding 'industrial culture', at a higher tier of promotion with a more probable influx of profitable investments and in accordance with the governmental guidelines aimed at improving technology-and-innovation-based economic growth, EKEO launched the Smart City programme in 2016 by announcing new participatory workshops and consultations.

3.2 Planning Process and Public Engagement in Kowloon East

I n this section, we review some of the most remarkable landmarks in the redevelopment process of KE, focusing on its participatory dimensions.

3.2.1 EKEO's Performance

Following the 2011–2012 Policy Address, EKEO was established in 2012. Currently, EKEO operates under a branch of the Development Bureau. By establishing EKEO, the HKSAR government adopted 'strategic planning' and a 'place-making' approach aimed at transforming KE into the city's second CBD. However, the general goal of this peculiar planning initiative was unrealistic, involving enhancing economic growth and the international competitiveness of a postindustrial urban hub by increasing the gross floor area of office use. Compared with other governmental departments and agencies, EKEO is located (temporarily) in the midst of KE, which represented a straightforward intention of strengthening links with the people affected by redevelopment.

'EKEO is a pioneer in applying the "place-making" approach which is an integrated strategy for planning, design, implementation, management and community engagement to create quality public spaces for the enjoyment of the people and improvement of the pedestrian environment' (LegCo, 2012). The place-making approach embraced by EKEO is based on four key themes: connectivity, branding, design, and diversity. In addition, this planning approach comprises an active

orientation towards public engagement and public space (Schneekloth & Shibley, 1995). Consequently, EKEO encouraged various forms of public participation in their projects without being limited by constraints such as those exerted by URA (compensations) and other state departments running statutory plans (objections). Moreover, the traditional recourse to consultations could be substantially widened according to the various projects launched or supported by EKEO.

EKEO's positive attitude toward promoting and accepting the incorporation of insights derived from public participation into the planning process was often expressed by EKEO managers; however, no systematic preparation was observed: 'In some areas we are between collaboration and consultation. The progress and the ways you handle this grows out naturally from our day to day work. We don't follow any theories, we don't have experts. [...] You to tell us what to do. We just follow our hearts and our natural response to what our community needs' (EKEO-01).

Government adopted 'strategic planning' and a 'place-making' approach aimed at transforming KE into the city's second CBD

In practice, instead of merely facilitating office space, planners insisted that their strategy was broader and involved the improvement of mobility issues and opening of the area to a wider population than the current users. The reactivation of a (new) diverse economy in the area was also emphasised as a main tenet: 'Our strategy

is to improve the connectivity, walkability [...] branding. To let people know about Kowloon East. Through urban design we focus a lot on the urban space, public roads. [...] This is the condition that we would like to keep and not just one type of high class office but a whole range of facilities and space to provide for various types of business to grow from here' (EKEO-01).

The major duties of EKEO are as follows: 1) To develop and update the CMP 'and explore options for strategic refinement of the Outline Zoning Plans; 2) To engage major stakeholders and the public to promote Kowloon East to local and overseas developers and users; 3) To provide one-stop support to land development proposals that are conducive to private sector development for transforming Kowloon East; and 4) To coordinate government's efforts and resources for area improvement works' (EKEO, 2016a). To modify and enhance each CMP, EKEO intends to integrate the outcomes of the various participation exercises conducted. Therefore, the contents of the CMP have slightly changed over time, but the general goals of EKEO's mission remain unchanged.

'We call ourselves place-making managers. To make the place is not just about hardware but how people use the space and how to make the space good for various activities. And this is our Conceptual Master Plan. It is an evolving changing plan. [...] We have a very open-doors policy actually. Whoever has a submission, request or meeting, if our time allows, we will arrange a session like this to share with us' (EKEO-01). In addition to continuing coordination with various governmental departments, their open-door policy enabled them to 'have very good support

from the District Council and the Harbourfront Commission' (EKEO-01). In practice, this policy involves a mixture of public relations with numerous professional exchanges and interactions with an abstract and undefined 'local community', requesting that they approach EKEO. 'We receive many In addition to continuing coordination with various governmental departments, their open-door policy enabled them to 'have very good support from the District Council and the Harbourfront Commission' (EKEO-01). In practice, this policy involves a mixture of public relations with numerous professional exchanges and interactions with an abstract and undefined 'local community', requesting that they approach EKEO. 'We receive many groups from all sectors and overseas visitors. And we participate in public forum, exhibitions and place-making events, and collaboration with other countries. [...] That's why we say *we engage people*. We are actually open to all. But usually it is the local community which is more concerned about what we are doing [...]—people working, actually working, staying, living in the area or adjacent districts, people outside like the residential development uphill and Laguna City. Actually they are outside our Kowloon East area' (EKEO-01). EKEO plays the leading role in the process as professional planners and designers and makes all the decisions. However, its 'bottom-up' attitude makes it open, in principle, to address issues highlighted by external stakeholders, usually named ambiguously as 'the community'; however, this is occasionally identified as comprising other experts, government officials, political representatives, or attendants to the workshops (mostly from the business sector): 'The process is like a very much

Table 6. Summary of EKEO Conceptual Master Plans

Conceptual Master Plan	Content
Version 1.0 (2012)	Initial plan focused on key infrastructures (eg. water sports, pedestrian bridge, promenade, etc.)
Version 2.0 (2012)	- Integration within Kowloon East (KE), and also between KE and its neighbouring areas - Pedestrian-friendly environment, attractive streets and urban greening - Place-making, promoting quality urban design and innovative architecture, creating vibrant public space, bringing people to the waterfront, inviting arts and culture to city life - Transforming KE as another premier CBD — a place where people would like to work, to do business, to walk, to stay, and to play
Version 3.0 (2013)	- Environmentally Friendly Linkage System - Kowloon Bay Link - Ngau Tau Kok Link - Kwun Tong Link - Green Boulevard - Kwun Tong Industrial Heritage Park - Tsui Ping River - Kowloon East Action Area 1 and 2 - Vibrant Water Front
Version 4.0 (2015)	- Environmentally Friendly Linkage System (EFLS) - Connectivity in Kowloon Bay - Connectivity in Ngau Tau Kok - Connectivity in Kwun Tong - Energizing Hoi Bun Road- Green Operation - Kwun Tong Industrial Cultural Park - Tsui Ping River - Kowloon Bay Action Area - Kwun Tong Action Area - Vibrant Waterfront

Reference: EKEO (2015)

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bottom-up process. I must say, well, we are the professionals. We should know how to resolve the problem and the technical side of it. But I must say the wisdom to point us to the problem is from the community' (EKEO-02).

When questioned about the exclusion of some actual workers and professionals in KE such as the artists' community, EKEO managers admitted that almost no contacts could be made despite welcoming them: 'If they are willing to talk and willing to come and see what we are going and tell us what they are experiencing, I am most welcome. But if I reach out them now and say, *hey, shall we talk?* when they are not ready, I don't think it will come to

In 2012, EKEO claimed that it had consulted and interacted with various stakeholder groups to obtain their perspectives regarding the project, including DCs (Kwun Tong, Wong Tai Sin, and Kowloon City), the HC, and professional organisations.

any good result. (…) I fully understand how they see us, and, and, and they are quite sensitive in a way. [But] if I reach out, they will say *what do you want to talk about? Why, why do you want to call us? We don't want to speak*' (EKEO-02).

Throughout the years, numerous projects have been initiated by EKEO on the basis of their place-making strategy. The following milestones can illustrate some of their activities and their implications for public engagement.

Fly the Flyover

'We (EKEO) learn from the community more about the story of this flyover space. When I first met a professor in a CityU forum, we know there is an artist, Ho Hei Leung (好戲量 FM Theatre Power) and Lai Yan-Chi (賴恩慈) is there. I learnt from her about the difficulties of street performers in Mong Kok at that time. That's why we think that the flyover space is a pretty good alternative as a street, you know, kind of performance space with this

ambience. And, in year 2012 we have this artist workshop. They came up with the idea of utilizing this flyover space' (EKEO-01).

Located on a vacant land underneath the Kwun Tong Bypass and next to the recently upgraded Kwun Tong Promenade, the first phase of the Fly the Flyover project was completed and opened to the public in 2013. The land was previously fenced off and in a state of abandonment, except for it occasional use by local musicians for performances. The new work was intended to improve the area to allow various types of creative activities such as art exhibitions, and music and dance performances. However, according to our records, no specific public consultation on 'Fly the Flyover 01' was conducted. By contrast, the initial plans for transforming and pedestrianizing the promenade before EKEO (Stage 1 was completed in 2010) were subjected to some consultation with District Councillors and residents of the surrounding areas (HKU, 2011).

In 2012, EKEO claimed that it had consulted and interacted with various stakeholder groups to obtain their perspectives regarding the project, including DCs (Kwun Tong, Wong Tai Sin, and Kowloon City), the HC, and professional organisations.'Various public engagement activities including briefings, public workshop, artist workshop and place-making forum were organized to collect their views. Collectively, the community and professional institutes shared the same view that a vibrant waterfront was one of the key elements of Energizing Kowloon East. Besides, most of the participants supported the transformation of the unused area underneath the Kwun Tong Bypass into an

informal performance venue with flexible and vibrant design for diversified activities' (EKEO, 2016b). With this public support and light work undertaken on upgrading, EKEO started managing the activities to be conducted in the area. EKEO presently accepts requests submitted only for nonprofit and noncommercial activities. EKEO provides light, electricity, and maintenance of toilets. The location of this area next to the 'containers' that function as offices for the EKEO increases the impression of connection between planners and the general public who use the flyover space for recreational activities. However, no further involvement of the population was observed in the management or future plans of the area.

The participatory precedent of the Kwun Tong Promenade, which is also located next to the EKEO and the under-the-flyover spaces, is noteworthy. In 1999, the HKSAR government appointed a private consultancy, ARUP, to conduct a series of urban studies on the planning of Kwun Tong Waterfront Promenade, such as the South East Kowloon Development Plan. Stage 1 of the Kwun Tong Promenade was completed in 2010. The newly constructed 200-m waterfront is located at the former industrial site of cargo activities. In 2010, the Kwun Tong DC appointed the University of Hong Kong to engage the public in the master planning of the second phase of the Kwun Tong Promenade development through a Community Project Workshop (CPW; HKU, 2011). The CPW team conducted public consultation workshops for two sessions at the Kwun Tong Community Town Hall. 'Local Residents interested community stakeholders, commercial sector representatives, district councillors, professionals, including architects and

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planners, and various community groups' representatives were invited to the sessions to express their visions and suggestions towards the development of Phase II' (HKU, 2011, p. 27). During the sessions, participants were divided into different focus groups to explore the possibilities presented by the revitalisation. Subsequently, the CPW team conducted a survey of the local residents through local mail and fax (475 valid responses were returned) in addition to telephone (20) and internet (15) questionnaires (HKU, 2011, p. 28). According to the aforementioned study, the promenade was rarely visited and was considered as poorly connected with the residential areas. Nevertheless, the recreational uses were mostly embraced by the respondents.

The promenade and the space under the flyover are the major highlights regarding the revitalisation of public space. These sites within the postindustrial area were successfully recovered for public recreation, strolling, playing, and performing. Currently, the size of the open space is quite limited and is mainly visited by the residents of KE. This process is paving the way for converting the area into a tourist and commercial attraction in the coming future. In addition, because the actual management and regulation of the facilities are already undertaken by EKEO and the LCSD, public consultation and engagement ended once the new designs were implemented.

EKEO considers the involvement of external artists, companies, and casual, spontaneous visitors as a 'creative form of participation' that started with the commission of painting switch boxes in the streets. 'We have asked a graphic company to wrap the switch boxes with some images of the industrial products we had. And this is the park project and the theme is industrial heritage with spirit of creation. […] And so this artwork will be another engagement process that we are now working with the LCSD—under LCSD, they have a curator. They employ an

outside curator and that curator also has an artist with them. And we are now designing the process so that we can let people participate. The idea maybe [will be that] we collect, we will play some games with the people who pass the park. And they will leave some ideas or some marks on certain walls. And these things will be collected and used in the future artwork creation. So we are designing a process. […] We hope that this is another creative form of participation. And then end product would be owned by not just one artist, but more people' (EKEO-01).

Back Alley Project @ Kowloon East

'This Back Alley Project is also another interesting engagement. […] Every collaboration is in a very different form. […] And then we come up with the idea as *hey, we can ask some of the owners along the way to allow us to paint on the hoarding and paint on the wall*. And ask some artists to paint on it. This should be a quite meaningful project for the community. So, they [PolyU] came back with a proposal to organize this Back Alley Art Project. […] Some of the images are quite modern and quite fashionable. One of them, even when we look at it, we feel, *wow! whether the owners will accept this such graffiti kind of graphics*. […] It is something that is a kind of bottom-up. We learn from the students about the back alley' (EKEO-01). Within KE, back alleys between buildings are usually underutilised and such spaces are thus avoided. Dirt, stored materials, bad odours, and ill-maintained pavements and walls make them unsuitable to walk or pass by, even if they are convenient shortcuts. The Back Alley Project was intended to improve the condition of back alleys by beautifying the external walls and renaming them, thereby serving as an evocation of the peak

industrial era. The project was established in cooperation with Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) Jockey Club Design Institute for Social Innovation and the Run Our City Foundation, a social enterprise (EKEO, 2012a). By aiming to create more 'colourful streets', EKEO-sponsored graffiti can contribute to increasing the pedestrian circulation in the area, ensuring that it is not restricted to the main streets usually considered as grey, noisy, and unpleasant because of the heavy traffic during work days. Moreover, EKEO incorporated the Back Alley Project into the feasibility study on Pedestrian Environment Improvement Schemes for Kwun Tong Business Area to improve the walkability in these areas (EKEO, 2014).

