

Community Participation and Empowerment in Informal Settlement Upgrading

**A Case Study in
Monterrey, Mexico**



Community Participation and Empowerment in Informal Settlement Upgrading A Case Study in Monterrey, Mexico

MSc. Graduation Thesis

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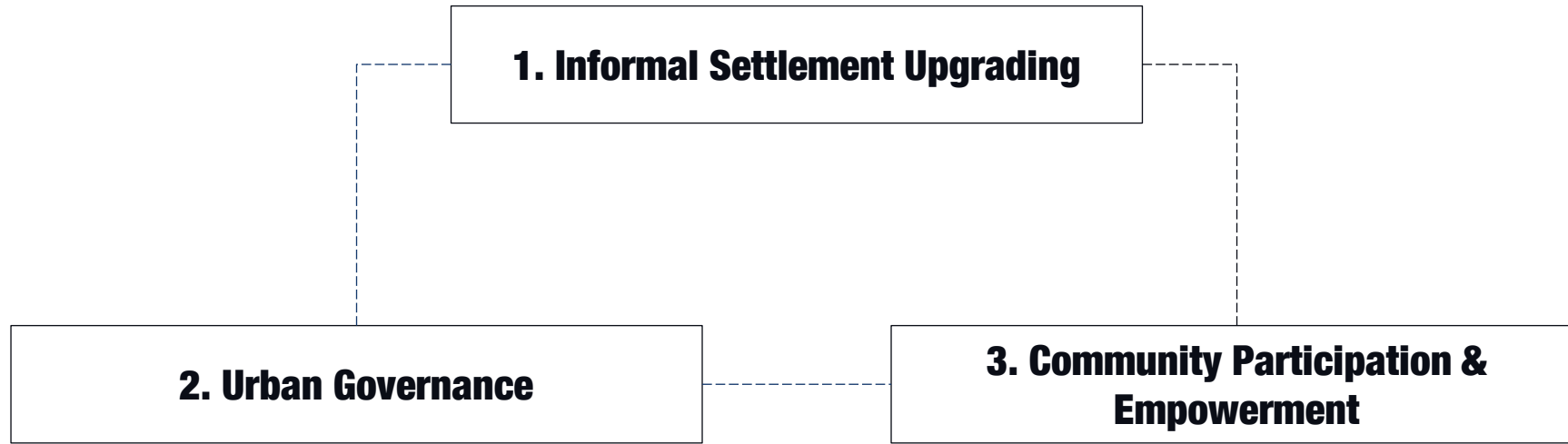
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1. Literature Review



1. Informal Settlement Upgrading

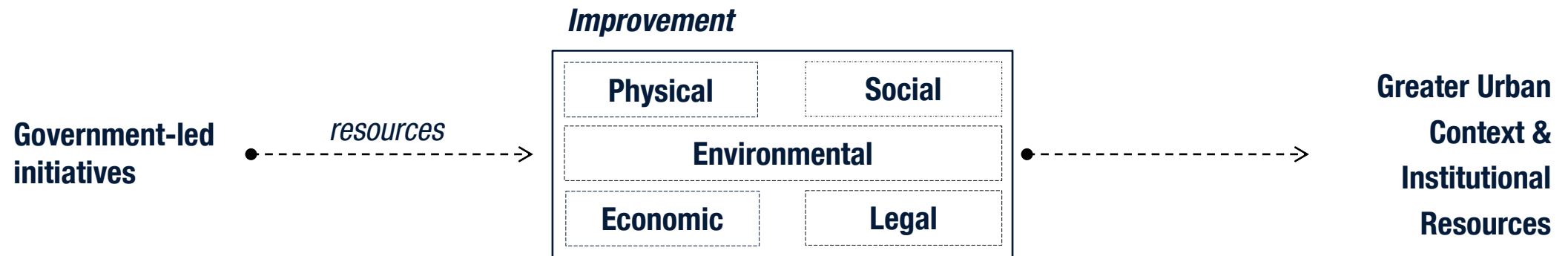
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graph TD; A[1. Informal Settlement Upgrading] -.- B[2. Urban Governance]; A -.- C[3. Community Participation & Empowerment]; B -.- C;
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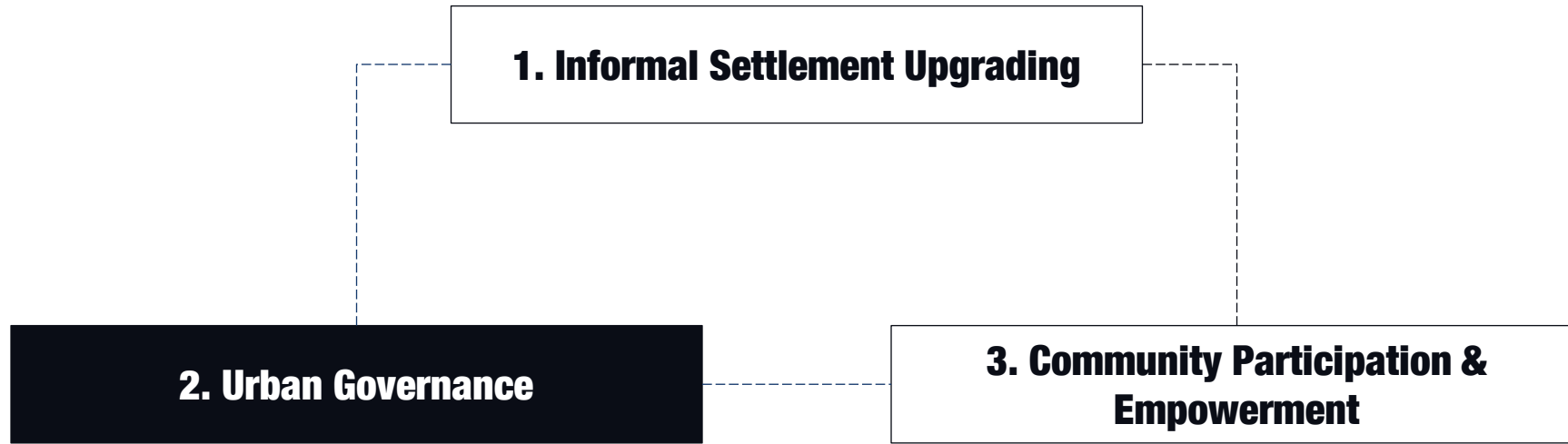
2. Urban Governance

**3. Community Participation &
Empowerment**

Informal Settlement Upgrading

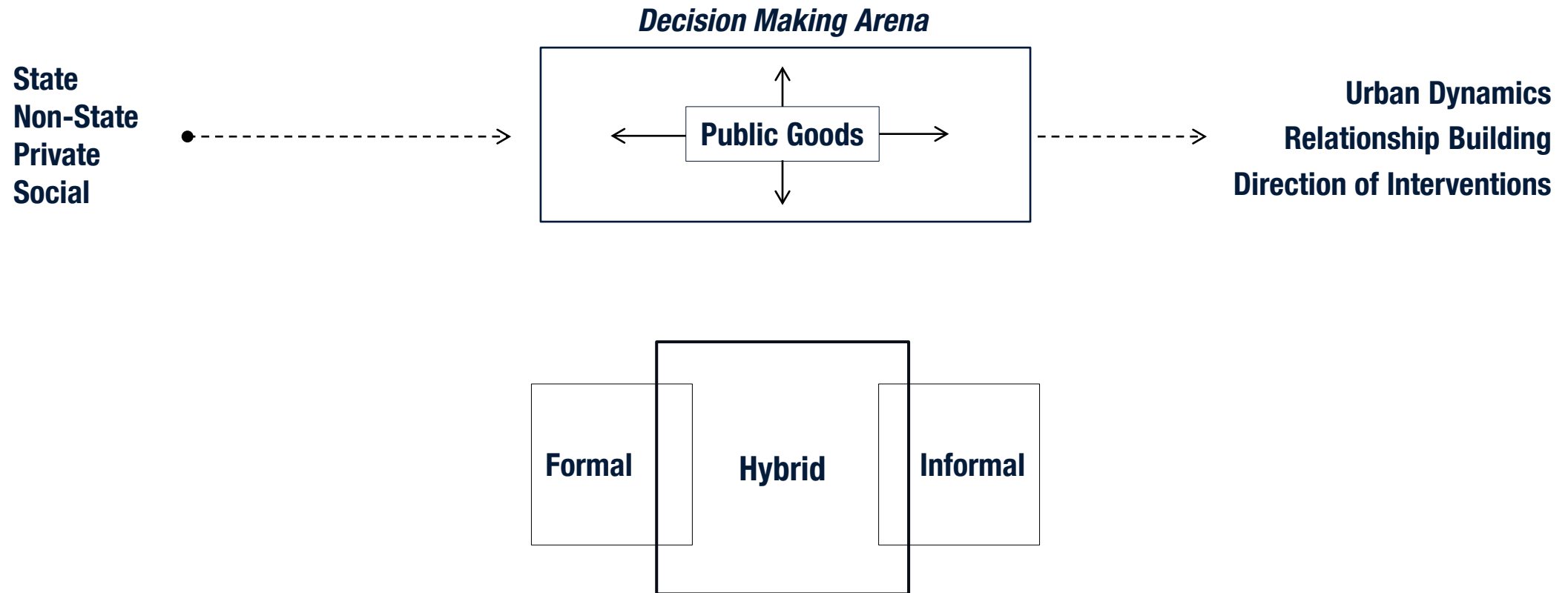
(within this research)

