

Fairville Labs DAKAR

Facing inequalities and democratic challenges through Co-production in Cities (Fairville) is a Urban Co-Production Research Project Horizon Europe.

Fairville uses knowledge co-production as strategy to address urban inequalities and democratic issues affecting seven urban areas in Europe, and two other mirror cases in Africa.



- ◆ Risk Inequalities
- ▲ Environmental Inequalities
- Planning and Housing Inequalities

Fairville experiments co-production with civil society actors, universities and local authorities to facilitate multi-engagement towards embracing entrenched urban and environmental inequalities with affected residents or community groups. Through coproduction of knowledge and actions-oriented programmes, it contributes to rethinking urban democracy.

Do you want to help? There are many ways to contribute to the project: would you like to participate in the co-production in our project tasks or go on the field in our Fairville Labs?

Contact us!

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CONTEXT

In **Dakar**, the context is shaped by community initiatives in disadvantaged suburbs, particularly in Pikine and Guédiawaye, since 2015. The NGO UrbaSEN, in collaboration with the Senegalese Federation of Inhabitants (FSH), works to strengthen local capacities, restructure urban areas, regularize land tenure, rebuild/rehabilitate houses affected by flooding, and improve public spaces through various flood risk management measures. These are co-designed, co-produced, and co-financed by residents and local authorities to enhance living conditions in the targeted neighbourhoods.

The Fairville Lab (FVLab) in Dakar also focuses on the efforts of vulnerable communities to access property ownership and decent housing, particularly through the eco-neighbourhood project of the FSH City currently under construction in the municipality of Diender Guedj.



Figure 1: Kickoff of the Fairville project: FVLab Dakar (UrbaSEN, February 2024)

Inequalities in Dakar include **social, economic, and geographic dimensions**. Residents of precarious neighbourhoods, often marginalized, face harsh living conditions, **economic insecurity, limited involvement in public affairs, and housing exposed to flood risks** – especially women and youth, who represent 96% of FSH members. These communities are particularly affected by unequal access to basic social services such as sanitation, healthcare, and decent housing, in the context of irregular urbanization in areas highly exposed and vulnerable to **flooding risks**.

ACTORS INVOLVED

Recently, the FVLab has developed collaborations with two universities. An agreement was signed with the University Cheikh Anta Diop (UCAD), and collaborations have begun with the University Amadou Matar Mbow.

Key actors involved:

- Local authorities (municipalities, neighbourhood elected representatives, resource persons)
- Decentralized state services (urban planning, hygiene, ANACIM, DPGI...)
- Communities (grassroots organizations, sports and cultural associations, neighbourhood godmothers, community relays)
- Universities (interns involved in diagnostics and documentation of housing rehabilitation, and researchers)
- CNRS and IRD are also part of the FVLab's think tank

Le FVLab est coordonné par UrbaSEN



Figure 2: Key actors involved.

ACTIONS

The FVLab aims to enhance local initiatives to ensure better inclusion of communities in public policy development and to strengthen their resilience to risks. It also seeks to reduce inequalities – especially for the most vulnerable – through a participatory and inclusive approach. To this end, the FVLab conducts co-produced urban diagnostics and documents past co-production experiences, particularly in the area of self-rehabilitation.

More specifically, building on achievements in the FSH City, where a participatory diagnosis was conducted with residents, the FVLab now focuses on:

- Flood risk mapping using drones and OpenStreetMap (OSM).
- Data collection and analysis to enrich urban diagnostics.
- Enhanced dialogue between communities, local authorities, and technical services for better risk management.

This approach positions the FSH City as a model of urban co-production and inequality reduction.



PUTTING RESIDENTS AT THE HEART OF URBAN PLANNING, production and management process

The activities carried out in the municipalities of Wakhinane Nimzatt, Ndiarème Limamoulaye, and Djender Guedj are part of UrbaSEN's ongoing interventions, now oriented toward action-research.

These aimed to inform stakeholders about the Fairville project and co-develop a local action plan through a participatory and inclusive approach.

In Djender Guedj, the work stood out for its strong community involvement and promotion of local knowledge, thereby strengthening the project's territorial anchoring.

This method relies on a more viable and sustainable bottom-up approach. It aims to empower stakeholders, involving them in decision-making, design, implementation, and management of all selected projects.

The objective of co-production is to implement solutions that have been jointly defined in collaboration with local actors. Structured into complementary components, this operational activity proactively addresses identified urban challenges.

First, participatory diagnostics of vulnerable areas provides a platform for actively engaging key persons in identifying and analysing main urban issues, thus providing a solid foundation for guiding future actions. Project implementation, backed by the revolving fund, represents an essential component of this phase, ensuring the financial viability of proposed interventions.



Figure 3: Interview in Abdou Diouf 2, Assessment of co-production (UrbaSEN, September 2024)



Figure 4: Co-assessment of flood risk management measures (UrbaSEN, November 2024)

At the same time, transparent communication of the results of FVLab's activities is crucial to foster community engagement and mobilisation. In addition, awareness-raising activities in the field play a key role in educating and involving residents, thereby strengthening their capacity to actively participate in the implementation and sustainability of the proposed solutions.

This approach promotes individual and collective responsibility among each beneficiary in terms of financing, planning, implementation, and management. By adopting this participatory and inclusive approach during the planning phase, flood risk reduction projects can benefit from greater community ownership, more effective implementation of actions, and increased long-term sustainability.