This project involves the introduction of drawings on certain walls and buildings in KE. EKEO aims to alter the streetscapes by increasing the diversity of images pedestrians and others can encounter. This project is focused only on the back alleys and on graffiti-like artwork, and thus the intervention has the appearance of being underground and run bottom-up by independent artists. Similar to a past project (decoration of some electricity boxes) that was associated with the initial process of improving pedestrianisation, the engine of this project is predominantly the EKEO. EKEO now invites academic (university students and professors) and civic (social enterprise and runners) partners to participate by contributing their ideas, workforce, and presence, thereby introducing some social diversity in the area, if temporarily. Thus, citizen engagement in these circumstances and among these social groups is very limited, despite this process being presented by EKEO as a flagship example of their open and earnest attitude to attracting more people from Hong Kong and KE.

For EKEO, this project showcases citizen engagement in the redevelopment process. However, the evidence suggests that the process primarily entails partnership and collaboration between the EKEO and two social organisations, namely the university and NGO. Essentially, the project has produced an influx of citizens that usually do not utilise the area; however, their engagement in the redevelopment project is restricted to that specific project.

http://www.walkablekwuntong.hk/2nd_stage_short_1.html

Kai Tak Fantasy

The area between the cruise terminal (the former Kai Tak airport runway), Kwun Tong Ferry Pier, and the enclosed water extension aside the Kwun Tong promenade (EKEO, 2013b) was earmarked for the Kai Tak Fantasy project. This project confirms the hypothesis that the ultimate goal of most projects in the area is to address the needs of tourists, prioritising them over those of residents. Recreational spaces here represent recreation for tourists. The light and simple work in the promenade and under the flyover will likely soon be upgraded to incorporate expensive restaurants, hotels, and water activities that fundamentally exclude working class residents, ignoring their requirements for such a space.

EKEO's planners state that the international Kai Tak Fantasy Contest launched on 7 June, 2012 is another example of public engagement. However, the contest was essentially another professional competition in which urban planners, landscape designers and architects, and engineering firms provided creative ideas for the future of this area. Although only a few applicants were awarded as winners of the contest, all participants contributed information that was considered by the EKEO planners. Other social groups were also invited to contribute but in a subordinate role to the experts.

https://www.devb.gov.hk/en/home/my_blog/index_id_49.html

Two stages of public engagement activities were conducted by EKEO. The first stage was conducted from 20 June, 2013, to 19 August, 2013. The consultation and briefing sessions mainly focused on professionals rather than the general public. EKEO planned separate exercises for different stakeholders. Initially, three briefing sessions were individually prepared for, namely 1) advisory bodies including DCs, the Lands Development Advisory Committee, and HC; 2) professional organisations; and 3) the media industry. Online and postal submissions of written comments and public consultation meetings were organised separately for stakeholders from different backgrounds to gather their opinions (Social Sciences Research Center, 2013). Stage 2 public engagement exercises were initiated on 5 June, 2014, after shortlisting the submission of comments from the previous participation. Unlike the first stage, students were invited to the briefing session in Stage 2. Moreover, social media channels began to play an important role in the participation and dissemination processes (e.g., online surveys and Facebook pages).

Pedestrian Environment Improvements

Following one of the four main axes of the CMP, namely 'connectivity', EKEO decided to undertake the improvement of walkability within the area from the outset of the process. In addition to specific collaborations with a think tank (Civic Exchange), they commissioned the technical and public engagement programmes from professional consultants, AECOM and ARUP, who split their proposals into Kowloon Bay and Kwun Tong 'action areas', respectively. These were the most outstanding participation exercises promoted by EKEO to date despite their various shortcomings.

Kowloon Bay Action Area

The primary participatory mechanisms in this proposal were 'community workshops', which aimed to collect public opinions and suggestions for the formulation of the main strategies and improvements on walkability, as well as other traffic and transport issues. Prior to planning community workshops, EKEO gained support from the Kwun Tong DC and received responses from 500 public surveys. In late 2013, EKEO-AECOM organised the first community workshop for Stage 1 of the 'Pedestrian Environment Improvement Feasibility Study'. Similar to other workshops addressed in the following discussion, the attendance list indicated that the proportion of business sectors was larger and in all likelihood more influential than other sectors of participants.

The first workshop consisted of 60 participants. According to the list supplied by EKEO, only 10 participants attended on an 'individual' basis (participant demographics such as age, sex, education, income, employment, and place of

Essentially, the project has produced an influx of citizens that usually do not utilise the area; however, their engagement in the redevelopment project is restricted to that specific project

residence could not be accessed) without representing any specific organisation. More than half of the total participants (34 [57%]) belonged to the business sector, and were mainly land developers and property development companies.

In the second stage of public engagement, EKEO consulted with the Kwun Tong DC and another community workshop. In addition, a forum with professional institutions was held to collect suggestions

for short- and medium-term proposals. The total number of participants in this community workshop decreased to 38, of which, 12 attended as individuals. The business sectors still outweighed other groups. Notably, professionals were absent from the two workshops.

The final public forum and focus group meeting were held in mid-2014 to collect comments and recommendations for the medium- to long-term measures. No community workshop was organised at the third stage. As an alternative, consultants organised a small-scale forum for informing the public about their plans to improve pedestrianisation; 42 people attended this forum with 11 attending as 'individual.

Fig. 2 Public Engagement Process of Kowloon Bay Business Area Pedestrian Environment Improvement
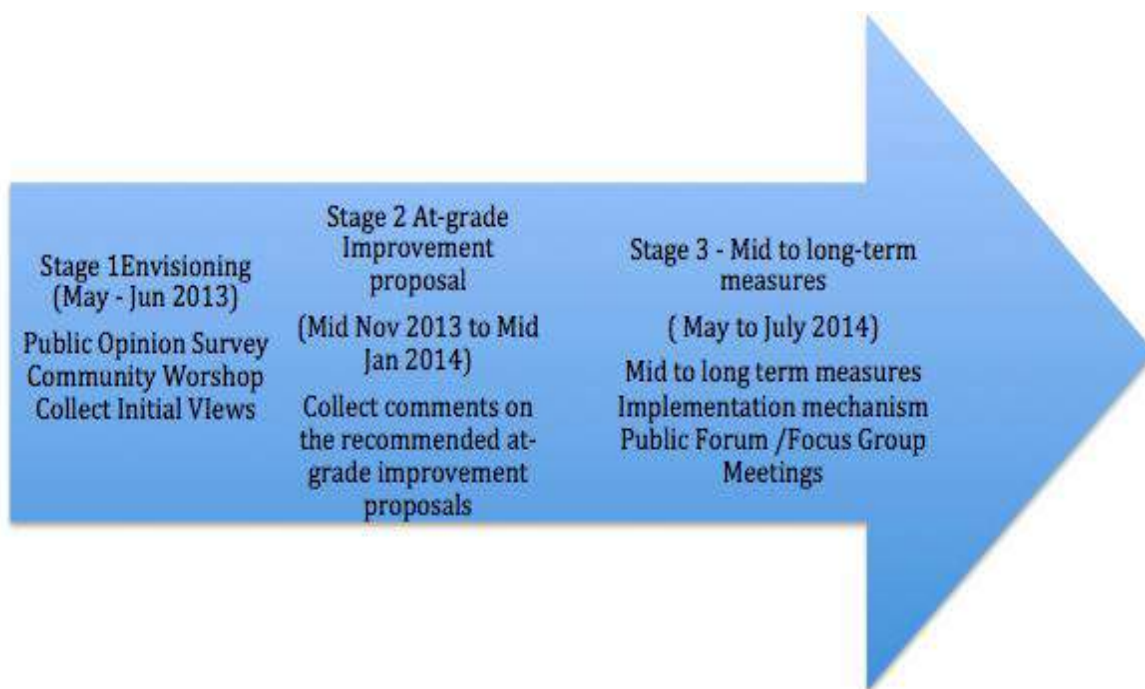
Reference: EKEO (2015)

Kwun Tong Action Area

The first stage of the public engagement activity in the Kwun Tong Business Area was conducted between 3 November, 2014 and 30 December, 2014. The aims of this stage were similar to those of the previous process in Kowloon Bay—to improve walkability, road connectivity, and accessibility between Kwun Tong, Ngau Tau Kok MTR Station, the Kwun Tong Business Area, and the waterfront (EKEO, 2015b).

The first community workshop was attended by 63 participants. Of them, only seven participants had an undefined 'individual' background, 19 were from the business sectors, and 22 from academic institutions. According to our observations, many participants in fact were not very familiar with working in the Kwun Tong industrial and business area. Similar to the workshops of the Kowloon Bay Business Area, few residents of the surrounding areas attended the first community workshop.

The second stage of the public engagement activity was held from July to September 2015. Short-term to medium-term improvement schemes were examined with public participation. Consultants claimed that the amendments to the second-stage public engagement plans were based on the comments generated from the first stage. Moreover, an online channel was made available for collecting comments. In addition, a roving exhibition was organised through various sites of the area. Most of these actions, including the workshops, were not noticed by the local residents and workers who were interviewed. The second event followed the same pattern of 'community workshops'. A total of 60 people attended this event, of whom only 14 attended as 'individuals'; 26 participants from the business sectors accounted for almost half of the 'community'.

Table 7. Attendees of workshops and the forum for the Pedestrian Environment Improvement of Kowloon Bay Business Area

	Stage 1 (workshop)	Stage 2 (workshop)	Stage 3 (forum)
Business sector	34	17	14
"Individuals"	10	12	11
Academic	4	3	2
District Councillors	3	1	1
Civic Groups	9	3	5
Government	0	2	4
Professionals	0	0	5
Total	60	38	42

Reference: EKEO

Prior to the third stage of public participation, EKEO-ARUP reported having made some adjustments to pedestrian facilities, public transportation facilities, green spaces, and back alleys in accordance with the recommendations from the inputs obtained in the first and second public participation phases. The third stage of public engagement addressed improvements in the medium- and long-term future. However, the new adjustments were based on opinions of only a limited number of participants. A total of 61 participants attended the third workshop held in late October 2016. Of them, only 14 were 'local residents', assuming that this is the main character encompassed by the category 'individuals'.

Overall, the average number of participants remained constant throughout the three stages of public engagement activities (approximately 60). Compared with the Kowloon Bay process, a slight increase of 14 participants was observed. The business sector was most substantially represented. According to the *in situ* observation, the influence of participants representing the business sector was not necessarily higher than the views or proposals expressed by others. However, in interviews or informal discussions most participants expressed their interest in knowing the options under consideration as soon as possible after the discussions at the workshops. This is particularly crucial given that their own business or future investments could be affected by the actions relating to traffic, transport, and mobility in KE.

Fig. 3 Public Engagement Process of Kwun Tong Business Area Pedestrian Environment Improvement Scheme

Reference: EKEO (2015)

Table 8. Participants of the workshops organised regarding the Kwun Tong Business Area Pedestrian Environment Improvement Scheme

	Stage 1 (workshop)	Stage 2 (workshop)	Stage 3 (workshop)
Business sector	19	26	17
"Individuals"	7	14	14
Academic Institution	22	5	21
District Councillor	1	0	0
Civic Group	15	10	6
Government	0	1	1
Professionals	1	4	2
Total	63	60	61

Reference: EKEO

Artists' detachment from EKEO

Since the relocation of the manufacturing sector to mainland China, many local artists have used the opportunities provided by the affordable rental prices and abundant available units in the industrial buildings of KE. Because of the high vacancy rates and low rental cost, and irrespective of the minor legal infractions, this old industrial district has become a cultural and art hub since the 1990s. The disinvestment process and the subsequent rent gap shaped a local ecology that encouraged artists to flourish, interact, exchange, and cooperate. Some artists were more commercially oriented, whereas others focused more on rehearsing and performing—particularly musicians. Creative studios that could sell their products after gradually building their small companies fed the underground economy of this scene. This prolific era began to decline once the HK government shifted their attention to the area around 2012 and reframed it as a potential CBD-2.

The prospects of redevelopment, including the specific policy for the revitalisation of industrial buildings, sparked the new wave of social substitution in KE. Landlords raised the rental prices, creative professionals moved from one building to another, and those who could not afford the increasing costs stopped working in the field or moved out from the area. Occasionally, some property owners were sympathetic with artists and 'did not put rental pressure on [their] tenants, allowing them to interact and co-operate freely' (Cheng, 2015, p. 27), such as the owner of the Easy-Pack industrial building.

Despite the vibrancy of the creative community, their political capacity to voice their concerns, protest, or negotiate with the government did not endure. The campaign 'Exterminating Kowloon East' emerged as a reaction to the first projects launched by EKEO such as the change in road signs (from 'industrial' to 'commercial' or 'business'), the decoration of switch boxes and back alleys with 'outsider's art', and the regulation of artistic performances under the flyover (Zuser, 2014; Cheng, 2015). Activists opposed to the redevelopment of the K7 project also joined forces and the Factory Artists Concern Group was established. However, apart from some stickers and graffiti spread over the area and the campaigns to save the Hidden Agenda from the various evictions they faced they expressed their discontent and kept ties mainly and almost exclusively through online channels. they expressed their discontent and kept ties mainly and almost exclusively through online channels.

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The case of Hidden Agenda represents the cultural use of industrial buildings. Instead of merely using a space for rehearsing music, the spaces were opened to the wider Hong Kong public. The live music venue was first and foremost used by local bands to perform and be heard by local audiences. In addition, the business scaled up when Hidden Agenda started organising gigs involving international bands willing to perform for underground scenes of, mainly, young people. Given their location and their selection of music styles and artists, Hidden Agenda became quite distinctive compared with mainstream, 'commercial' music venues (mostly in Central, but also in the Asia Expo and the Megabox, Kowloon Bay). In addition, the more events they organised, the less hidden they became. Once their popularity increased, more people became aware of their cultural contribution. Moreover, the mass media reported on the venue because they hosted famous bands from Asia and elsewhere who came to Hong Kong for the first time. Their activities thereby became more visible to the government, which then mandated licenses for operation.