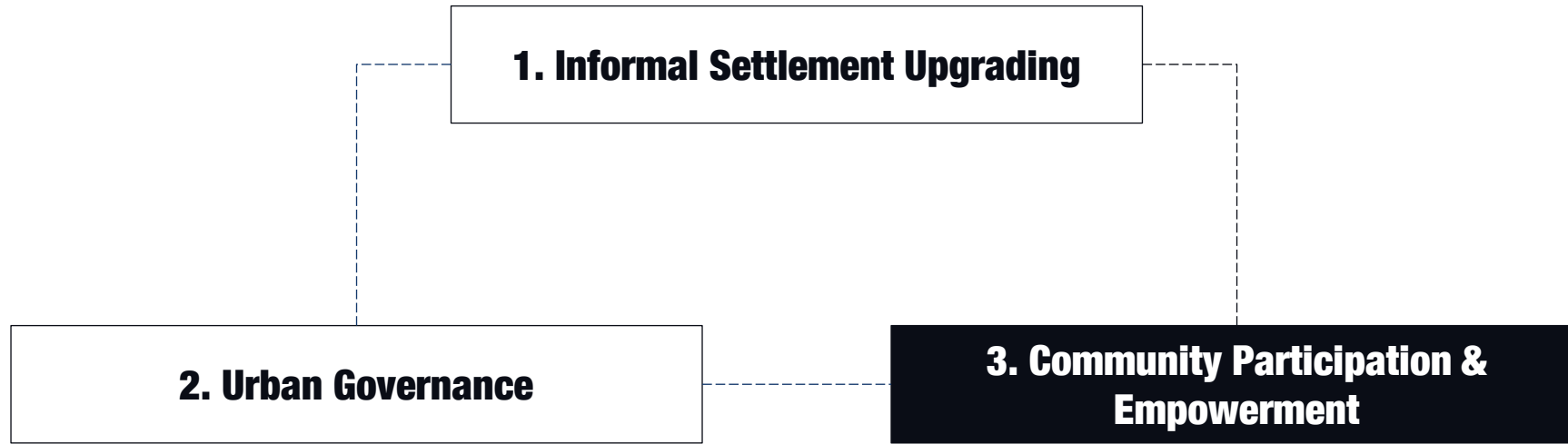




Urban Governance

(within this research)





Community Participation & Empowerment

(within this research)

Broad range of **activities and intensities** of participation throughout the upgrading process

Participation
means

(Moser, 1989)

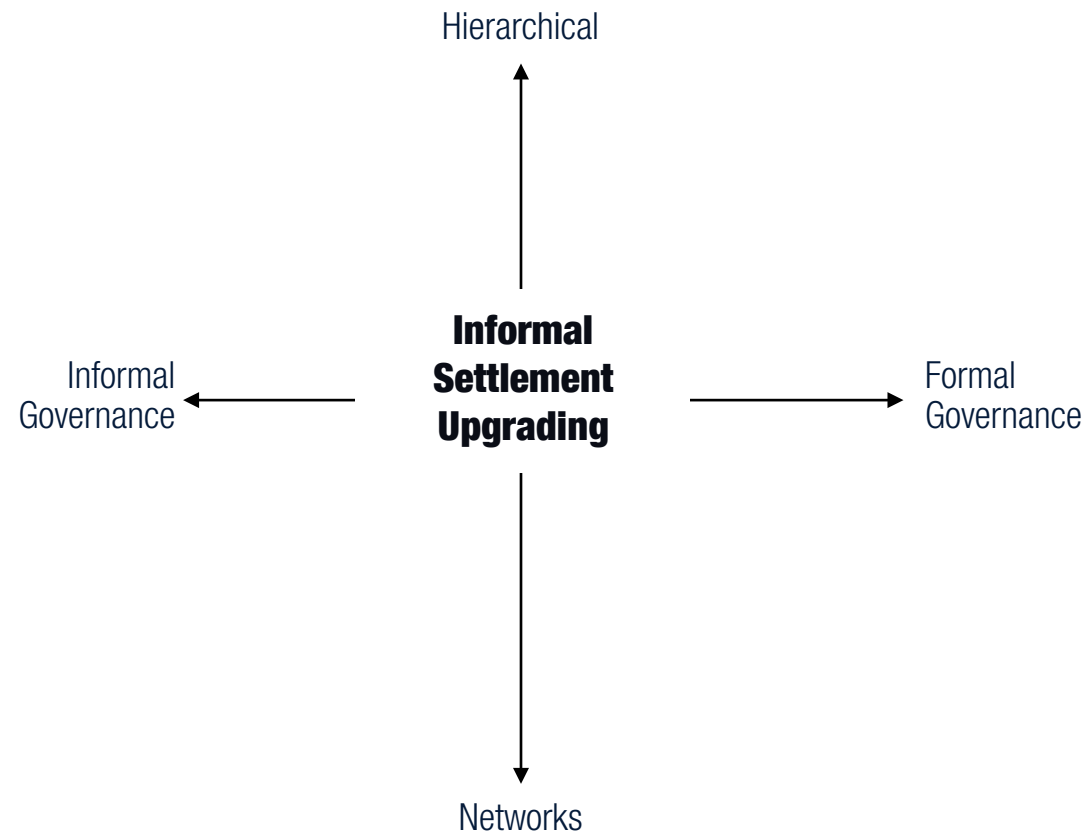


Empowerment
objective

1. **+ Control over Lives**
2. **+ Control over Resources**
3. **Democratically Participate**
4. **+ Critical Awareness of Reality**

2. Problem Statement & Research Questions

Problem Statement



Research Questions

Main Question

What **factors** of **informal settlement upgrading processes** in Northern Mexico enable **community participation** to promote **community empowerment**?

SQ1

What are the **current practices** of community **participation** in informal settlements in the city of **Monterrey**?

SQ2

How are **government-led upgrading programmes** in Monterrey **initiated, planned, and implemented**?

SQ3

Who are **the key actors** that can be identified and what are their **roles and interests**?

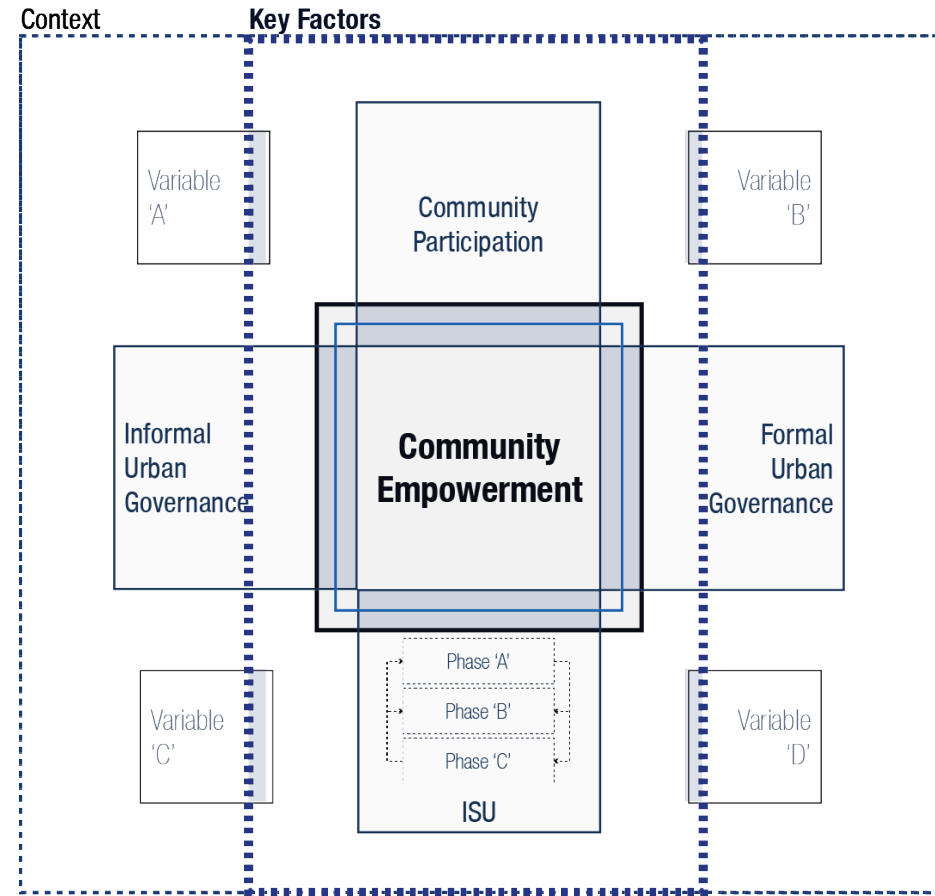
SQ4

How is **power manifested** and **distributed** amongst actors throughout the process?

SQ5

How does the **context impact community participation** in the upgrading process?

Conceptual Model



Research Aim & Objectives

Aims

1. Greater insight into how urban governance dictates participation

2. Identify areas of opportunity for participation during upgrading processes

3. Better understanding of urban poverty and informal urban developments

Objectives

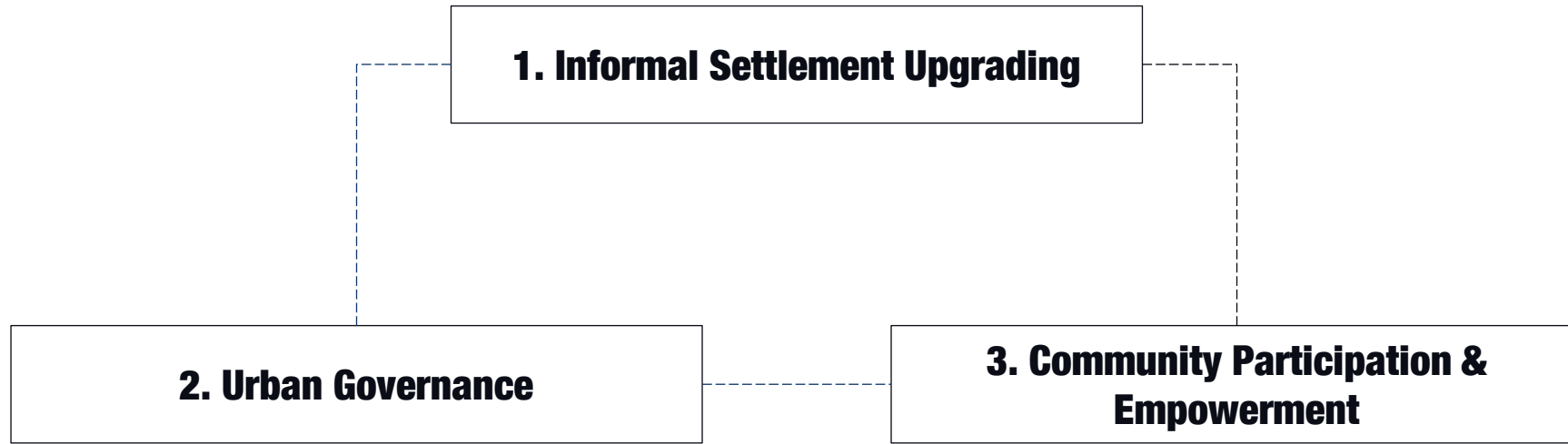
1. Analysing **governance structures** theoretically and empirically