The organisation and groups that animated Hidden Agenda succeeded in creating an independent, subcultural, 'and non-compliant space' (Zuser, 2014, p. 68). Since its opening in 2009, Hidden Agenda underwent several evictions because of violations of permitted land uses in industrial buildings. In addition, their rental costs increased notably (Table 9) in parallel to the progress of the redevelopment 'branding' of KE. Similar to many other artists we interviewed, members of the Hidden Agenda argued that the initiatives run by EKEO are harmful to the grassroots of the cultural and creative industry. Over the years, they have struggled for official acceptance despite the constant warnings from the Lands Department (Mok, 2013). According to one interviewee, '[the government] claims that our operation is against the law. It's true indeed in accordance to the corresponding ordinance with a clear statement. But why can't the authority consider the issue from the users' point of view and be flexible? However, the law on breaching the land use, in fact, it is rather out-of-date. We don't understand

why it is not possible to exercise the ordinance flexibly' (CP-03).

In response to the warnings and the rental increases, Hidden Agenda changed venues and organised support campaigns. Because of this contentious experience, it is understandable that many artists decided not to participate in the institutional mechanisms of consultation and participation promoted by EKEO. 'I believe the government will only consult those she considers as partners. I agree that we are stubborn, that we often oppose the government policies. We don't think we need her help. [...] We declined the invitation as we don't agree on a couple of government policies. […] I think the government should not discuss with us participation promoted by EKEO. 'I believe the government will only consult those she considers as partners. I agree that we are stubborn, that we often oppose the government policies. We don't think we need her help. [...] We declined the invitation as we don't agree on a couple of government policies. […] I think the government should not discuss with us conditionally. Usually the government already has her plan. She simply just wants to hear your opinion and then brings forward her plan. It is not conversation and actually she just wants to tell us what actions she will take' (CP-03).

The second significant finding regarding the artists' community in KE is an event named 'Ngautrip'. Initially organised by four local workshops at the Ngau Tau Kok industrial district on February 2015, this seasonal event was intended to open the community's doors to participants to enable them to explore what was happening inside (Peng, 2015). Hidden Agenda was one of the groups that launched the initiative. In all, 12 workshops and artists' studios participated in the event held in October 2015, and 10 participated in the September 2016 edition. We observed a mostly young, well-educated, and artist-friendly audience among the visitors and no more than 10 or20 people in each working or performing space. Many participants enrolled in training workshops (e.g., leather, wood, and cooking). Another interviewee highlighted, 'actually many people do not know much about the community they are living in. The audience came once or twice for band shows and didn't know other users. This district is very interesting indeed with old restaurants, independent printing companies, and wooden art workshops. Therefore, we are eager to do something to make people learn more about the community. [...) "Ngautrip" aims to take you to walk around Ngau Tau Kok. It should be interested for most HK people to discover that there are lots of hidden things they have never come across. [...] Most Hong Kong people won't explore the happenings in their community if it is not initiated by others' (CP-03).

Table 9. Relocations of Hidden Agenda

	1st Generation	**2nd Generation**	**3rd Generation**	**4th Generation**
Opening Time	01/2009 - 01/2010 (1 Year)	03/2010- 12/2011 (1 Year and 9 months)	02/2012-10/2015 (4 Years and 8 Months)	12/2016- 12/2020 (Estimation)
Size	2000 square feet	4000 square feet	4000 square feet	4000 square feet
Rent	HK$ 7,600	HK$ 10,000	HK$ 25,000	HK$62,000
Income	Tickets and Beverages	Ticket and Beverages	Tickets	Café, meals and Tickets
Focus of Events	Local	Local/ International	International	Local/ International
Reasons of relocation	Termination of Lease (premise sold due to the revitalisation measures)	Termination of Lease (potential land use violation)	Investigation and sanctions regarding land use and fire safety violation	n.a

Reference: Zuser (2014) and authors

3.2.2 Public Participation in Kai Tak

Kai Tak Development is a highly mixed project that covers over 320 hectares of land. Its vision is to create a 'distinguished, vibrant, attractive and people-oriented community' (KTO, 2008). The government aimed to offer a high-quality living environment for approximately 90,000 prospective dwellers. This will be achieved in coordination with the attempts to revitalise the surrounding districts, including Kowloon City, Kwun Tong, and Wong Tai Sin (KTO, 2008).

Preliminary efforts to redevelop the Kai Tak area were initiated as early as 1992. The Hong Kong government appointed private consultancies such as AECOM to prepare the Outline Master Development Plan, which later served as the framework for guiding future developments and investments after the relocation of the Kai Tak airport in 1998. To further identify the phases of development, the government also completed the Feasibility Study for South East Kowloon Development by appointing another consultancy, ARUP (EKEO-Arup, 2001). However, the study encountered strong public opposition over the harbour reclamation that was implied (LegCo Secretariat, 2010).

In the early 2000s, the government organised the first 'public consultation' on a Preliminary Layout Plan. 'The public consultation included a public forum attended by political parties, professional organisations, green groups and interested bodies on 30 May 2000, as well as presentations to the Legislative Council, Town Planning Board, District Councils and so forth' (EKEO-Arup, 2001, p. 2). As usual, participation was dominated by elite social groups who had incentives for involvement in the project. Despite the conspicuous absence of many social groups and activists, the report claimed that the plan received 'wide support from the public'.

In 2001, the feasibility study for the revised scheme of South East Kowloon Development was completed. Under the 'zero reclamation' principle, the Planning Department commissioned the 'Kai Tak Planning Review' in 2004 to conduct a 2-year three-stage public engagement process (Fig. 5). The process ranged from 'determining the vision and key issues' to engaging the public in the formulation of the Outline Concept Plans and the Preliminary Outline Development Plan. The public engagement activities encompassed public forums, district-based forums, design forums, exhibitions, focus groups, community workshops, and relevant consultation materials (KDPO, 2004).

From 2009 to 2012, only four 'community envisioning' and 'consensus building' workshops on the subjects of 'Preservation of Lung Tsun Stone Bridge Remains' and 'Building our Kai Tak River' were open to the community. The remaining 19 'public consultations' exercises mainly targeted stakeholders such as DCs, the Antiquities Advisory Board, LegCo Development Panel, Town Planning Board (TPB), and Task Force under Harbourfront Commission (CEDD, 2013).

The KTO and EKEO were established in 2010 and 2012, respectively. The jurisdictions of each office were unclear and confusing to many stakeholders in the area; however, EKEO attempts to explain its various responsibilities on its official website: 'Whilst the established Kai Tak Office under CEDD will continue to assume its role in delivering infrastructural projects under KTD, EKEO has been and will continue to focus on the strategic planning of KE including KTD.' (LegCo, 2012, p. 12) Since 2013, considerable quantities of infrastructure have been progressively completed in accordance with the Kai Tak Outline Zoning plan, such as the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal Buildings. Two blocks of public rental housings (Kai Ching Estate and Tak Long Estate) were also completed (EKEO, 2012b). To date, the participatory approach pushed by EKEO on the issues of walkability and the smart city has not reached the Kai Tak area. Only the Kai Tak Fantasy contest exhibited any coordination between both agencies.

'We have an overall coordination and overseeing role because Kai Tak development area is within Kowloon East. But the Kai Tak office, they are under the Civic Engineering Department. […] They focus more on works projects. So they are building up all the infrastructures in the area to allow development, private and public development to come to use the Kai Tak development area. [...] But we work closely together because there are so many interfaces, projects between us. One of these is the Environmentally Friendly Linkage System [EFLS] which is an intra-district green transport mode linking Kai Tak and Kwun Tong and Kowloon Bay. So

for all the interface thing we have to work really closely together. We have got very friendly' (EKEO-01).

After a review of the secondary materials on this participation process tour attempt to interview members of the KTO was

neglected on various occasions. However, we identified a noteworthy case of civic engagement that can help in evaluating the pros and cons of participatory planning.

Fig. 4 Public engagement exercises by Kai Tak Planning Review
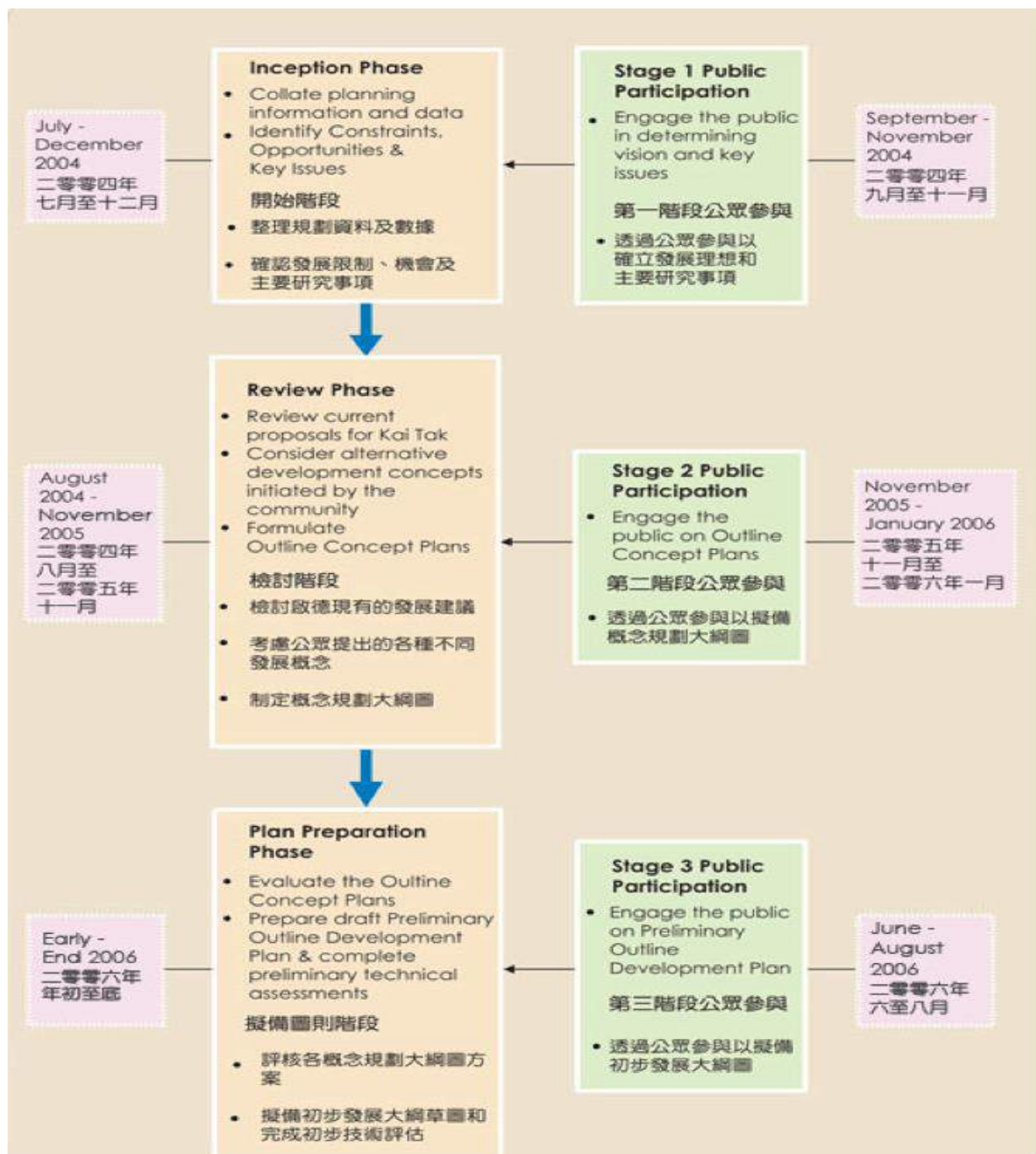
Reference: KTPO (2004)

Professionals' Initiatives in Kai Tak

During the Kai Tak and KE redevelopment processes, professional organisations have been actively involved in providing comments and alternative strategies either on a voluntary basis or by appointment.

For example, in 2005, the Hong Kong Policy Research Institute was appointed by the government to evaluate and provide comments on Stage 2 of Public Participation, namely the Outline Concept Plans, which were conducted by the Kai Tak Planning Review. In general, the institute agreed that the main concepts of the planning proposals met with public aspirations. Moreover, the institute provided suggestions on various subjects such as housing and office space. In particular, they argued that 'Hong Kong is not short of housing land in general, but it needs more high-class housing land to meet the demand of the niche market' (HKPRI, 2006, p. 4).

> **They would […] have some preliminary development plans for the public to comment. They arranged the forums so different groups [might] object. [...] So they are open to it but they did the final decision actually**

By contrast, in 2013, Liber Research Community, allied with two other professional organisations (Professional Commons and Harmonic), launching a proposal named 'Kai Tak for the People'. They advocated more public housing in areas such as Kai Tak to prevent peripheral displacement of working class households (e.g., to the Northeast New Territories Development). Housing supply could be increased through some adjustments of the KTD plans. In addition, public spaces could be augmented at the expense of limiting land provisions for hotels and sports stadiums.

The alliance organised various noninstitutional events to disseminate their proposal, such as press conferences and public forums. Furthermore, they started lobbying the government through institutional channels given the initially open approach of the participatory mechanisms. 'They would […] have some preliminary development plans for the public to comment. They arranged the forums so different groups [might] object. [...] So they are open to it but they did the final decision actually' (CG-01).

To further promote the proposal, Liber Research Community criticised the response they received from various government departments. 'So this is a disadvantage, the department would say that we did not have strong evidence or justification. So they could easily disapprove the proposal by civil society [based on] technical reasons. *You don't have findings to support*, […] something like that' (CG-01). In particular, they submitted their suggestions to revise the existing plans to the TPB. Rather than engaging the public in deliberation over these suggestions, the TPB dismissed them by exercising its final decision-making power through indoor meetings.

3.3 Stakeholders' Views

In this section, we present the analysis of the most crucial opinions, observations, and evaluations of the different stakeholders that were interviewed. We selected a sample that is as diverse as possible to understand aspects that cannot be easily incorporated in the institutional participatory planning process. This qualitative collection of discourses enabled us to identify hidden faults and phenomena that could undermine the democratic quality of a participatory approach to the redevelopment planning of KE. Rather than being exhaustive, the analysis revealed an array of indicative topics that should be addressed to improve public engagement.

3.3.1 Main Criticisms Raised by Stakeholders

On the basis of the personal interviews, we were able to identify numerous crucial criticisms regarding various aspects of the participatory process developed in KE. These views first indicate a general dissatisfaction with the public engagement opportunities in the urban planning and management processes. Second, they provide detailed accounts of dimensions that could be improved in further stages.

In particular, we have distinguished and grouped these aspects as follows:

- Public Consultation Workshop
- Information Delivery
- Underlying Controversies

Public Consultation Workshop

One of the key initiatives taken by EKEO to engage the public in the urban changes encountered by KE was the 'Pedestrian Environment Improvement Scheme'. Two private consultancy companies were commissioned to provide feasibility studies for 'Kowloon Bay Business Area' and 'Kwun Tong Business Area'—AECOM and ARUP, respectively. Besides other activities, they organised workshops to collect 0comments and proposals from the participants. Although this form of 'public consultation' implies a face-to-face interaction and opportunities to have conversations, many interviewees still deemed that the workshops had several limitations as an effective mechanism for engaging the population in the planning process. Occasionally, the interviewees referenced other forms of public consultations, other meetings conducted by the government, and instances or past experiences closely connected with their views on KE.

Some interviewees considered the workshops to be one-sided and to be above all an instrument for government

Some interviewees considered the workshops to be one-sided and to be above all an instrument for government and professional consultants to present their plans rather than a mechanism to discuss the public's views, negotiate, or make agreements with various stakeholders. The following excerpts from the interviews elucidate their views:

▪ An interviewee from a Civic Group remarked: 'A lot of their points were based on presumptions on the monorail [EFLS]. There was uncertainty with regards to the ticket prices, whether they could generate enough income to offset the expenses, and where the customers come from. There were quite a lot of questions they couldn't answer properly.' (CG-02) Because the EFLS was not openly debated elsewhere, some participants wished to discuss walkability in the workshop. However, the contents and technical proposals of the workshops were not sufficiently flexible to hold further discussions. 'The public consultation process was quite one-sided. The "consultation" was more like an opportunity for them to sell the idea of the monorail, rather than listening to the public's opinion.' (CG-02)

▪ A District Councillor believed that workshops and other means of consultation in both Kai Tak and the rest of KE managed by EKEO were not satisfactory: 'frankly, it wasn't a good consultation' (DC-01). Rather than merely listening to the participants or presenting ready-made plans, 'you need to assess whether both visions match' (DC-01). Irrespective of the number of times he raised issues regarding planning and management, no authority addressed them immediately. On the contrary, most issues were postponed or arranged according to the authorities' discretion. 'Not a lot of thought was put into it before a decision was made. It was all about saving face. They were scared [of the possible consequences]. (…) We kept on pressing on the issue but they continued to fudge' (DC-01).

▪ Another District Councillor considered that EKEO is not entitled to make substantial decisions and that many other governmental departments are involved in

KE: 'We don't agree with the design of this workshop.' (DC-02) She believed that a 'community forum' between the head of EKEO, representatives from the government, residents, and political party representatives would be more 'effective'. 'EKEO's representative told us she's only a representative who has no actual power. (…) It is a workforce. It is not legally empowered to control other departments to perform certain tasks' (DC-02).

▪ Activists usually hold an opposed view to most government actions. 'I think [workshops] are rubbish. They have organized some mobile exhibitions for consultation before. The participation in Hong Kong is fake. After they have collected information from consultation, they only do what they want to do. It is so fake. In overseas countries there is now planning by the people. It is done by people in a bottom-up approach. (…) They only listened to what they desired. Then they would collect those opinions favouring their views—like *the redevelopment would bring more economic activities*. Then they would clarify that the mentioned economic activities are those the government thought of. So they continuously build luxurious housing blocks, boutique hotels, and Grade A offices. […] This creates conflicts in the society. It couldn't solve the community needs. It is not a diversified and sustainable direction of development. Smart City? Low Carbon? These are fakes. The general public won't care.' (CG-03) This attitude prevents them from attending the workshops. They fear that their opinions will be easily manipulated according to the government's previously set goals. Moreover, the dissenting voices might be included merely for justifying the efforts made by planners while listening to everyone: 'They just turn your opinions into the *alternative voice* and make your

voice as the *opposition percentage*' (CG-03).

The design of the workshops was criticized for not achieving a sufficient inclusivity of

social groups and addressing their specific needs.

Miguel A. MARTINEZ

■ For example, according to a nearby resident, 'Engineers usually conceive the first renewal plans for the district from their own perspective. They might not know what exactly the situation is like at the real setting, such as the needs of the people living there. Thus they should have considered our input as well, in order to find out, for example, what are the most insufficient facilities in the neighbourhood [for] the elderly and the children. And how should these problems be addressed?' (R-01). This is consistent with our own observations of the workshops and with the recognition by the management of EKEO that they did not sufficiently insist upon including all types of residents in the urban areas surrounding the industrial and business hub of KE.

■ In addition to the social diversity of residents, the exclusion of artists (and activists) settled in the industrial buildings is usually emphasized as a conspicuous absence: 'The participants are mostly students and people who research on such issues. Actual residents rarely attend. The councillors and so-called stakeholders are represented as well to a certain extent' (DC-02). Furthermore, 'I know many artists in Kwun Tong but no one attended the workshops and no one knew about them. […] They only focus on traffic. People are concerned about what's the future of the industrial area. Has it become a CBD II or become a creativity industrial area? […] But they only talk about very minor [issues]. Whether they introduce some flowers in the roads, or the traffic lights may stop 2 more seconds; it does not

change much' (CG-04). In the informal conversations that we held with some artists involved in the Ngautrip event, these artists also expressed their unwillingness to participate in the institutional participation mechanisms. They anticipated feeling powerless and hopeless because of similar past experiences: 'Until today, I can't see the report. You can't see the report online. Until today, 2 years already' (CG-04).

▪Because DCs are key stakeholders in the redevelopment process and maintained contact with the EKEO staff outside of the workshops, an activist distinguished them from 'the public'—it is just an example of political representation. Moreover, he believed that District Councillors do not necessarily make correct decisions, and that the only way to achieve public engagement is to directly reach people in the area, and not operate through representatives.

> *"Until today, I can't see the report. You can't see the report online. Until today, 2 years already"*

'EKEO should have more direct communication with the community […] because no one knows what happens. […] It would be much better than they can go directly to the community' (CG-05).

▪ The format of the workshops was also questioned by a District Councillor. She would have preferred to be engaged in previous and more regular discussions. The short duration of actual deliberation and the lack of a meaningful feedback system were disappointing. 'The things they do in each phase are quite standardised: small-scale workshop, large-scale workshop, and then big consultation. […] From my understanding we should have engaged in some smaller workshops before. […] The

feedback was [useless].' (DC-02) Moreover, this is in agreement with our direct observations of the rush, urgency, and large number of discussion topics set to be addressed within the few hours assigned for the duration of the workshops.

When we interviewed the staff of the consultancy firm responsible for the workshops, they admitted that social groups with vested socioeconomic interests are more eager to attend participatory meetings than local workers. Workers may consider these workshops to be a waste of time and therefore prefer to use their free time after work for other activities.

▪ The main challenge for the organisers of the workshops identifying incentives that can trigger the involvement of all social groups. 'Even though we invite all of them one by one, by mail or even by face to face, it doesn't mean that they all will come and express their views to us. That's kind of one of our difficulties. That's why we would like to think about different measures to reach them out. Of course in addition to the workshop [we organised] exhibitions, the online interactive map [and] we also invite them to send us written comments. […] But […] it depends whether they have the incentive. […] Owners of the industrial buildings would like to have a bridge connecting to their own buildings. Some of them maybe would just like to know more. […] The investors' interests drive them to come for the workshop and express their views to try to affect the decisions of the government. But for those who work over there, that's actually the workers; [they] spend [there] quite much of their time. [Therefore] we observed that most of them run after their work, they will go directly to the MTR station. […] The users are more mobile here, not residents' (PC-01). In addition, a

member of a professional organisation reasoned that participation fails because only professionals, financial investors, and developers exhibit interest in the planning process: 'We have conducted the situation [to a point] where the decision, major decisions are made purely in terms of land management and [land and financial] organisations. […] I would like to be associated with the involvement in East Kowloon Development in the sense that most of our members are professionals. […] Definitely there are investment opportunities [so] some of members may be interested in too. We are representing the full landscape of the whole real estate industry from Hong Kong and also part of China' (PO-01). Furthermore, a District Councillor holds a similar conviction: 'They have put a lot of effort into the consultation process, in the workshops for example. Publications and posters were everywhere but only those whose interests will be directly affected by the issue will attend those workshops. Otherwise the public won't care that much' (DC-02).

The following conversations with workers and student-residents illustrate the lack of incentives for the general public: 'Q: Have you heard about the organised workshops and seminars? A: No, I seldom noticed. Q: If there were any consultations, would you like to attend? A: No. […] Generally, it is useless when we tell about the government. The government decides and lets you choose' (W-01). 'Q: Even after 10 years, do you also think that there should not be a change? A: Yes, I think so. The old and original cultures should be preserved. […] I think the government is rubbish' (R-02). In fact, their ignorance and reluctant attitude to cooperate with the official participatory mechanisms is also grounded on a deeper distrust towards the government's intentions and management style. The increasing popular interest in local heritage over the last decade might provide incentives for the involvement of young people; however, the relevant processes would not necessarily be rooted in young people's economic interests.

Siu Leung Cheung

■ Community groups may be motivated to attend to remain informed. Although they recognise their minority position compared with private companies and real estate professionals, their participation ensures that they remain updated with the main urban changes that occur. 'Q: What kinds of consultation events called by EKEO did you join? A: Most of them were consultations and they told us their planning. The last time was last year. 80%–90% [of the participants] were developers. Their targets were hotels and residential developments. We were the only sport club. Q: If there are other consultations in the future, will you join? A: Yes, we will. Q: What do you think about the effectiveness of your participation? A: We would like to know the progress. I am not sure about the effectiveness but I cannot find the reasons to be absent from the consultations' (CG-06).

The lack of information accessibility was widely criticised. Maps and technical reports were neither accessible well in advance nor easily understandable. Therefore, participants were unable to criticise experts' proposals, suggest new ones, or compare possible alternatives. Although the staff from the consulting firm and some of the most qualified participants explained some issues during the workshops, a hierarchical dependency was created, which is difficult to overcome in a short time.

■ Rather than providing adequate information to the public before the deliberative events were held, secrecy appeared to be prevalent and partial insights about the topic were provided. A member of a professional organisation stated the following: 'I think the government should more proactively approach us instead of just posting the notice on the wall. You come across and then you can see kind of they just want to show that their jobs are done—*I have informed the public and you are one member of the public, you should give your opinions to us*. It is not really proactive. […] When you see a project is being developed by the government somewhere in the city, they never tell you anything about. […] Sometimes, they are not very proactive in [providing] the information to the public or to the industry, so that we could make better informed decisions' (PO-01).

■ Complaints about the accessibility of important and timely information are also based on the suspicion that when government departments organise the participatory process the ultimate decisions have been predetermined. They are not open to improvements because the complexity of the planning decisions is not translated to the public to enable them to understand and engage in the process. 'I think the feedback mechanisms [are] very poor because I can't see what they propose, even I can't understand. How do they fix it? […] *We put the footbridge there...* You know, it is so complicated. That environment, those multiple layers. […] When the government get out a plan, this plan is internally agreed and that is the big problem, I think. If you really want to get a plan open to the community, you get to be ready to make changes that respond to the public concerns' (CG-05).

■ In a case related to the participatory process in Kai Tak, an activist remarked that the responses received from the government discouraged further involvement of the public. In particular, she was told that (1) her group's suggestions would lead to unsustainable delays in the redevelopment project and (2) the government could not handle the raised

issue because of the lack of technical refinement. 'Some [members of the Town Planning Board] may show appreciation for your objectives [...] but actually they were also kind of inclined to the government's side—like *this will affect that programme, this would delay the whole thing* and we didn't have strong technical support' (CG-01). Certainly, such processes would entail a closer exchange of information between the official departments and the civic groups interested in advancing with their proposals, rather than the current tendency to dismiss civic feedback because of its insufficient development.

An architect presently working in a construction site in the area and attended a workshop emphasised the complexity of the topics under discussion and the intense time pressure during the workshop in which they were addressed. 'It's a limited time with too many different topics. Yes, that's my observation of the workshop. It will be better if it were more narrowed down the idea and then to continue discussing about that. Because I believe there are seventy-five items to talk about within a very limited time. […] Actually there are no in-depth ways for discussion during the workshop' (A-01).

Despite the abundant information distributed by the organisers of the workshops, the information did not reach many people. In particular, many people from the creative sector such as workers, designers, and artists revealed that they did not notice any announcements of the workshops. 'There were no posters near the lift on the lobby. It seems it had happened but you didn't notice them. It is not a practical consultation. […] If they really wanted to let us know that there are consultation meetings in the district, they should have really let us know. For

instance, the musical water fountain. They should have asked us whether we needed it or not. You can provide an agenda to us. Then we know that you would discuss several items and so on and so forth. They should come and talk. If they let me know, I will go and argue with them' (D-01).