2. Capturing **interests** and **roles** of key urban development **stakeholders** and **power** dynamics

3. Studying process of **urbanisation** and **poverty** and analysing the **contextual implications**

3. Methodology

Literature Review

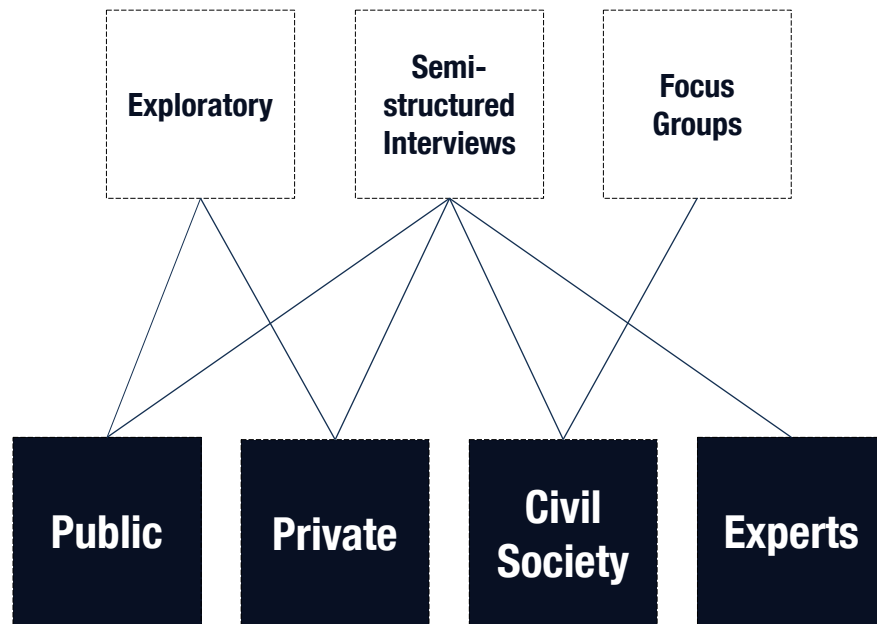


Establish Concepts & Definitions

Empirical Research

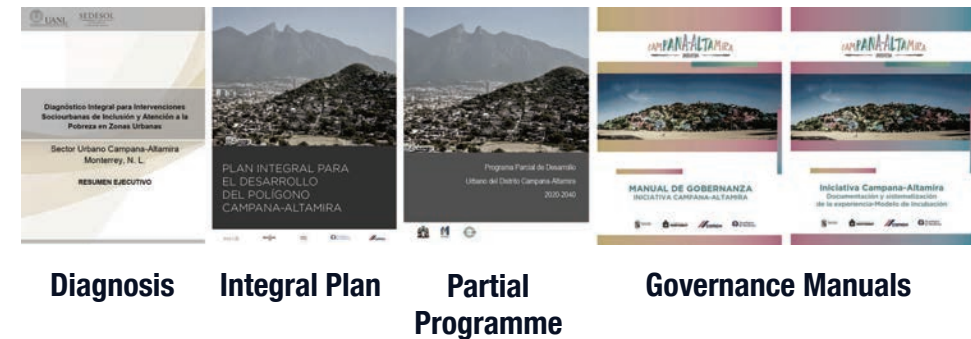
Single Case Study

Primary Data



Secondary Data

Document Analysis and Desktop Research



4. Case Study & Findings

Monterrey, Mexico

Monterrey, Mexico

5.3 million people

3rd largest contributor to the national GDP

2nd Human Development Index

41% population in vulnerable situation

1st in income inequality (2016)