Information Delivery

Similar to the issue of accessibility to crucial information to participate in the workshops, interviewees complain about the means by which information in general is released, delivered, and disseminated by the planning authorities.

Workers in the area are rarely aware of what is happening in KE in terms of planning, redevelopment, and promotion. Although they hear something occasionally and are routinely familiar with the physical space, they usually feel poorly informed. EKEO is frequently a blind spot for them. They barely notice advertisements or information display boards related to the projects in the area unless a large construction site is underway. For example: 'The promotion by the government is not enough. On the contrary, I knew it because of the complaints. The complaints were reported by news. [...] I don't know if they promoted on TV. I only remember they have a website. News reports also mentioned. No promotions on

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TV. […] I don't go to the website to check it out. […] I know that there are artists organising something like exhibitions, parties…' (W-01) Residents share similar views: 'Q: Have you ever received any information from them? A: No, I haven't. But I'm not sure about my family. I'm afraid not. I've never heard anything about these projects. Every time it's just "*Oh, a new building has popped up*", "*Oh here's another one!*" I've never received any prior information about them. Q: Do you know anything about the renewal of Kwun Tong and Kowloon Bay area? A: I have barely received any information on this. Q: Didn't any of the District Councillors mention about the renewal project? A: They didn't. I think they should ask beforehand. They don't live here and thus don't really know the real needs of the residents here' (R-01).

▪ A representative of a professional organisation manifested ignorance about the government's plans in Kai Tak, even after so many years of planning and consultation. 'Q: Even for the development of Kai Tak? A: No. We don't know what actually they want to do. We'd definitely like to offer our views, participate and contribute. Certainly we are keen to do that but we would not be kind of proactive and take the initiative to approach them' (PO-02). Therefore, the responsibility of initiating and continuing the information delivery would fall on the government institutions. This was confirmed by a former District Councillor, who remarked that DCs are partially exempted of that responsibility because they do not have sufficient resources: 'I haven't had the ability to deliver as a District Councillor. I know we have no ability to deliver. We can advise the government but we have no delivery ability. EKEO has the budget and has the delivery ability. They have the delivery ability also because they are sitting

in the redevelopment bureau, so they can go to other bureaus to get support. They are sitting on a much higher level in the government to get things done than the District Council. Therefore, they have money, not much, they have more power' (CG-05).

▪ Among the active citizens in the area who attended the workshops on traffic schemes, one interviewee expressed that he was well informed about the 'monorail' (EFLS) but had no idea about other projects launched or supported by EKEO. 'Q: Do you know Energizing Kowloon East's Office (EKEO)? A: Yes, they support us. Q: Did you have contact with them? A: Yes, with Brenda and Winnie. Q: Have you heard about the plans of embellishing back alleys in Kwun Tong? A: No' (CG-06).

▪ Professionals in the field of arts and design whose workplaces are located within industrial buildings often contested the government's efforts to keep stakeholders informed. 'I have never heard or known anything. There are so many advertisements on TV made by the government, or on bus. There are so many billboards on the streets, like those made by the Food and Hygiene Department. I have never seen any like that about EKEO. Basically if they want to do something, they could make it. I have been renting the flat for 5 years, I have never noticed a small bit of it. […] The management office [of the industrial building where my studio is located] only posts those notices of suspension of electricity or water supply or the information on tours organised by the owners' corporation' (D-01).

▪ An interviewee who was a small business owner also criticised the poor information flow through social media. 'I am a person who cannot live without the cell phone and

I am attached to it. It is very common for the owners of small and medium enterprises to be [continuously] connected to their cell phones. [Thus] it is important for the government to rethink how to let this group of people receive the message. Nowadays, people spend relatively less time on TV, so it is better to use Facebook and YouTube to promote the government's projects. There are increasingly more social platforms but our government does not make good use of them. They only used social media during the political reform' (SM-01). The comparison with the process of political reform indicates that the government has the capacity to reach the population whenever they assign a political priority to their project. Thus, EKEO does not appear to be regarded as being the flagship project that the government sometimes claims it is. Given the political passions that political reform has produced among the Hong Kong population, another interpretation of the aforementioned criticism could be that the government actively uses social media onl y as a reaction to public concerns at the top of the media and political agendas, but not for crucial redevelopment plans such as the KE project.

Nevertheless, traditional mass media are still cherished by nearby residents: 'I guess there should be more explanation and elaboration on TV programmes so the general public can have a deeper understanding' (R-03).

Fig. 5 Criticisms of workshops as a means of public consultation

Underlying controversies

Participatory planning can entail encountering controversial topics at any moment. These can be side-lined, hidden, or overtly discussed. Controversies may arise at various stages of a project—initial proposals, study reports, public information, and consultation. An illustration of this phenomenon in KE is the 'monorail' project (EFLS). Notably, despite pertaining to transport, the topic was not discussed in the workshops on traffic schemes, which upset some participants. The same could apply to other related issues such as the underused and almost abandoned Kwun Tong Ferry pier and utilitarian cycling. The multiple mentions of the monorail by our interviewees clearly indicate that this project remains an underlying conflict that the government has not presented and discussed publicly in a convincing manner. Given the expenses like involved in this infrastructure, its significance can be aligned with other 'white elephant' projects (e.g., the Express Rail Link and Macau-Zuhai-Hong Kong Bridge) that have led to many protests against the government's intentions and procedures.

▪ 'In the District Council people ask me to sign petitions against the projects and I'd say to them that although I have some reservations, I won't oppose the projects. Actually it's not about opposing the proposal. The District Council is the body deciding whether the proposal is accepted or not, it is not a one-man council. No matter whether the councillor is elected or appointed—not the case this year as all of us are elected. The decision is finalised after deliberation between the councillors. No matter how against I am, I only have one vote. The proposal would only be accepted if there is a majority vote, and I

would have to accept the decision and such rules. […] At first some councillors were against the construction of the monorail. I was the one who fought for this proposal' (DC-02). This quotation indicates how the conflict over the monorail pervaded DC meetings. In this particular project, these institutional bodies enjoyed a crucial deliberative capacity, and their decisions may have substantially affected the future implementation of the project. Nonetheless, the seclusion of the debates within the DC walls also indicates the lack of wider public deliberation and involvement.

▪ Another District Councillor not only opposed this infrastructure but also stated that his stance may have caused some damage to his role as a legitimate stakeholder in the view of government authorities. 'You cannot just say this area needs this project and use this area as an excuse for your idea and benefit from it. I criticise the government in the same way as well which is why they don't like me. How can such monorail solve the traffic problems of the area and other areas as well? […] There aren't a lot of people who are just travelling back and forth within the same area, you can go and check it for yourself. […] How can this infrastructure be of any convenience to the locals and bring about the local economy and the vitality of the area?' (DC-01).

▪ An LC member observed that the proposal of the monorail construction was evidently already supported as the most favourable option by the government. Therefore, public engagement in its implementation would only be a 'show'. 'Well, it already started, and I think they first came to talk to me about the monorail about 18 months ago, or

may even be 2 years ago. So you can't really say that they have been dragging their feet in engaging the public. There could be some evidence to say that they may be just doing a show. They had already preconceived this idea that the monorail was the best. Now why is that? Is it because of this conspiracy theory that they already had done a deal with the land owners along the line of the proposed rail? I do not know, but I have some concerns in this regard. […] It seems that the administration and the planners are quite adamant and stubborn that this monorail should be put in place. […] We do not think that the administration has sufficiently justified putting in place the monorail, which to us is very costly, expensive to maintain and they have not made up a really good case that this is the only way forward for CBD intra-district, so to speak, connection' (LC-01).

Yushi Chen

■ A civic group specifically concerned about transport issues stated that various technical proposals should be compared before making such important decisions. Thus, activists perceive their contribution as a means to widen people's options. However, they encounter strong resistance from the government when key investors are assumed to back the proposed infrastructure and public debate about the monorail might delay and undermine the viability of the project. 'Basically, we are a group of people who share the same enthusiasm and a certain level of knowledge regarding trams and other public transport means. It is an interest group and is a non-profit organization. We began to voice our concerns about the redevelopment of Kowloon East due to the government's proposal on the construction of monorail. This particular kind of railway is not that common in the world; it is expensive and requires a lot of pillars and platforms to support. […] We've conveyed our opinions to the best of our abilities. At the end of the day, the authorities' position remains the same, that modern tramway would occupy too much space on the

ground whereas monorail would not, rendering our efforts useless. […] I think it is important for the public to know what kind of a system this monorail is and thus we have carried out research and posted a few essays about it, informing the public about the pros and cons so that they could weigh the facts and decide for themselves which option is better for the area. […] It's not about making suggestions to make the public consultation better, it ultimately depends on whether the government is genuine during these consultations (in considering public's opinion) or are the sessions held just for the show' (CG-02).

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Controversies on specific projects involve various social groups employing different forms for expressing and advancing their views. According to their resources, intentions, and knowledge, they actively pursue various tactics.

■ An example is lobbying high-ranking politicians directly, outside of the context of public consultations. 'I've been lobbying Mrs. Carrie Lam [Chief Secretary for Administration] for the construction of the monorail. But people still disagree with the proposal because there will be fewer people on the streets. So maybe that's why some people oppose the idea' (CG-02).

■ Internal conversations, negotiations, and agreements among various political and administrative bodies are also usual routes that bypass deliberations among the general public. 'At first the proposal wasn't about the construction of a monorail. What they proposed, I mean political parties such as DAB, was the construction of a bridge. A bridge that links Kwun Tong Ferry Pier to Kai Tak Development area. […] A monorail would be able to link up (the areas) and since Hong Kong hasn't had any monorail or a driverless train system… For example, when people go visit Japan, Daiba is a must-visit place, so why isn't there a monorail in Hong Kong? […] Locals don't have particular (opinions). Only Hong Kong Tramways' proposal and it was subsequently discussed at the District Council, but all of us think that [a tramway] would occupy much space on the roads. Whereas, on the other hand, monorail has a higher passenger capacity and it's better on a macro-scale. After Hong Kong Tramways handed in its proposal, its voice died down shortly after. The government then formally set aside a budget for the feasibility study in this LegCo term. […] A sum has been set aside. I don't think they came to the District Council afterwards to tell us which company received the sum and the company's proposals, but one thing that's certain is that EKEO and District Council work together very closely. They would come up to the Council if they had any proposals and explain them' (DC-02).

■ Civic groups such as the Clean Air Network support a technical debate in which various well-informed alternatives are considered before advancing with a project. They stated that the government officials did not listen to other alternatives, thereby seriously constraining any further public consultation process. 'It is proven in other areas in the world that monorail isn't a very effective transportation means. For

example, it was proven a failure in Australia. It's a transportation means that is more for tourists than to meet local demand. There are other better alternatives like trams, green trams. They have actually put forward a proposal—I mean, Hong Kong Tramways—with a cost that will be, I think, one sixth to one eighth of that of the construction of monorail. (Trams) have a higher carrying capacity of passengers, are more suited to locals' needs and complement more with the whole transportation system but the government has decided to go with the proposal of the construction of monorail' (CG-07).

A second illustration of underlying controversies is the discussion related to the 'creative classes' in KE. Although the main planning strategy of EKEO is focused on 'place-making' and branding KE with a symbolic veneer, planners have not endeavoured to interact with the local arts community. This has generated conflict that has, to some extent, led to the alienation of this community from the prevailing participatory process.

This controversy is also rooted in the discontent expressed by creative professionals working in KE since the rents started soaring immediately after the policy for the revitalisation of industrial buildings was launched (2010) and EKEO was established (2012). Their small businesses are thus subject to more financial stress and the resulting displacement of members of this community has led to a disconnect among them. Artists declared, often through informal conversations, that their rents doubled and they blamed the government's hands-on approach to KE regarding branding for activating (energising) the property market in the area. Many members of this community did not claim any subsidy or explicit policy to

support them. They cherished KE because it was an affordable, centrally located, and convenient place for developing their activities. In addition, their own networks of acquaintances, colleagues, and professionals in related business sectors facilitated the generation of an informal community. Because of the economic displacement, only the most affluent and successful members could stay independently in KE, with others being forced to cooperate and collectively use their rented units by sharing costs.

▪ An academic researcher who was involved in the underground scene of Kwun Tong for many years noted that the disinvestment gap was an opportunity for both artists and industrial buildings owners. Artists occupied KE because the rents were cheap. Owners were pleased because they could rent out their properties owing to the high vacancy rates after deindustrialisation. Although prices remained stable for several years, once the owners' expectations of gaining higher profits increased, artists began to feel the pressure. To some extent, according to the researcher, artists' spatial demands and will to remain in the area encouraged the owners' speculative practices. 'For a long time and even now industrial buildings are often vacant and landlords want to get an extra income. So there is a sense, of course, that if you are renting out to artists, you are breaking the law, but [otherwise] you wouldn't earn anything. And artists actually create that kind of rising rents as well' (AR-01). Therefore, the government and EKEO cannot be blamed for the market change; however, they might have been the main 'external' factors fuelling the owners' higher profit expectations. Illegal practices (and the government's tolerance of them) constituted the grey zone in which this particular property market operated to

prevent financial loss for all parties—owners and artists. 'There is a small business community around this. And I also think they have the same strong market ideology than the government, exactly the same. Everyone in Hong Kong is about "let the market work", but once the market doesn't work, everybody complains.' (AR-01).