1940

Today

Industrialisation



Migration



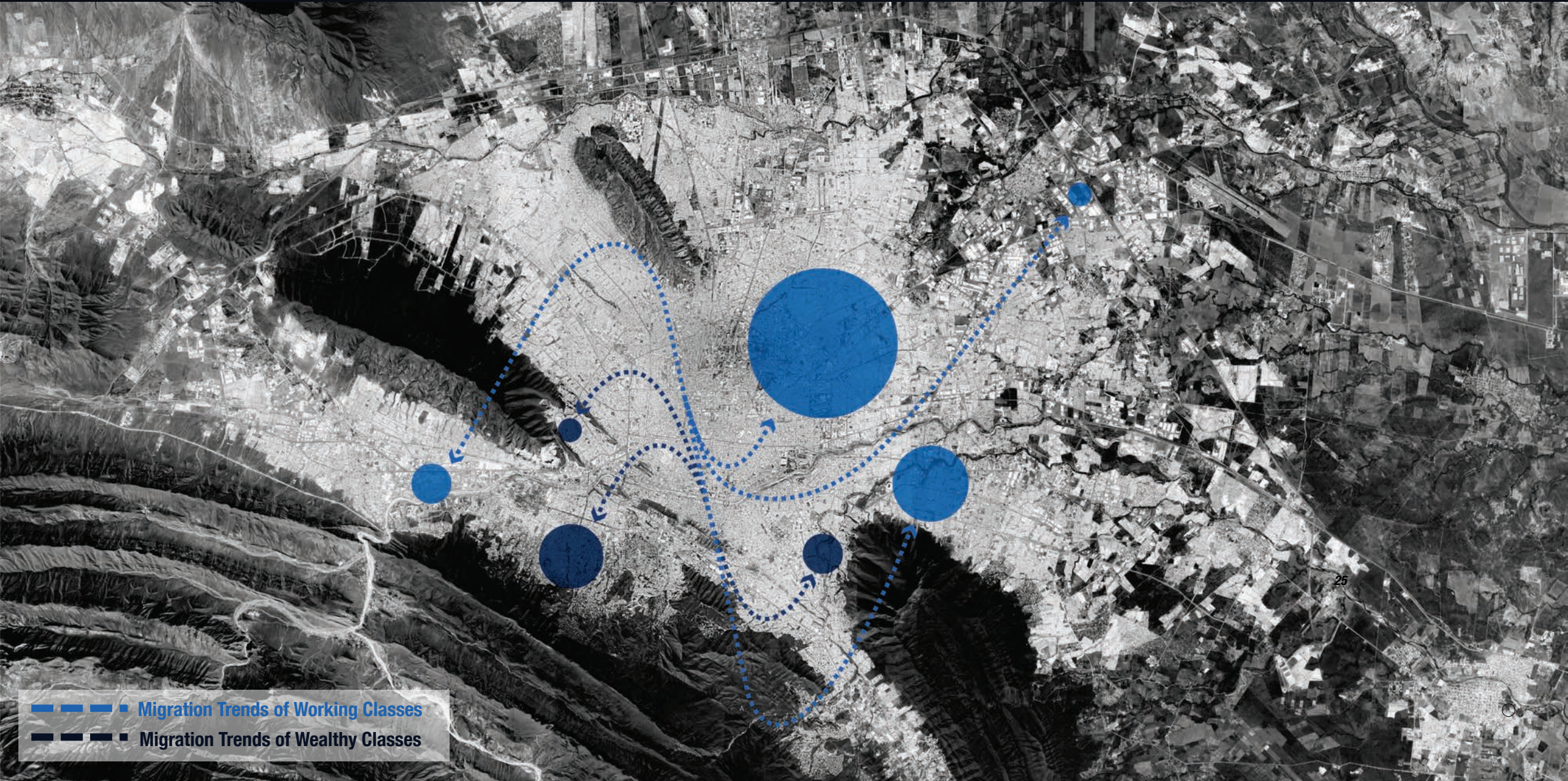
Informality



Urban Expansion

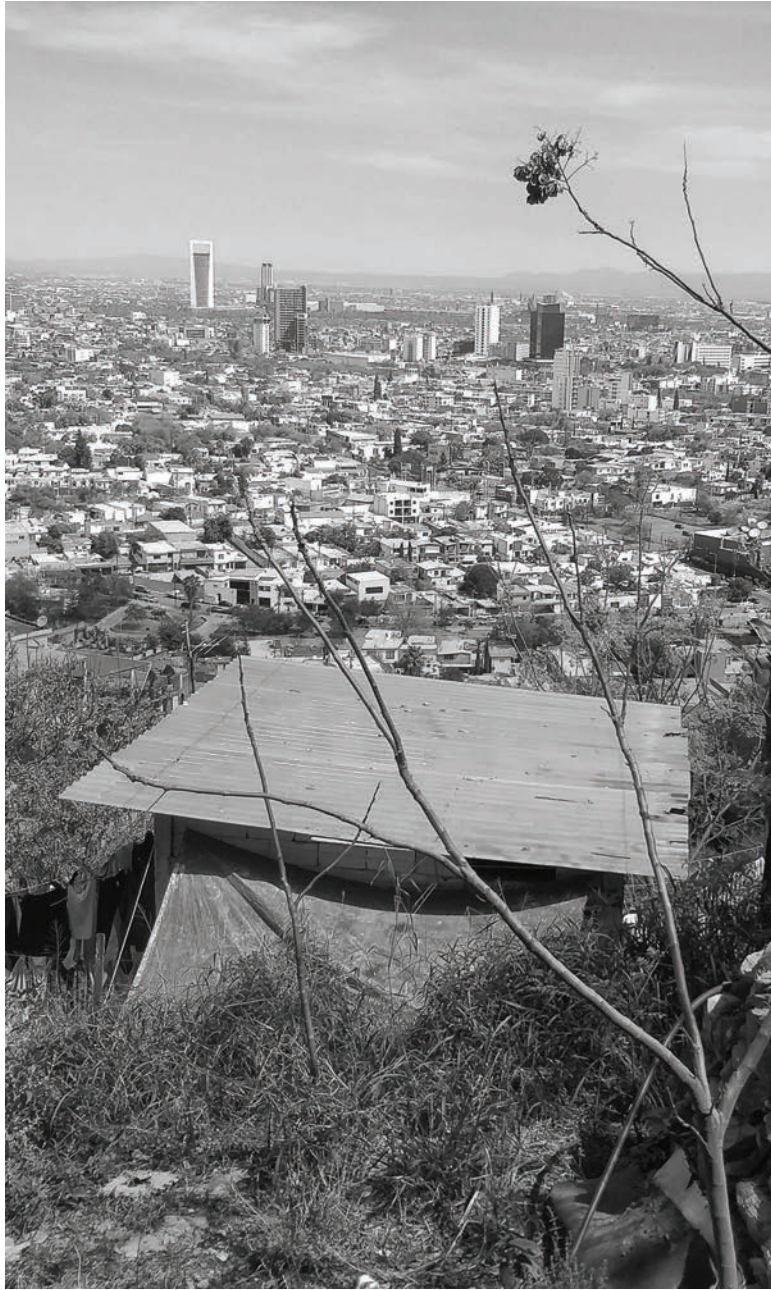
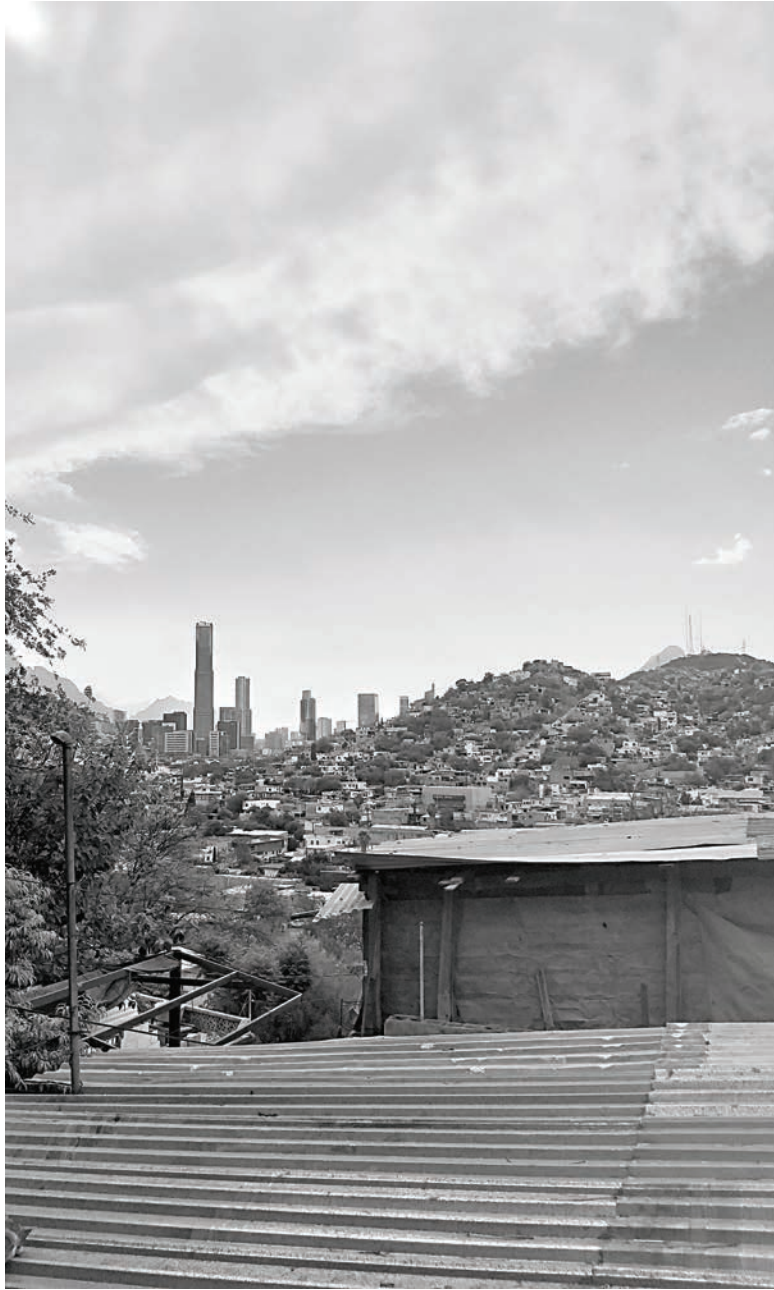


Segregation

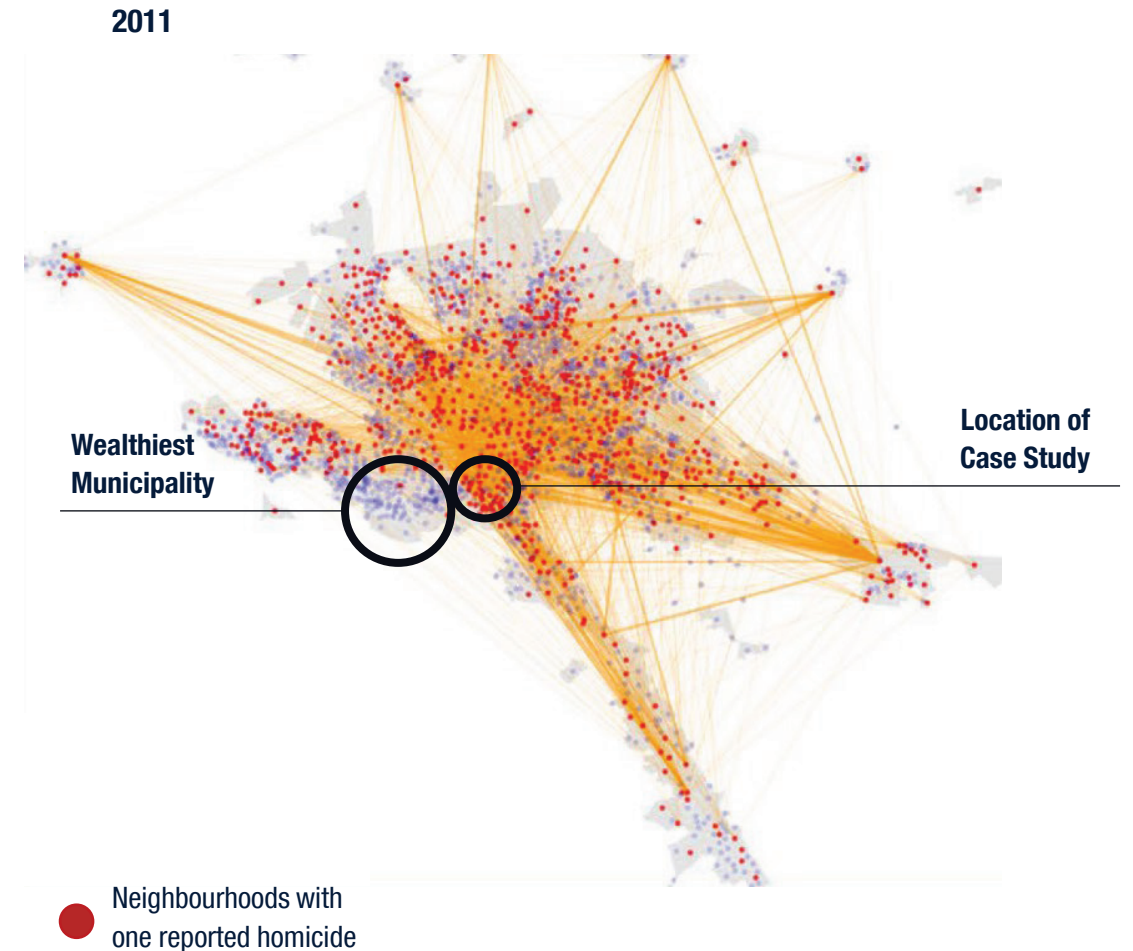
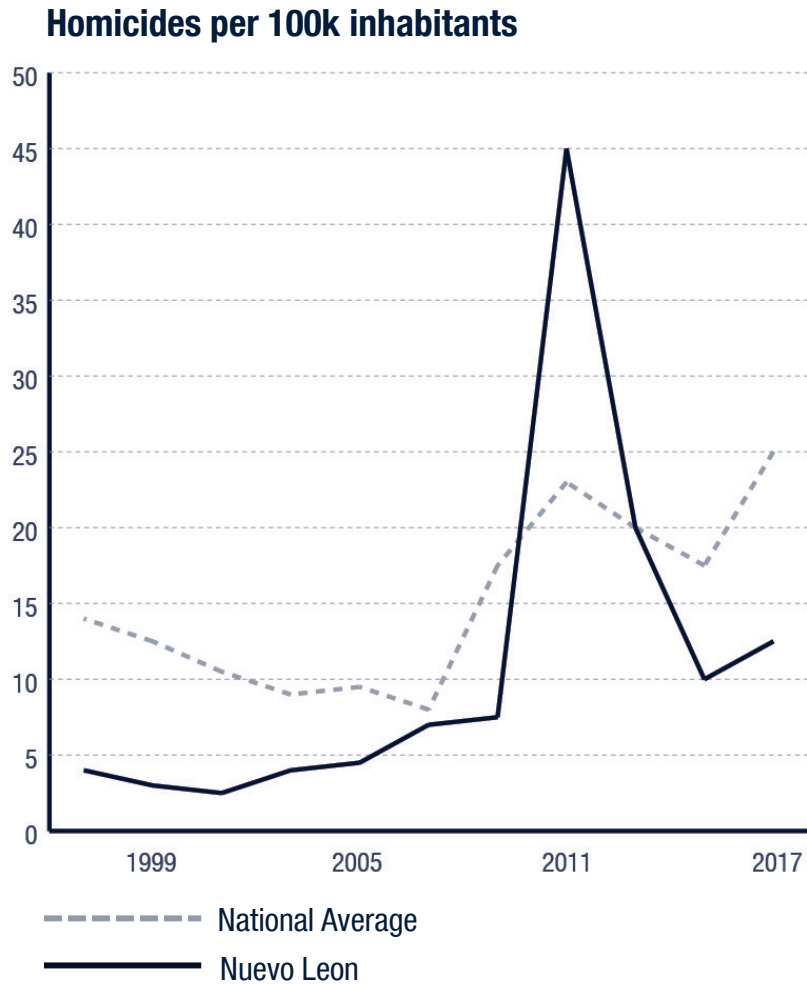