In some cases, artists had convenient temporary agreements with landlords. Tenancy rents were increased but not at 'market rates' in line the ongoing speculative trends. 'The landlord said they lease the flat to an individual for 10 years. He just increased the rent amount twice. They asked us not to worry too much. He said he supports the so-called youth starting their own business instead of working for others. He just said that. I will only know when the time comes. […] The plan proposed by the government is to convert the area into the next business district, the next Central. I know how the project would affect me. Like a designer who starts their own business, the income is not stable. When they energise the area, the rent also energises. When the rent energises, either you bear it or you close it. Either of these two ways' (CP-01). The reference to the verb 'energising' is an obvious reference to EKEO's actions in the area. Creative-art studios operating in KE, being small companies, are more concerned about their own economic survival should the government plans disturb the property market environment rather than improving the details or participatory opportunities of the planning process.

'In the 1980s and 1990s, some artists, such as Johnnie To, lived in Kwun Tong Industrial Buildings. By the end of the 1990s, there were some [musicians] coming to Kwun Tong. They have been staying here for more than a decade. As for the diversity in [this] development, what the government has to do is support them, simply regulate them. There is no need to impose a big policy. Policy-making is [just] beneficial to the real estate developers. Who can unify all the property rights of a building for revitalisation? Only the big real estate developers' (CP-01). In contrast to the opinions we collected from other artists, this activist preferred having specific government policies to support the local creative community. Cultural diversity will vanish if artists are abandoned to market forces, with only the financially strongest (most business-oriented) individuals and organisations remaining in KE.

The vibrancy of the arts community in KE is at risk because they feel powerless when confronted with real estate operators. However, there are many hints of self-organisation and cooperation among creative professionals (e.g., the annual *Ngautrip* event). 'After the Kwun Tong Town Center project [K7], I got also involved in the industrial area. I help the artists because many artists are very good in artworks but they don't know how to analyse [public] policies. For example, the government propose the idea of CBD-2, but they don't know what it is. They don't know what the relationship between the CBD and their artworks is. So I try to help them as a researcher. I organise some of the artists. To talk with them and discuss with them. […] Artists are a little bit cynical because they say that even if you get organised, it does not change anything because they feel powerless. But I think I can ask them to come. They are very happy to talk' (CG-04). Instead of a loose arts community in which they feel free and at ease, the government's embracement of a 'creative industry' appears like an external

imposition, with subsequent unwanted side effects and alien economic interests. Moreover, many artists express criticism of the HKSAR government in their creative work, and do not welcome interference from the government. In addition, they require affordable spaces for their activities; they suspect that the promotion of 'creative industries' is a direct attack on their survival conditions in a formerly cheap urban area. 'Creative industry is not a good thing. It's like when URA kicks people out from a place. We say no to CY [the Chief Executive] but we are also concerned as we are artists. So we don't want the *creative industry* because the creative industry is only in the name but what is behind [is] the real estate redevelopment. […] The only reason [is that] this policy hits the rents and artists cannot find spaces. They need space to work. […] They want to use the space legally but now you can see that the Lands Department still can close their studios or residences because of the violence of the zoning policy. The policy is a trap. […] It is only for the real estate developers, not for the cultural industry' (CG-04).

The above quotations indicate crucial alienation from the institutional participatory mechanisms. There are no clear or easy bridges between planners, creative professionals, and other stakeholders. This is particularly critical in the case of a substantial cluster of poor (but certainly passionate) artists who lived in KE at a very low cost for many years. Internal divides within this community and their detachment from some 'creative' policies or events promoted by the EKEO (e.g., the Back Alley and Fly the Flyover projects) may also cause their continuous contestation of official policies.

▪ 'There are different types of artists and different types of users in the industrial buildings in Kowloon East. I think they [the government] undermine [or underestimate] the impact on those grassroot operators, the grassroot artists within the area. I think they don't really quite understand the people inside. The people here, I mean in particular the grassroots here, are not fancy about what events the government is doing. They are concerned about the rental price. The government did nothing to… I mean, in a policy level, the Hong Kong government wouldn't do anything about controlling the rental price. What they do in response [is] just […] more supply. Then the price would drop gradually [the government thinks]. […] But people don't believe that because when you bring up more supply, you attract more investment and interests [so the price will increase]. […] My view is that the grassroot people might find it hard to stay here but the groups may not disappear completely. Some would stay here for a long while and the resistance would continue for like several decades, maybe' (CG-01). To support less wealthy artists, this activist advocates for public intervention in the property market (i.e., price controls), which the government usually rejects by arguing that public intervention would erode Hong Kong's capitalist and free market-oriented principles.

▪ Artist-activists opposed some EKEO-driven initiatives in the field of arts such as the Back Alley project. 'The EKEO project used the graffiti to beautify the back alleys. I started talking to my friends. We should do something because the EKEO uses the name of graffiti to do something creative, and creativity and graffiti should be means to say *no* to the establishment. So they [the artists] organise an online campaign and demonstrations. The graffiti created under the EKEO project are very ugly. But they

say they spent HKD 900,000 for the graffiti. They use such huge amounts of money. But they do a very ugly work. Like primary school work. So we laughed at them and wrote articles and then we did some demonstrations. We just want to tell people that creativity and culture are not a neutral thing. Sometimes, maybe a tool of the government' (CG-04). Local artists assert their right to apply their creative work throughout the spaces they inhabit.

I know how the project would affect me. Like a designer who starts their own business, the income is not stable. When they energise the area, the rent also energises. When the rent energises, either you bear it or you close it. Either of these two ways

Officially sponsored art appears to them to be a form of political coercion and censorship and may also involve an elitist and outsiders' orientation that dismisses local artists and the characteristic local outlook of the area. 'I have read some articles and guided some tours. My biggest concern is that the so-called street art or community art did not come from the community. It is detached from the community since it is outsourced to PolyU. Then they found some so-called famous artists. I like graffiti but those are not related to local culture. It is problematic. You don't need to find LMF, the local group. But you could find neighbours' (CG-03). The interviews with local residents and workers indicate that most of interviewees were unaware of the artistic interventions in the back alleys— still less who had organised their production.

▪ Similar criticisms were extended to the EKEO's decision to contract out a recently licensed organisation (HKALPS) with no previous ties with KE to manage the activities underneath the Kwun Tong Bypass (the flyover). The tender process, the lack of experience of the winner, and the lack of transparency of the process were some of the criticisms raised in most alternative media (and some mainstream outlets). As previously discussed, artists and activists from the KE area and other parts of Hong Kong feel more comfortable with engaging in social media than in institutional mechanisms of consultation and negotiation. 'The organisation [HKALPS] is totally newly established. We don't know what it is, who they are. I have never heard of them. The firm didn't have any previous experience. It is ridiculous' (CG-03). Following the inception of the Fly the Flyover programme, local artists refused to participate in the music events, festivals, fairs, and other cultural actions backed by EKEO because they perceived these events as an external colonisation of their own field of expertise. Earlier, the local artists independently organised their own performance under the flyover without asking for any license. Had a different cultural organisation, closer to or from within their community, won the tender, the perception of co-optation and institutionalisation might not have arisen, or at least involved less initial resentment. Nevertheless, visitors and the general public that attend the official activities are usually ignorant of these internal conflicts.

▪ A District Councillor has even admitted that the lost freedom of performing in the abandoned spaces of KE might be recovered by relaxing the regulations managed by the LCSD and EKEO. Certainly, organised activities are less sustainable over time (festivals and fairs tend to be one-off events), whereas informal and popular cultural expressions

may provide a more lasting vibrancy. 'When the government doesn't enforce the law, the artists and musicians who have been able to do so in these buildings take it for granted. Thus when the government enforces the law, these artists and musicians claim that the government is suppressing their (creativity, rights, etc.).

Miguel A. MARTÍNEZ

[…] There is always something that prevents such functions from continuing week after week. I always tell the government: lots of middle-aged women now dance, teenagers now play music and street dance, so if I were the one in charge, they wouldn't need to book the venue for such activities like before—the venue would be open for all. Then they could just dance, bring their equipment over and play their music and sing etc. every week. But I don't understand why the government isn't effectively promoting such idea. […] Our voices are not always heard' (DC-02). This explains the closure of Hidden Agenda, which revealed to the public the unclear legal circumstances in which many artists in KE were trapped. Despite the instability that these minor legal infractions entail, many artists stated that they do not worry much about handling them.

In sum, the government faces various dilemmas in promoting a creative hub in KE—inclusion of various types of artists in their management and participatory exercises, regulation of the property market and legal activities in industrial buildings, and establishing specific policies addressing the arts community. Failing to address these issues will only accelerate the effective displacement of the creative professionals working (and sometimes living) in the area, as most of our informants observed:

▪ 'The cheap rentals have also attracted the so-called "artists". I once followed a worker […] into their office and when I went inside their site at Hung Hom, the whole office was renovated as grand as a hotel. Bear in mind that the office was just in an industrial building. The whole office was also very spacious to the point you can do anything in there without being noticed. Regarding the artists, as I've said, when they first moved in the rentals were very cheap, but when you're wanting to build "another Central", do you think the owners would settle for a $3,000 or $5,000 rent over a $30,000 rent? Its actual value now is $30,000. The owners therefore wouldn't want to charge a rent of $3,000 [as they did before]. This would only be possible when the economy is poor. […] The problem with the large number of artists in the area is that if the government subsidises the artists to do something else, how would you think others would react? If artists need to be subsidised, do others need to be subsidised as well?' (DC-01).

▪ 'This comes to the availability of the commercial space at low cost so that the art community can access the space they need. […] In Kwun Tong, obviously, there is no space to do that because it went from industrial to commercial [first and from commercial] and high quality commercial [later]. […] That basically means that you have to move' (CG-05).

The artistic community in fact represents one of the multiple sectors of small and medium enterprises operating in KE. Most face hardships caused by the increase in rents. Only those with a stronger capital base are able to remain in the area. This implies internal cleavages among these businesses (with informal and poor hawkers at the bottom of the ladder), and thus, different attitudes to the planning process. In practice, their willingness and motivation to participate is low; however, in theory, they could lobby as extensively as powerful real estate developers do. Similar to what happened in the K7 redevelopment project, traditionally cherished shops and services scattered all over the industrial buildings are at risk of closure. This fear and anger fuel underlying opposition to the government's plans and even to their requests for public engagement. Furthermore, it is very unlikely that the 'shop-for-shop' policy often rejected by the URA will be implemented by EKEO or any other governmental department in KE.

Fig. 6 Underlying controversies
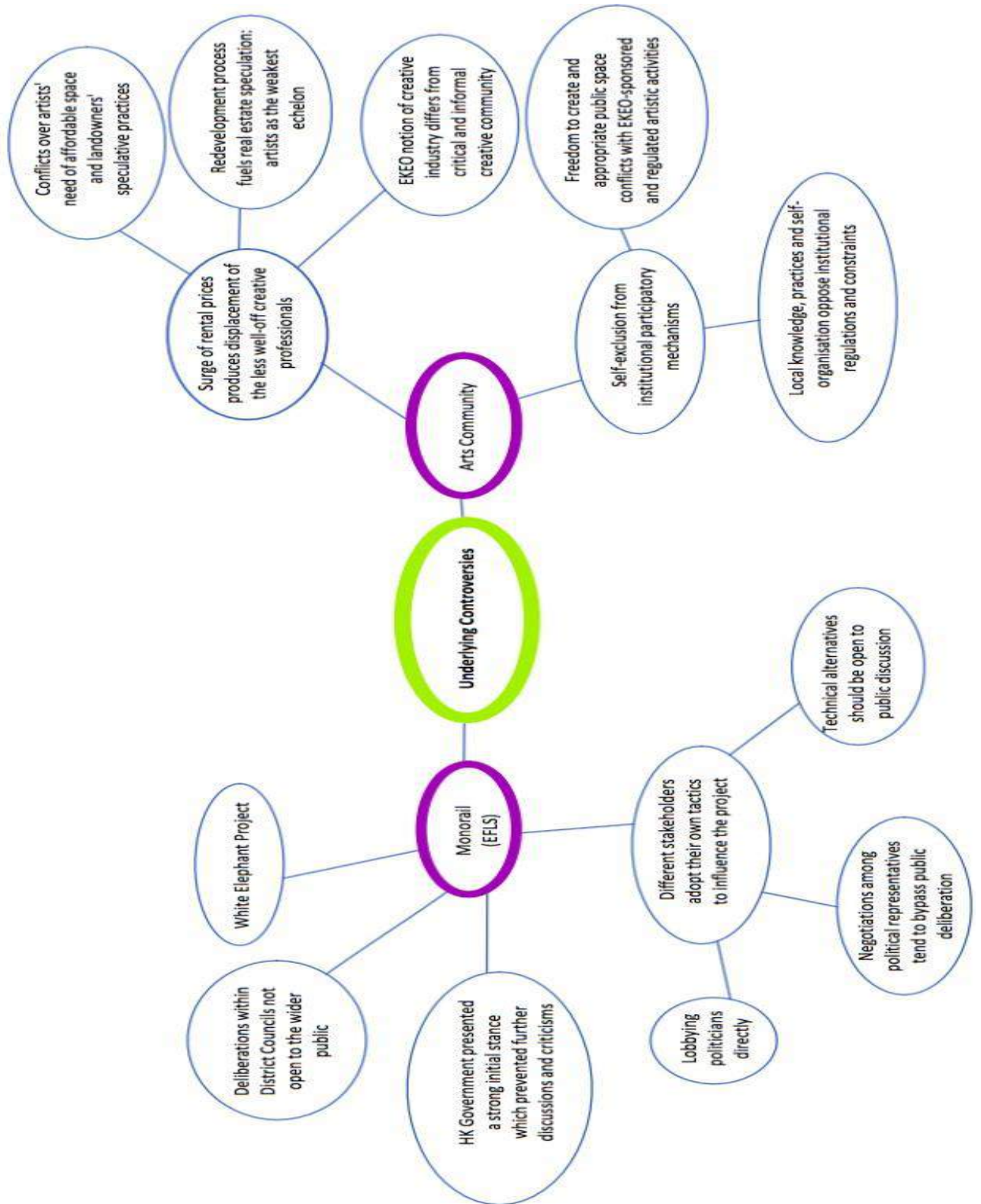
3.3.2 Constructive Evaluations According to Stakeholders

Overall, apart from the EKEO management and the consultants working for them, few interviewees presented positive evaluations of the participatory process. This is partially because of the qualitative design of this study, in which we made a conscious effort in reaching out to voices that are not usually heard within the institutional mechanisms of participation. Nevertheless, we collected constructive suggestions from the interviewed stakeholders to be considered in further stages of the redevelopment process in KE or elsewhere.