— — — — — Migration Trends of Working Classes

— — — — — Migration Trends of Wealthy Classes



Drug-related Violence and Inequality



Campana-Altamira Polygon

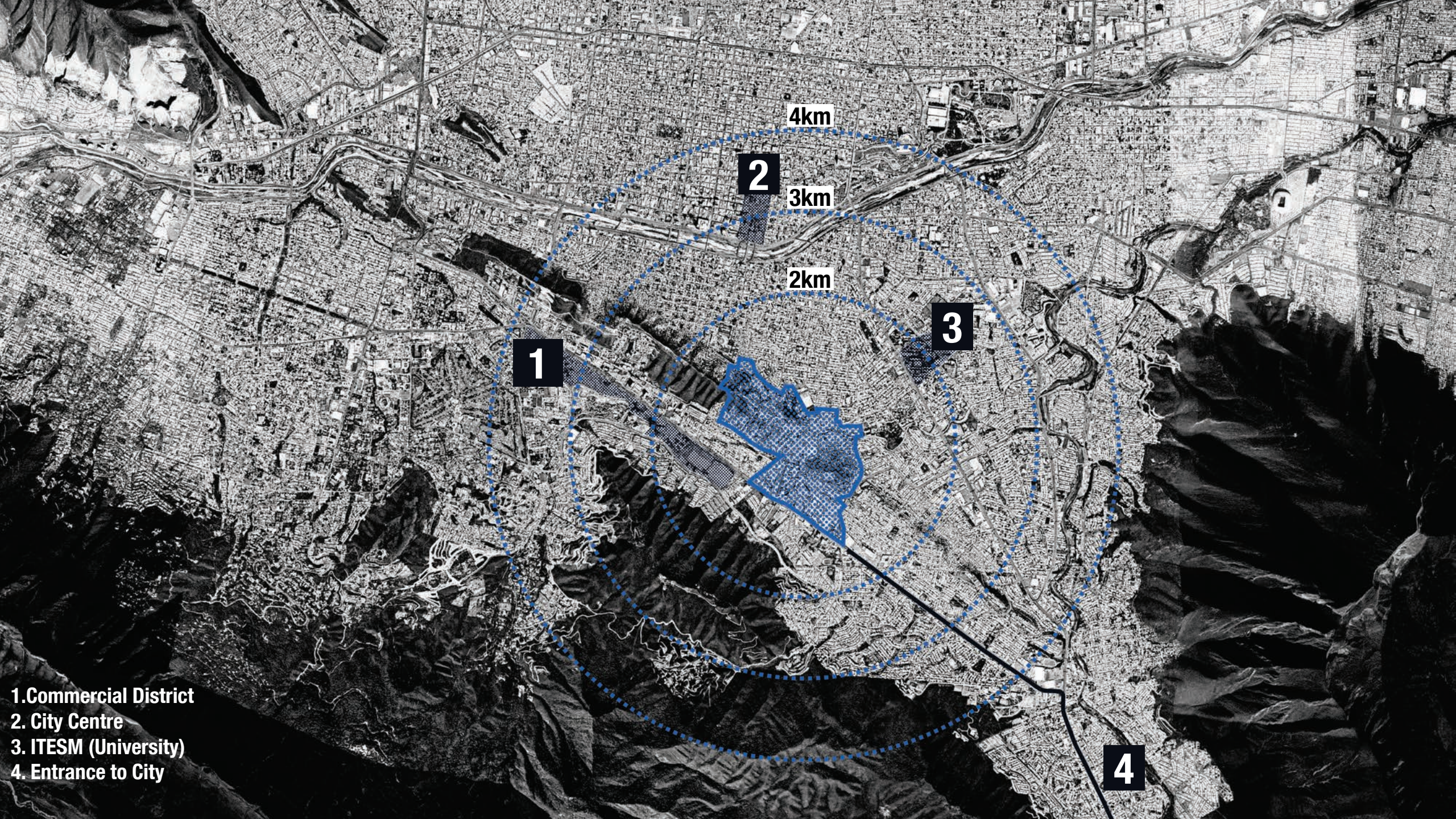
Campana-Altamira Polygon

2014

Priority Polygon

by Federal Government





4km

2

3km

2km

1

3

4

- 1. Commercial District
- 2. City Centre
- 3. ITESM (University)
- 4. Entrance to City