An architect who participated in one of the workshops on pedestrianisation and is also involved in one of the construction sites of the area welcomed the open approach of EKEO to incorporating a diverse range of professionals. However, he also believed that the duration and extent of the discussions were too limited to discuss technical aspects. 'The positive side is that a lot of different professional people shared the information. And the negative is the very limited time for too many topics. Many people have to share their ideas [...] so EKEO can consolidate that kind of idea [in order to decide] which way they can go for. Maybe that was their original intention in doing that way. But actually, there were no in-depth discussions during the workshop. Maybe they plan another round, a fourth round later' (CP-02).

A former member of the LegCo (from the pandemocratic camp) considered the actions performed by EKEO as 'acceptable' in both the planning and participatory dimensions: 'In general terms, I would say that the public engagement exercise, in so far as the development of Kowloon East is concerned, is acceptable. There are

different avenues for the public to be engaged and to make known the public's views and opinions to those who are designing the project. And in the course of such public engagement we have detected that opinions expressed have been taken aboard, and the planners actually went back to the drawing board and included some of the ideas that they received during the engagement process' (LC-01). He attended some LegCo meetings in which they were briefed by EKEO and other authorities on the progress of development. This timely communication by EKEO and the many activities conducted to connect with different social groups in a relatively short period may

'I think that if the government is actually listening to the people, they should stop the project which only focuses on real estate development." (CG-04).

explain the satisfaction expressed by legislators and District Councillors. In addition, few criticisms of the redevelopment of KE were reported in the mass media compared with other cases of redevelopment in Hong Kong, which may indicate a more efficient planning strategy in the KE redevelopment process. However, the transparency of the process and the involvement of public representatives do not indicate that the general public was fully engaged, informed, or satisfied.

A District Councillor appreciated all the efforts made by EKEO and other government departments to promote consultation workshops and discussions within the DCs. Moreover, 'people from To Kwa Wan attended too. But after a series of discussion, the conclusion was not particularly fruitful as some agree while some disagree with (the monorail)' (DC-

02). Similar recognition was expressed by an activist (and former District Councillor) despite demanding closer contact with actual residents and many other civic groups, in addition to a higher budget for EKEO to address the artists' displacement and claims: 'EKEO is the one making decisions in the commercial district and they consult the public for that. They do. […] They have no budget to deal with the place of artists. No space to deal with it. […] I don't think EKEO is doing something wrong. But […] EKEO [should deal] with the consequences of […] artificial, orchestrated gentrification' (CG-05).

To overcome the deadlocks and shortcomings that were highlighted during our research, many interviewees proposed further developing a bottom-up approach (in the procedural dimension) and a more central concern for the most excluded social groups (in the dimension of social needs to be addressed). The latter would ensure that consultations focused on those grassroots' views and demands rather than assuming a consensus on a seldom-discussed model of 'economic growth' (CG-03). An improved bottom-up approach would obligate EKEO and governmental departments to maintain active communication with the people in the area to genuinely understand their actual needs rather than only listening to some random opinions typically limited those of the most privileged and well-educated groups involved: 'I think that if the government is actually listening to the people, they should stop the project which only focuses on real estate development. Instead, the government should find a way to identify and create Kwun Tong's interesting cultural character, in order to make it a liveable city' (CG-04).

Regarding the planning process, despite the flexible mechanism adopted to reformulate the CMP, some interviewees asked for a more public implication; for example, 'I think we have to go back to the planning in a much more proactive way.' (CG-08) This supports the criticism that many planning decisions were pre-determined by EKEO managers with little scope for discussion once the public participation exercises were conducted. 'If the government opens its mind, if different departments are welcomed to new ideas in a strategic level, if there is a real innovative thinking that is allowed in the process of the earlier stage, we can develop a progress for our urban development.' (CG-09) Similarly, some categorise this participatory planning process on the basis of a 'hardware' planning style instead of a much more favourable 'software' approach: 'That plan is probably at least a year old. It has gone through all the departments and all the technical reviews. The government presented it as a draft idea, but it is not an idea, it is something that they have already internally done. Therefore, what they come up with is *hardware*, not a soft plan. So when coming up some soft plan, you can change it much earlier' (CG-05).

Regarding the incentives to participate, some interviewees stated that artists would not contribute if the topics under discussion were 'minor' ones. Therefore, the specific concerns of every social group should be placed at the core of the contents under discussion. This applies in particular to the promotion of so-called 'creative industries'. Consultants who organised the workshops and EKEO staff admitted that identifying stakeholders and persuading them to attend the consultation events are fundamentally separate tasks. Frequently, they had to repeatedly telephone a number of groups to insist that they attend the workshops. 'Of

course in addition to the workshop, the exhibitions and the online interactive map, we also invite them to send us [online] written comments' (PC-01). However, according to these consultants even a representative sample of online comments is extremely difficult to collect. In response, a creative professional who is currently working in Kwun Tong suggested: 'In fact, I think that the social media platforms need to be better utilised. People need to pay careful attention to the details. […] Actually, social media should be used as an instrument, to communicate with all the stakeholders in the area. This information delivery approach could allow easier communication and encourage [more] participation of the public' (CP-01). He also suggested that if EKEO published and distributed its materials such as workshop agenda in advance, the likelihood of public attendance could be improved.

Using analogical and sophisticated devices could facilitate civic engagement. For example: 'This is a complex area where space, facilities, infrastructures are already existing. The only way to help people imagine their ideas of how to work is [by using] 3-dimensional models and the ability for people to go in a room, walk through the street, walk through the buildings. And it is now cheap to do so' (CG-05). As previously stated, EKEO and other state agencies tend to regard the DCs as if they genuinely represented the actual residents. However, it is more accurate to assume that they constitute merely another level of political representation. It is intrinsically desirable for state officials to be closer to citizens. Thus, a more diversified and direct communication with the general public (and not only local residents) will facilitate the incorporation of various inputs from different social

groups into the redevelopment projects. 'EKEO should have more direct communication with the community. [...] Once EKEO wants to consult the community they would send [the call] to the secretary of the Kwun Tong District Councils [instead of sending it] to all the residents to get the inputs from the community' (CG-05).

Specifically, some local residents proposed that 'They can send us surveys into our mailboxes and create some collection boxes to ask our opinions' (RW-02). Additional, small-scale consultative boards might also help in focusing on specific key issues: 'Creating a board on different topics where the citizens could express their opinions directly. Based on different topics, citizens can express different opinions. [...] There should be reviews from time to time. For example, one month, one season or it is better in a short time period' (CG-10). Instead of being limited to KE, a local resident also recommended mailing letters to various districts of Hong Kong, given the nature and importance of this whole area, rather than only the inhabitants of the surrounding neighbourhoods (RW-01).

Another suggestion for surveying the more transitory and busy population who never attend institutional calls is the following: 'I would like the government to consider having a folding table at the MTR stations during the rush hours in the morning and in the evening to listen to what the people have to say. They can also collect people's opinions by stationing at the entrances of markets and supermarkets. They can then put all the views collected onto a web page for people to post their views, for experts to comment on the opinions collected, thereby creating a platform for everyone to discuss the issue at hand' (LC-01).

4. Conclusions: Policy Implications and Recommendations

This study examined the limitations and achievements of the participatory processes involved in the redevelopment of the KE postindustrial area. On the one hand, we focused on the institutional actions of EKEO and their partners. In particular, we reviewed the mechanisms of consultation and involvement in their projects intended to improve urban mobility. These and other participatory attempts were interpreted according to their place-making strategy, which incorporates citizens' views and increasing attraction to the area in conjunction with enhancing investment opportunities for real estate developers. On the other hand, we identified autonomous initiatives undertaken by citizens and professionals that question this institutional participatory approach. Citizens and professionals may interact with state institutions and market forces, but their proposals reveal an array of contentious aspects that should be addressed by redevelopment efforts.

On the basis of the quality and extent of the information collected and the analyses presented in this report, we suggest the following policy recommendations for improving future participatory actions and mechanisms.

1. *Public deliberation on the strategic goals of urban redevelopment*

Government-led urban planning and the concentration of decision-making power in the hands of the government executives with the help of qualified planners and professional experts hinder authentic public engagement in the politics of urban redevelopment. The predefined goal of converting KE into a preferential area for Grade A office space was not subject to sufficient public deliberation. If CBD-2 is a good proposal for the future of this post-industrial area then the question is raised of how the CBD will differ from the current on Hong Kong Island. Conversely, if the CBD-2 proposal is judged unfavourably then the issue of what alternative mixed-use spaces and diversified economies can be hosted should be addressed? Moreover, to what extent tourism is an adequate and essential economic dimension for KE should be examined.

We understand that the CMPs are flexible instruments to integrate these deliberations if required. However, the reluctance of many social groups to be involved in the redevelopment process is justified because they assume that their contribution is focused only on minor aspects. The preexistent rich economic and social environment that is currently occupying the urban fabric of KE and its surroundings should be regarded as an intrinsically valuable asset. Diversity already exists in KE and many people fear that it will be replaced with commercial forms. Sociospatial displacement caused by the brutal 'invisible' forces of the free market produces an underlying damage that is reflected in the overall dissatisfaction towards EKEO and their symbolic and brand-based approach to citizen participation.

To be effective, legitimate, and empowering, participatory processes should offer all possible opportunities to engage in the review of the strategic goals of urban redevelopment—from both short- and long-term perspectives. This should

include residents and workers from the locality as well as citizens and civic groups from across the city.

2. *Unequal engagement of powerholders and powerless groups in urban planning*

Evidence regarding most participatory planning processes indicates that the most powerful groups are usually those who perceive more incentives to be engaged (e.g., real estate developers, land owners, engineering and constructing companies, and professionals). They receive thorough advance information regarding future urban projects, have paid staff to attend meetings, and enjoy many resources for influencing the government, including their involvement in participatory activities. We believe that public engagement is not a neutral political exercise and is not only open to those who want to participate. Social contexts involving inequality and oppression are easily reproduced within the participatory mechanisms introduced by institutions. Those who are more marginalised in society because of the differences of gender, education, income, abilities, ethnicity, age, and lifestyle are less informed about urban plans and political intentions. Therefore, they are not necessarily excluded by planners and consultants in charge of participatory planning; their social exclusion precedes and precludes any further involvement.

We thus believe that the organisation of institutional mechanisms for improving participatory planning should compensate for preexisting social exclusions. First, this implies acquiring awareness of significant social diversity and inequality prevalent in the area. Second, the design of consultation and involvement processes should ensure that the most powerless groups are well informed, motivated, and continuously engaged—not only in one-off activities. The right to the city is universal, and the responsibility of government is to erect barriers to the further accumulation of wealth and power by elites and widen the opportunities for underprivileged groups to prosper and develop the full extent of their capacities, including their full urban citizenship.

This concern also entails that transparency of negotiations and coordination among planners, governmental departments, and outsourced companies must be enhanced achieve improved social accountability in civil society—either on behalf of those regularly excluded from the planning process or as an exercise in democratic responsiveness conducted by specific civic groups. The controversial case of the 'monorail' (EFLS) and the lack of general information about many projects developed by EKEO and KTO are a clear indication that urban plans are still very far from the scope of knowledge and political action of many citizens.

To be effective, legitimate, and empowering, participatory processes should offer all possible opportunities to engage in the review of the strategic goals of urban redevelopment—from both short- and long-term perspectives.

Participatory budgeting is also an internationally recommended tool for clarifying the economic involvement of the government in ongoing projects and simultaneously opening an additional window for general discussion on how public monies are used.

3. *Systematic strategies for enhancing inclusivity and representativeness*

Public engagement may be adopted either as a rigid or flexible process. Despite a positive attitude towards listening to the views of the public, we observed that a systematic plan to reach as many sections of the public as possible is implemented only occasionally. Full inclusivity and representativeness would imply the continuing application of referendums (direct voting) and strong and fair exercises of previous deliberations. Without such extensive measures, more efforts could be made to understand and reach more social groups. The planning of the participatory process should also consider techniques for retaining public engagement over time in a meaningful manner. Instead of merely including compulsory public engagement in the commissioned projects that are contracted out, specific budgets and strategies for enhancing inclusivity and representativeness must be implemented by EKEO and other involved governmental agencies.

Regarding the partial self-exclusion of the artists' community, for example, it is necessary to understand its contributions to the dynamic complexity and value of the area, and its different internal and community networks; in addition, the economic situations relating to its creative activities, and its requirements and attachments regarding the various spaces it has occupied and appropriated must be comprehended. Deepening their detachment from the redevelopment process merely because they represent one of the few oppositional voices to the institutional plans is not an adequate response. Planners should approach artists through different means and events, and not merely wait for them to attend an institutional environment they consider intrinsically hostile.

This case represents a valuable lesson in inclusivity and the necessity of dealing with social conflicts instead of merely dismissing them. Although most artists did not demand rent control or policies of redevelopment beneficial for them, they argued that some governmental policies (e.g., city branding, tourism attraction, regulation of street art, and revitalisation of industrial buildings) are only means of transferring public money to powerful private companies. By using the usual recourse of 'respecting the free market', government officials appear to conceal biased towards large corporations, rather than enhancing the already existing economic networks of small and medium enterprises, including those of creative professionals.