19,543 people

15 neighbourhoods

1.6 km²

12% Children Abandon School

32% + Basic Food Basket

34% No Tenure Security

42% Households Food Insecurity

50% Households Violence





Mobility



Facilities



Public Spaces

Campo de Los Pinos

11,000m²

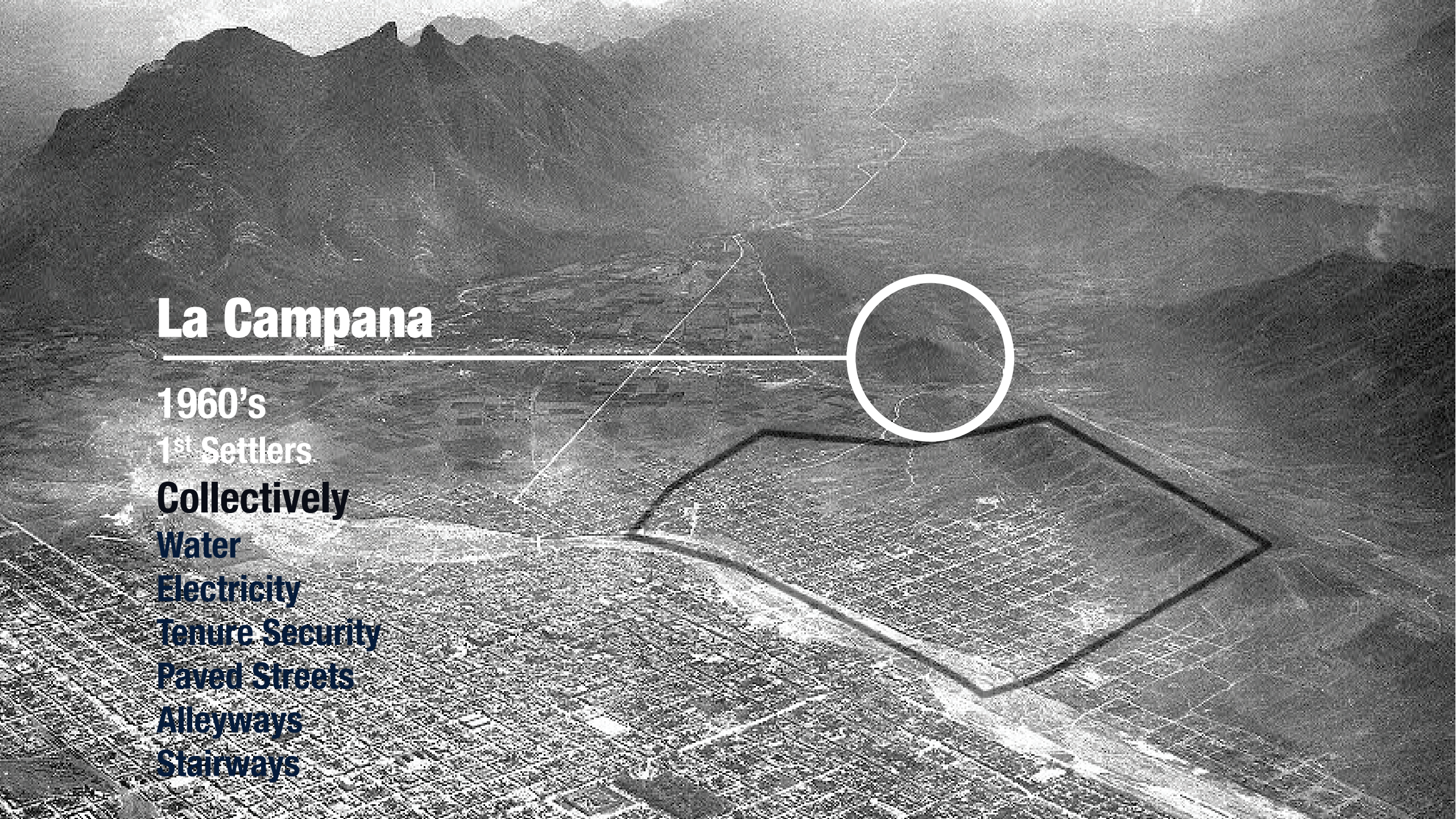
Meeting Point

Recently Purchased by ITESM



La Campana

La Campana



1960's

1st Settlers

Collectively

Water

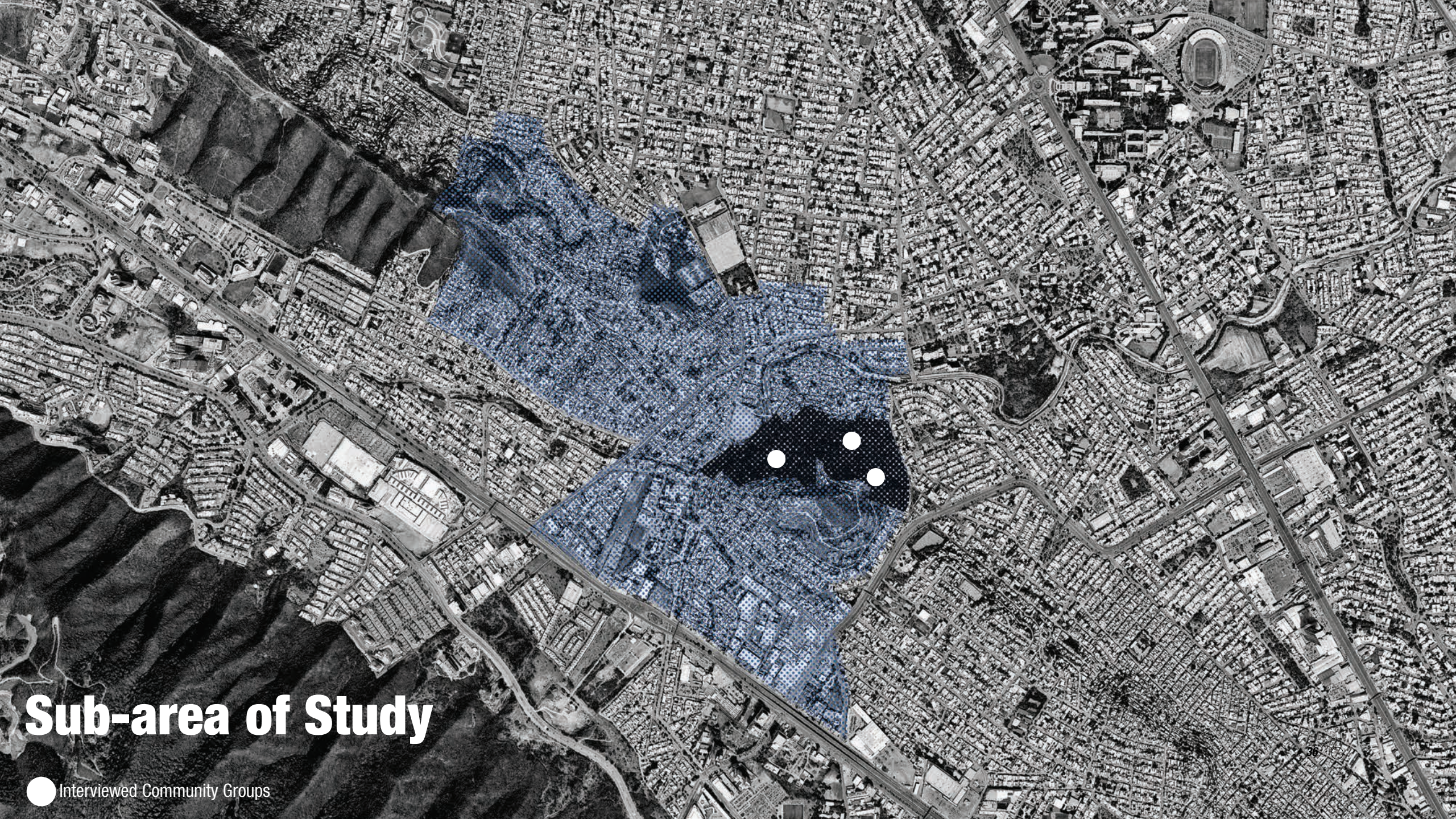
Electricity

Tenure Security

Paved Streets

Alleyways

Stairways



Sub-area of Study

● Interviewed Community Groups



Context-Specific Conditions

What did I find in the context?

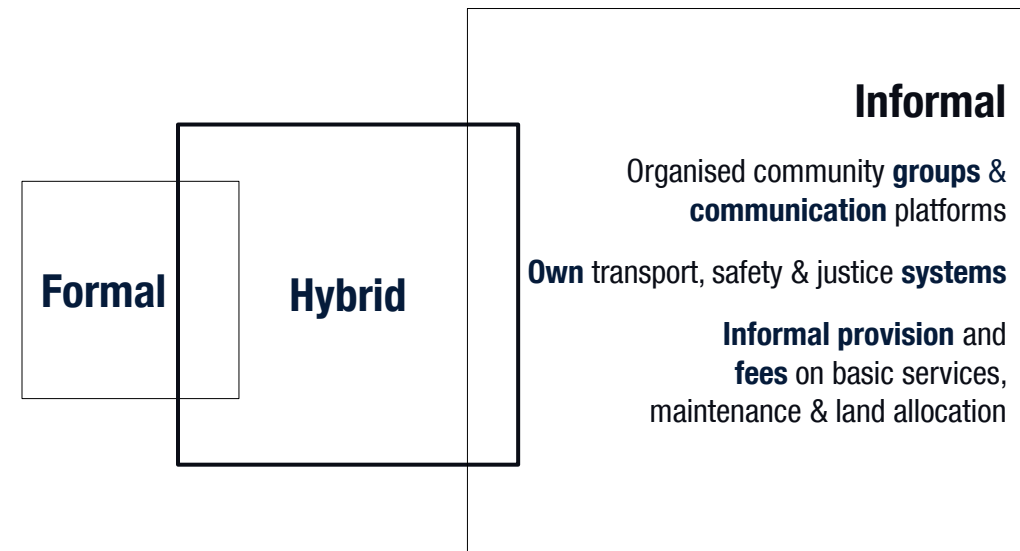


Forms of Violence in the Area

Drug-related
Machismo
Stigmatisation

Political Clientelism

Paternalistic Relationship
Territorial & Political Structures
Campaigners as Community Leaders



Campana-Altamira Initiative

Campana-Altamira Initiative

How did it start?



Integral Plan for the Development of the Campana-Altamira Polygon

objective: activate and **empower** the community
means: innovation, **co-responsibility**, **trust** & resilience

Integral Plan for the Area: Intervention Model & Phases

Phase 1: Definition of
Intervention Model (3 months)



Phase 2: Prioritisation by
Community (3 months)



Phase 3: Design by
Lines of Action (3 months)

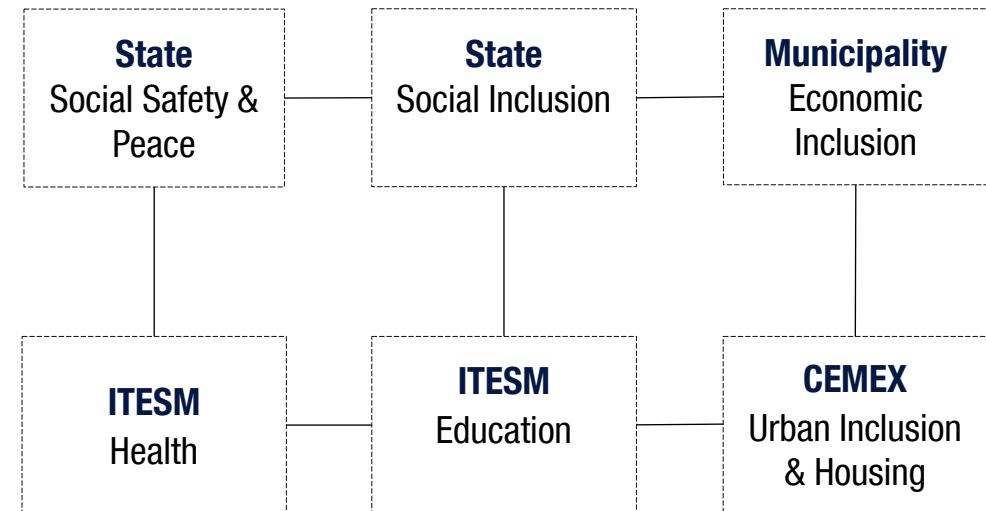


Phase 4: Implementation
(since 2017)



Interinstitutional Council
strategic decisions & direction of programme

Lines of Action



Coordination Committee
technical & operational

Partial Programme for the Urban Development for the Campana-Altamira District 2020-2040

objective: co-responsibility in planning
means: regulated **tools** for citizen **participation**

Partial Programme: Policy & Instruments for Community Participation

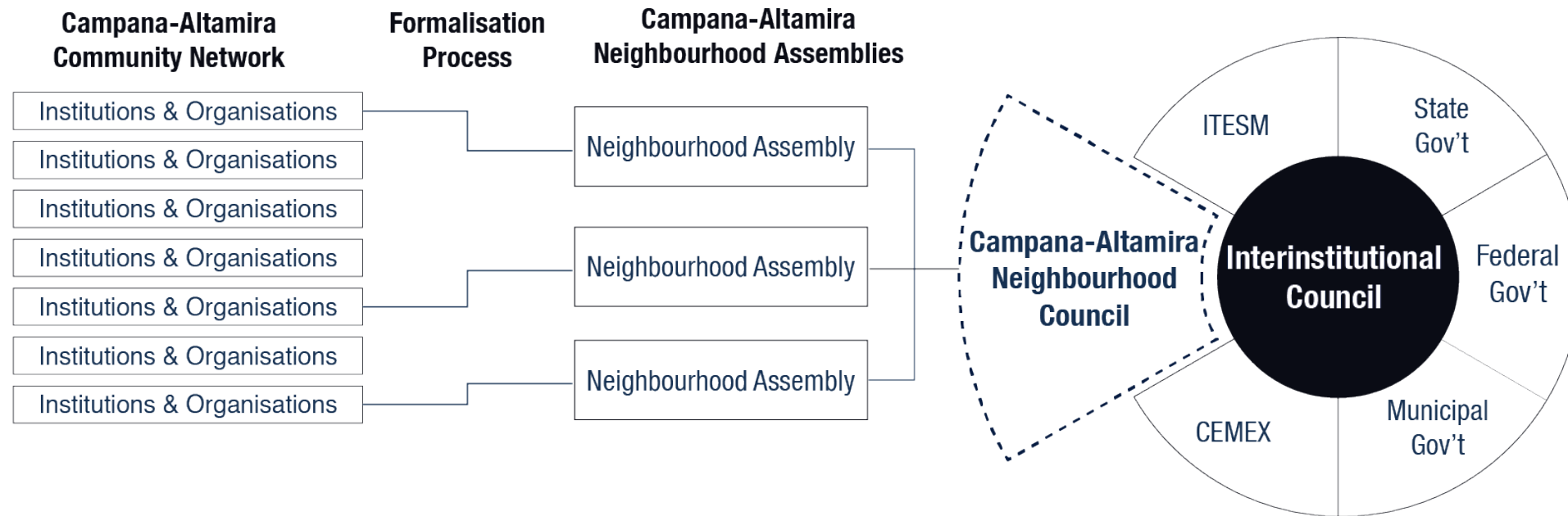
How is **community participation** engrained into the planning?

Citizen Participation Policy

Objective: consolidate community organization **through tools**

Strategy: build on **social structures** through institutional **formalisation**

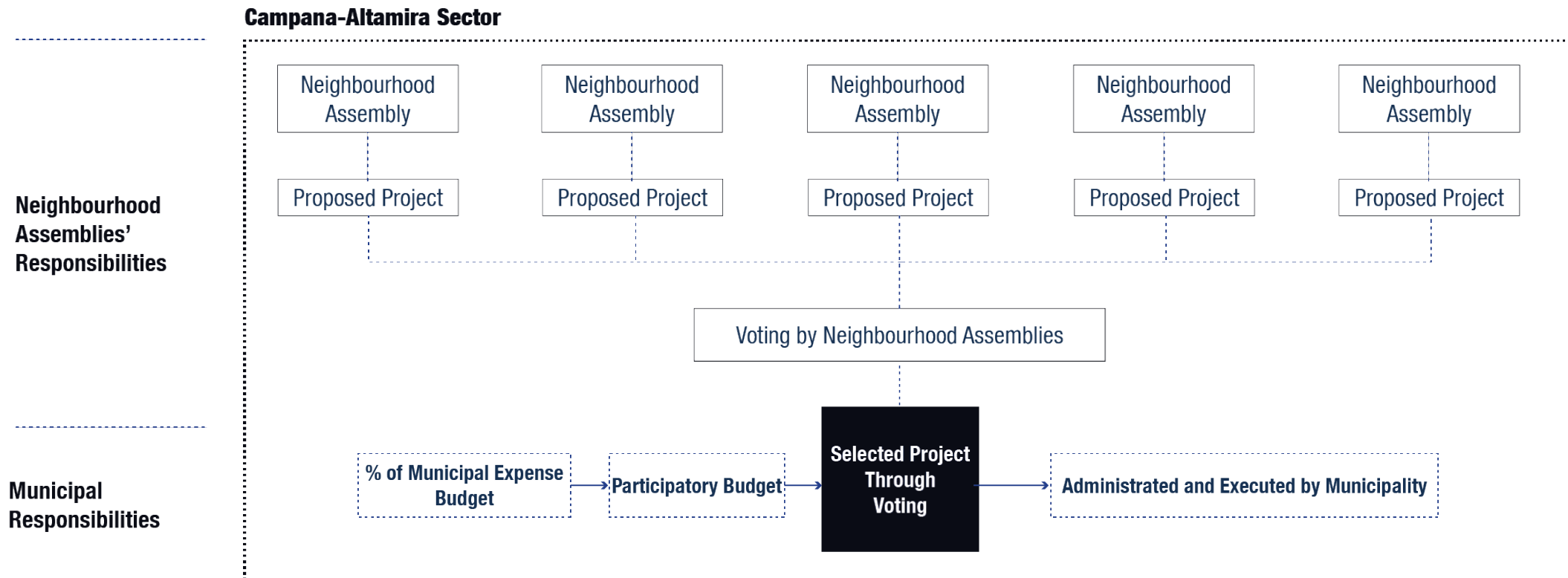
Programme: **systematise** how citizens are involved in **decision making**



Participatory Budgeting

What can formalised councils do?

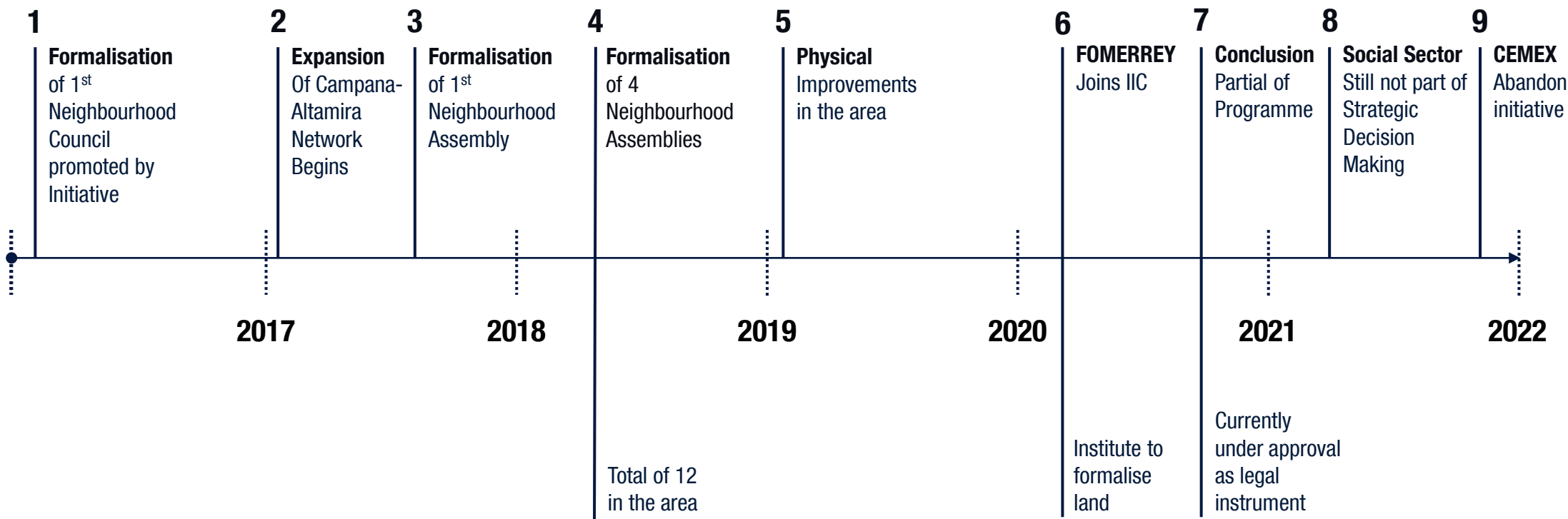
Receive Funding - Tax Deductions - **Participatory Budgeting**



Implementation Phase

This is all on paper

So, what has happened in the past five years?



Spaces for Participation

How can the community participate?

INFORMAL

Organised community **groups** & **communication** platforms

Own transport, safety & justice **systems**

Informal provision and **fees** on basic services, maintenance & land allocation

HYBRID

Campana-Altamira **Network**

Open workshops for dwellers

Collaboration between formal and informal actors

FORMAL

Formalisation of Councils

Social Sector as part of **IIC**

Dynamics such as **Participatory Budgeting**

Stakeholders

Identification of Stakeholders

Public Group

National Government
State Government
Municipal Government

Private Group

ITESM
CEMEX
CEMEX-TEC

Civil Society Group

**Formal & Informal
Neighbourhood Councils**
Civil Society Organisations
Individual Neighbours

Experts

Council Consultants
Academics

Expected Power-Interest Matrix

Public Group

Municipality – can make most significant changes

State - less interest but retain power

Federal - no direct relationship in the area

FOMERREY – can provide land tenure

Private Group

ITESM – more interest due to proximity to area

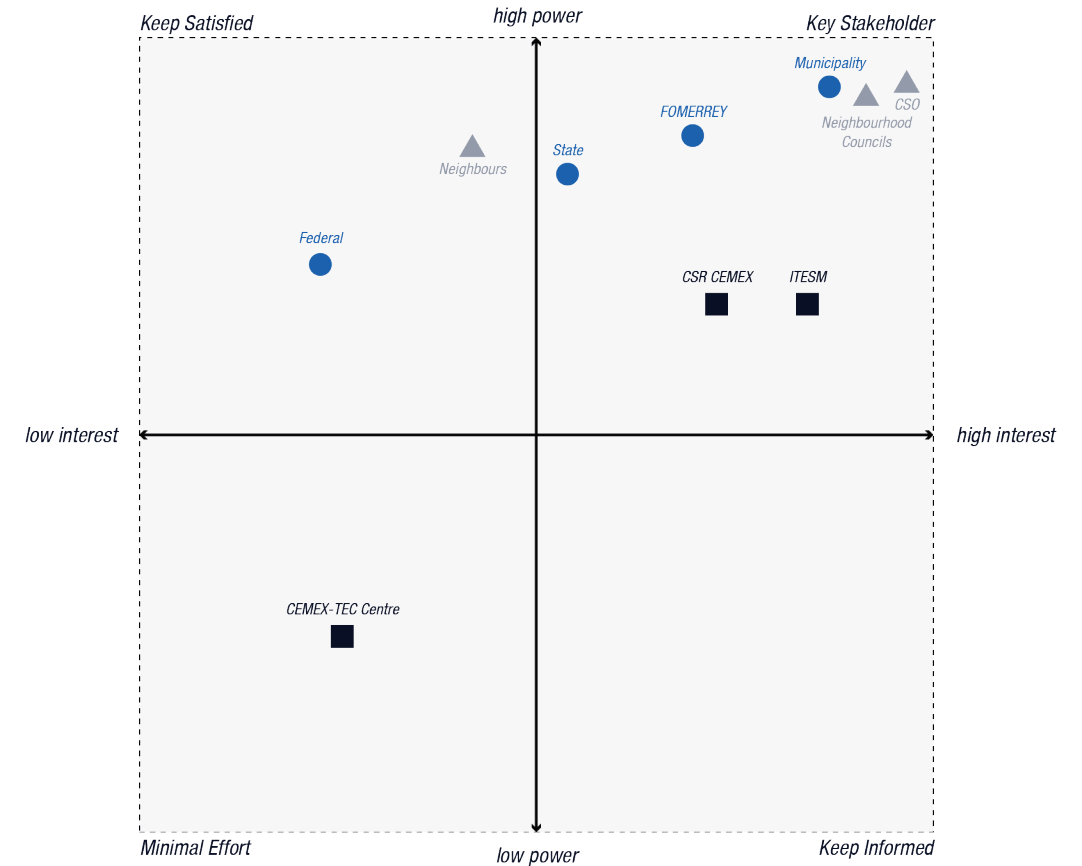
CEMEX – similar to ITESM, but less interest