Similarly, the 'community' is often used an ambiguous label by authorities to avoid responsiveness. Most forms of collaboration, partnership, or 'festivalisation' (the production of large public shows) neither engage nor empower people in the complex process of urban planning and change. Furthermore, the category 'local residents' is another illustration of how frequently internal diversity, divisions, and conflict are neglected. The mere attendance of some citizens at participatory events does not indicate that all the residents are well represented. Key mediators or social workers in residential communities could help to select representative sections of their locality and invite them to participatory exercises.

A further dimension of a more systematic participatory process is the communicative approach. We observed that information

delivery and accessibility for KE has been widely criticised. Despite the EKEO and KTR websites and consultation workshops, most people were not informed of plans and future events. One possible solution to address this issue is, as some interviewees suggested, to implement additional 'participatory surveys' and the direct involvement of social groups in more practical and creative workshops (without numerous restrictions on terms of content, time, stakeholders, and District Councillors' mediation). In addition, more active use of online media was often demanded. In general, contact with various social groups from throughout city would entail specific communication strategies.

4. *Noninstitutional forms of participation*

Our study revealed that autonomous (noninstitutional) forms of participation provided important contributions, but without having much impact. The professionals' proposal of an alternative plan for increasing public housing in Kai Tak is an outstanding landmark for consideration. The lack of resources and the high bar for technical requirements set by the TPB led to the failure of their initiative. Previous discussions and proposals from the HC to review Kai Tak Development plans were more influential. Ngautrip visits to artists' studios effectively engaged young people from throughout the city in the labyrinths of the industrial buildings. The regular cultural production in some of these spaces, such as Hidden Agenda, represents self-organising methods

for sustaining community ties while recreating the social diversity of the post-industrial landscapes. Moreover, informal appropriations of public spaces by people from different age groups challenge the excessive regulation and restricted management by EKEO and LCSD.

First, these noninstitutional practices are paving the way for alternative forms of public engagement. Governmental agencies could learn from them or even support or interact with their participants and organisers. Beyond merely bridging gaps, or replacing and coopting such practices, the forms and contents of these initiatives could be incorporated into public deliberations about the essential issues at stake in the area. For example, complaints from artists regarding the EKEO-sponsored graffiti in the back alleys indicate that they dislike them and would have liked to be involved; in addition, local artists believe that their informal manner of appropriation and artistic interventions in KE are being erased. Consequently, they experience a further loss of attachment to the area because of the government's actions. Thus, it appears that artists would prefer less institutionally sponsored actions and enjoy more freedom to continue expressing their critical concerns about society, politics, and the urban space itself. Obviously, this involves the democratic right to protest and to question authorities and planners. For many citizens, participatory planning erodes those rights on the pretext that institutional consultation mechanisms are the only legitimate form of citizen participation.

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Appendix I. General Questionnaire for In-depth Interviews

The following are the general questions that we provided to most of our interviewees. According to their responses, specific organisation, experience, and background, we modified the questionnaire and added new questions.

1. 你知道起動九龍東辦事處（EKEO）的（發展）計劃？你知道它是什麼？

   Are you aware of the <u>Energizing Kowloon East Office's</u> (EKEO) plans? What do you know about it?

2. 你是否支持起動九龍東辦事處（EKEO）的目標和行動？為什麼？

   Do you <u>support</u> EKEO's goals and actions? Why or why not?

3. 你認為起動九龍東辦事處（EKEO）帶給你的生活/工作/活動和未來什麼影響，為什麼？

   What <u>impacts</u> do you think EKEO has brought to your life/work/activities and will bring to you in the future? Why?

4. 你知道任何起動九龍東辦事處（EKEO）公眾參與的活動／渠道？你如何評價他們？他們是否是有效的？

   Are you aware of any events and channels of <u>public participation</u> in EKEO? How would you evaluate them? Have they been effective?

5. 你曾否參與起動九龍東／九龍東任何形式的公眾參與？如有，如有，你能否描述這個過程是怎樣？

   Have <u>you ever engaged</u> in any form of public participation in relation to EKEO or in Kowloon East in general? If yes, can you describe the process?

6. 你是否滿意你在參與機制過程中的投入度？

   Are you <u>satisfied with your involvement</u> in the participatory process?

7. 你如何看待政府怎樣處理過程中出現的問題，特別是與不同持份者之間的衝突和異議？

   How do you think the government handled issues arising in the process, in particular, the <u>conflicts with</u> and <u>claims by</u> different stakeholders?

8. 什麼情況決定或激勵你的參與投入程度？

   What <u>circumstances</u> determined or motivated the degree of your involvement?

9. 你能更具體告訴我，你對當前起動九龍東辦事處（EKEO）有關公眾參與機制利弊的意見？

   Can you be more specific and state your opinion on the <u>pros and cons</u> of the current public participation mechanisms in relation to EKEO?

10. 你今後有沒有打算參加一些公眾參與機制？

    What are your <u>plans</u> for participation in the forthcoming months and years?

11. 你理想中的起動九龍東（EKE）公眾參與模式是怎樣的？你或者其他人應該如何投入參與九龍東的改造？

    What is your <u>ideal model of public participation</u> in relation to EKEO? How should you or others be involved in the transformation of KE? What would be the main criteria and principles to take into consideration?

12. 你認為九龍東十年內／未來的理想前景將會如何？根據什麼標準和原則來考慮？What is your <u>ideal outlook of Kowloon East</u> in 10 years/future? According to which criteria and principles?

Appendix II. List of Stakeholders

The following map presents the stakeholders in KE that we contacted during the project by means of various activities, including interviews, discussions, workshops, and field trips. Because of ethical concerns, their names and organisations are kept confidential.
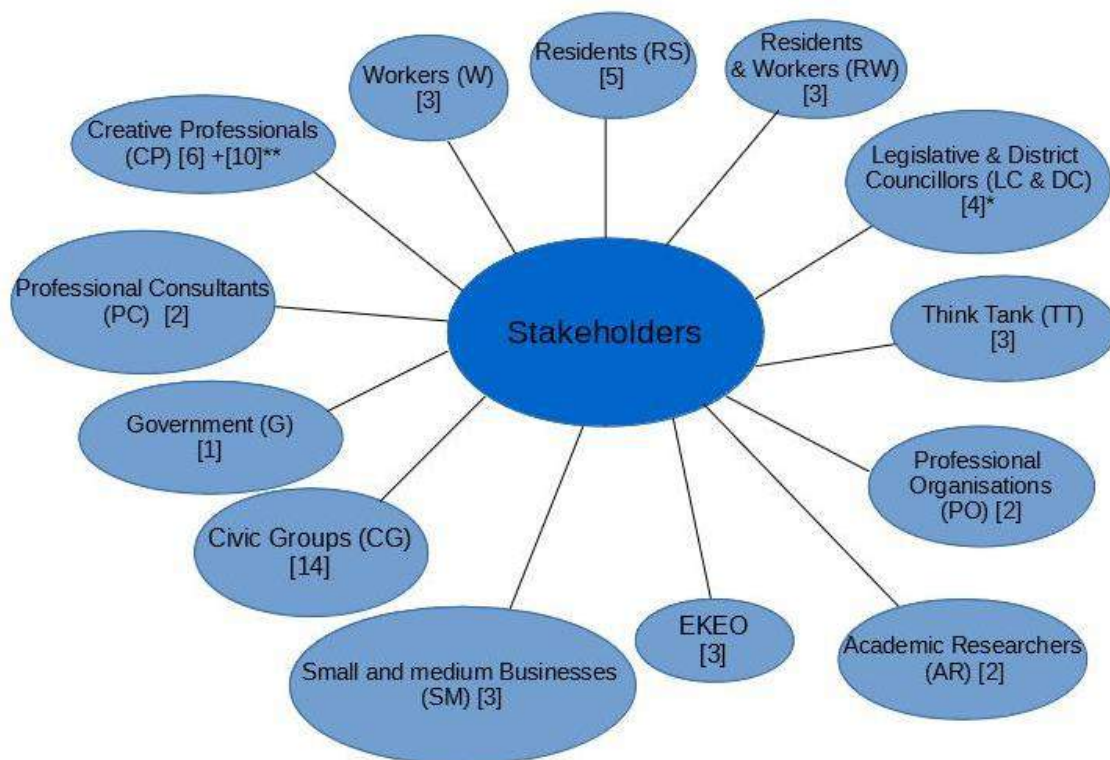
*One is a LC candidate; not elected

** Plus 10 informal interviews

Appendix III. Coding

The following categories were applied to the analysis of the discourses produced with the interviews, discussions, and mass media news, once they were transcribed. Our unit of analysis was the paragraph and occasionally a set of paragraphs. Codes may be combined. The analysis does not represent an exhaustive follow-up of all the codes but only of those combinations that are more relevant to the research goals.

1. N--- Non-Institutional Participation
2. I --- Institutional Participation
3. O --- Other Suggestion
4. AC--- Art & Culture
5. BS --- Business (Small Business)
6. BH --- Business (Huge Corporation)
7. EN--- Environment
8. HO --- Housing
9. TR --- Transport
10. SP--- Sports
11. RE --- Real Estate/ Land Development
12. LR --- Leisure / Recreation
13. AN --- Agreed with NGO's suggestion
14. DN --- Disagree with NGO's suggestion
15. AG --- Agree with government's suggestion
16. DG --- Disagree with government's suggestion
17. OS --- Other suggestion
18. CW--- Consultation Workshop
19. OS --- Online Opinion Submission
20. LS --- Letter submission
21. ID --- Info Delivery
22. CO --- Contact
23. LL --- Leaflet
24. Ex --- Exhibition
25. BA --- Back Alley
26. PR --- Promenade
27. DC --- District Council
28. AV --- Activity
29. OP --- Open Space
30. LB --- Lobby in government

31. RPS --- Submission of reasoning plan
32. SM --- Social Media
33. EF --- Effective
34. IE --- Ineffective
35. PV --- Positive
36. NV --- Negative
37. AV --- Ambivalent
38. SR --- Shifting Responsibility
39. GE --- Public participation is just a gesture
40. NE --- Government Plan has no evidence to support their argument
41. EN --- Efforts from NGO needed
42. ED --- Efforts from District Councilors needed
43. EL --- Efforts from Legislative Councilors needed
44. EP --- Efforts from Professional needed
45. NR --- Government responded to public opinions, but not supported by evidence
46. PP --- Public needs to know more about the proposal
47. OS --- One-sided plan by government
48. IG --- Public opinion ignored by government
49. RI --- Fear of rent increase
50. DA --- Difficult to reach mutual agreement by stakeholders
51. XO --- Public won't have participation
52. RS --- Too many restrictions
53. HM --- How to manage
54. FB --- Facebook of their own

Appendix IV. List of Figures & Tables

Appendix V. List of Acronyms

CBD --- Central Business District

CEDD – Civil Engineering and Development Department

CityU --- City University of Hong Kong

CPW --- Community Project Workshop

DAB --- Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong

EFLS --- Environmentally Friendly Linkage system

EKEO --- Energizing Kowloon East Office

EPG --- Empower Participatory Governance

GFA --- Gross Floor Area

HEC ---Harbour Front Enhancement Committee

HKLPA --- Hong Kong Loss Prevention Association

HKPRI --- Hong Kong Policy Research Institute

HKSAR --- Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

K7 --- Kwun Tong Town Center Redevelopment Plan

KBBA --- Kowloon Bay Business Area

KE --- Kowloon East

KTD --- Kai Tak Development

KTO --- Kai Tak Office

LAP --- Local Area Partnership

LCSD --- Leisure and Culture Service Department

LDAC --- Lands Development Advisory Committee

LDC --- Land Development Cooperation

LegCo--- Legislative Council

MCC --- East Manchester Council

NDC --- New Deal Communities

NEM --- New East Manchester Limited

NP --- Neighbourhood Planning

OMDP ---Outline Master Development Plan

PolyU--- Hong Kong Polytechnic University

TPB --- Town Planning Board

URA --- Urban Renewal Authority

URAO ---Urban Renewal Authority Ordinance

URS --- Urban Renewal Strategy

Appendix VI. Public Dissemination of Research Findings

The project results have been disseminated through the following means:

1. One academic article written by a research member was published earlier: Xian, S. and Chen, H.W. (2015). Revitalisation of Industrial Buildings in Hong Kong: New Measures, New Constraints? *Habitat International* 47, 298-306.

2. Another paper was presented in an academic conference and has been submitted for publication: Xian, S., Yip, N.M., (2015, December), Urban regeneration and 'compressed gentrification'—A case study of 'Energizing Kowloon East', Hong Kong, the 3rd International Conference on Social Policy and Governance Innovation, Guangzhou, China.

3. A third paper was presented at the 10th Conference of the Pacific Rim Community Design Network, organized by the Urban Studies Programme (URSP) of The Chinese University of Hong Kong between 15 and 17 December 2016: Martinez, M., Cheung, S. L, Chen, Y. C. (2016). Hidden Conflicts in the Urban Redevelopment of Hong Kong. This work will be submitted for further publication in an academic journal.

4. A series of three discussions on public engagement issues in Hong Kong attracted an academic audience to the Urban Research Group, CityU, in 2015 and 2016.

5. In a work meeting with EKEO, we presented our research project and explored possible mutual collaboration methods.

6. A deliberative workshop, 'Urban Change and Public Engagement in Kowloon East', was organised at City University of Hong Kong on 19 November 2016. The workshop comprised the screening of a short documentary film (produced and edited by the research team) and a discussion on the issues of public engagement in the redevelopment of Kowloon East. Additional workshops are expected to be organised to continue the discussion of this topic by readers of this report.

7. Additional screenings of the documentary film will be organised and circulated online and among civic groups. In addition, EKEO has expressed interest in screening it.