CEMEX-TEC Centre – commissioned occasionally

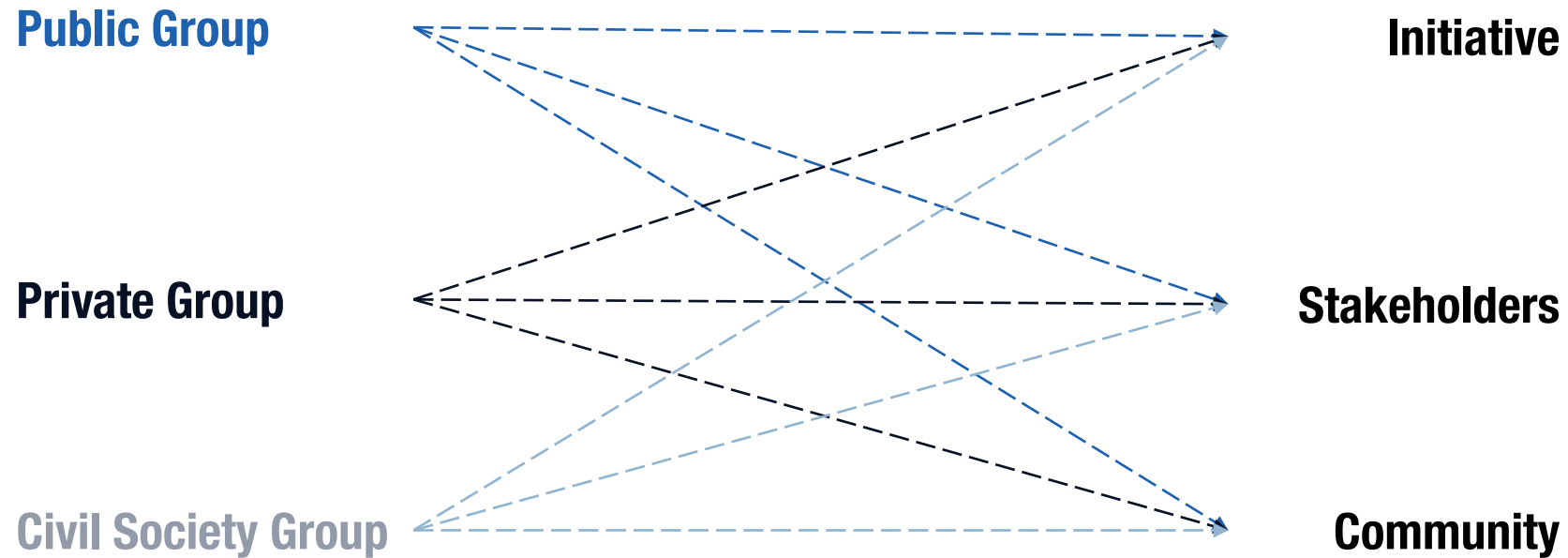
Civil Society Group

Councils and CSO's – high interest and power presence in area

Neighbours – low interest but high power

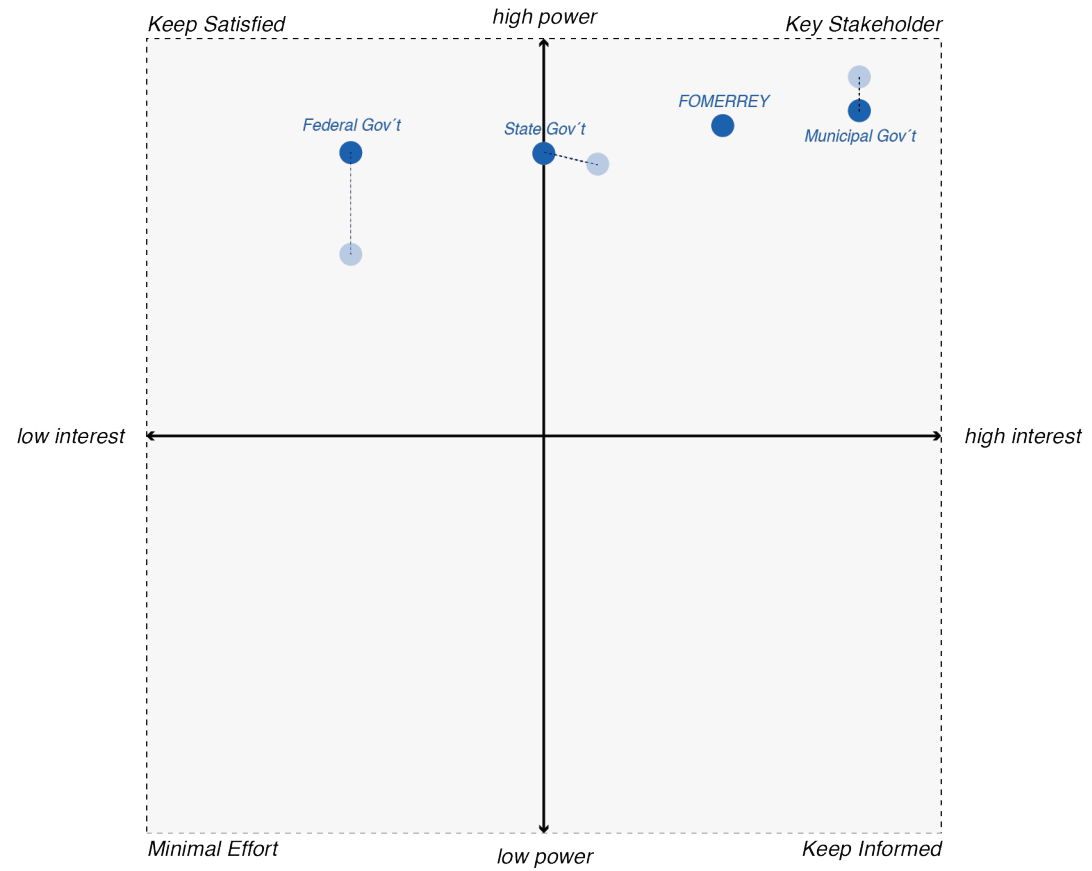


Stakeholder Relations



Public Group

○ Initiative	◦ Formalisation of Partial Programme ◦ Power: to transform the area ◦ Challenges: Equal power = unclear leadership Lack of resources directed at Partial Programmes	<i>“The formalisation of the partial programme is our first step to an urban intervention model that can be used in other areas systematically and integrally.”</i> (J.A., personal communication, 2022)
○ Stakeholders	◦ Dependent relationship ◦ Federal and state governments constrain Municipality's autonomy and power ◦ Challenge: transparency with other actors	<i>“[...] in the case of the municipality, it is null. We depend terribly on the federal government, if you do not get along well with the federal and state governments, you can't do anything.”</i> (J.A., personal communication, 2022)
○ Community	◦ Formalisation process excludes informal groups from participating ◦ Ability to provide basic services and land tenure ◦ Integrate them into urban systems	<i>“[...] the dimension the public services has to transform is enormous. It is a capacity of changing things few entities have.”</i> (X.P., personal communication, 2022)



Private Group

○ Initiative	◦ Power: ITESM to negotiate and influence how interventions are conducted and how information is released and communicated ◦ Purchased land in the area ◦ Challenge: Equal power = unclear leadership	<i>“[...] we have to make sure that governments don’t announce projects that have no funding yet. Sometimes we are able to achieve this, other times we aren’t</i> (V.G., personal communication, 2022)
○ Stakeholders	◦ Power: Networking can link different actors across sectors ◦ Challenge: transparency between actors	<i>“[...] at the next meeting we find out it is a public work. There was no consult, no transparency. That is a huge problem”</i> (V.G., personal communication, 2022)
○ Community	◦ Power: Networking to link community to resources Transfer of power, knowledge, or information to community ◦ Challenge: transparency	<i>“The community is a fundamental part of this effort. In theory, there is a co-responsibility inscribed in the purpose of the initiative. In practice, projects have been carried out with minimum or no participation from the community”</i> (V.G., personal communication, 2022)



Civil Society Group



Initiative

- **No relationship** with **initiative**, but with individual **social workers**
- **Unawareness** of **large-scale** urban project
- **Challenges: Transparency** to not create expectations (Campo de los Pinos)
- Precedence is questioned as **marketing campaign** and **hidden agenda**

“There is no relationship between them. They identify the workers, but they have not been told that this is large-scale urban development”

(L.S., personal communication, 2022)



Stakeholders

- **Government** - high level of **distrust**
- **External** parties – **open** to listening, **sceptic** to commitment or interests
- Lack of **sensibility** and listening to community's **need**
- Lack of **flexibility** in participating **workshops**
- **Other citizens** – **stigmatisation** from middle class **neighbourhoods**

“Unfortunately, political parties here have done a lot of damage. More than help, they have done damage because they accustomed people to give them a food basket in exchange for their vote”

(T.R., personal communication, 2022)

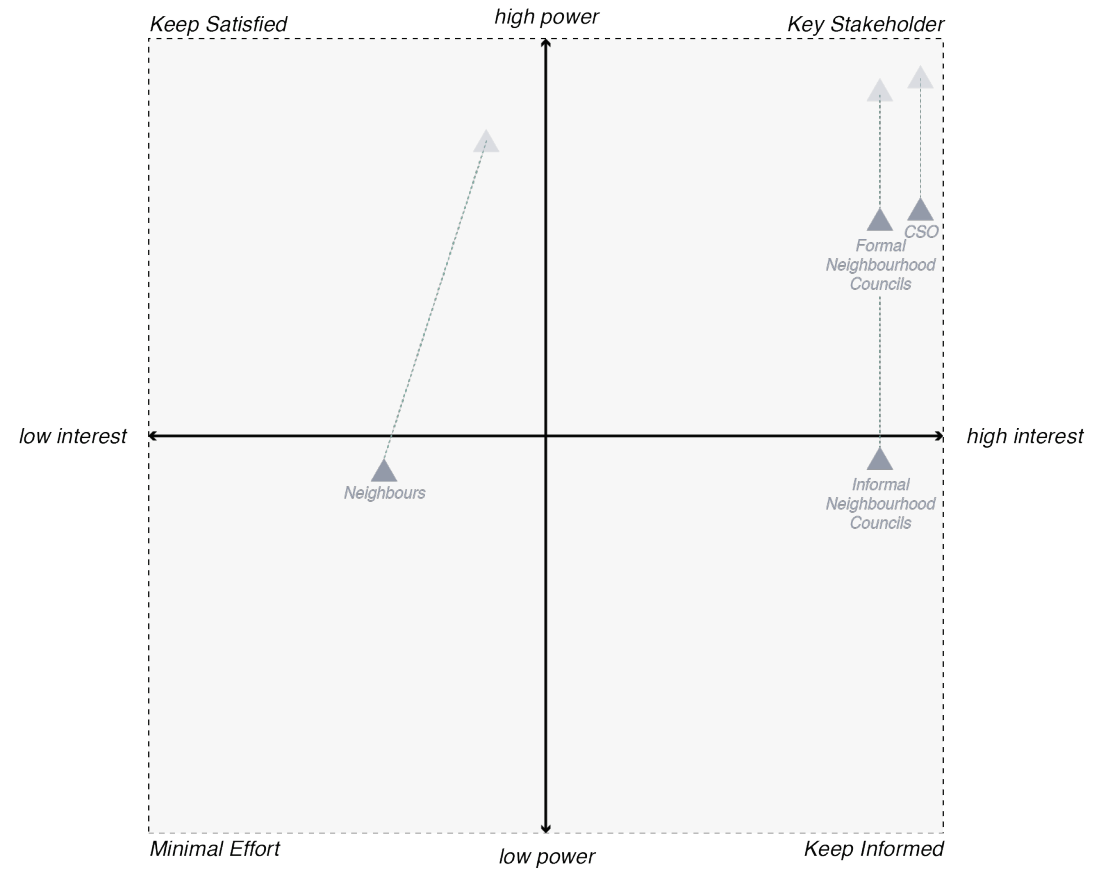


Community

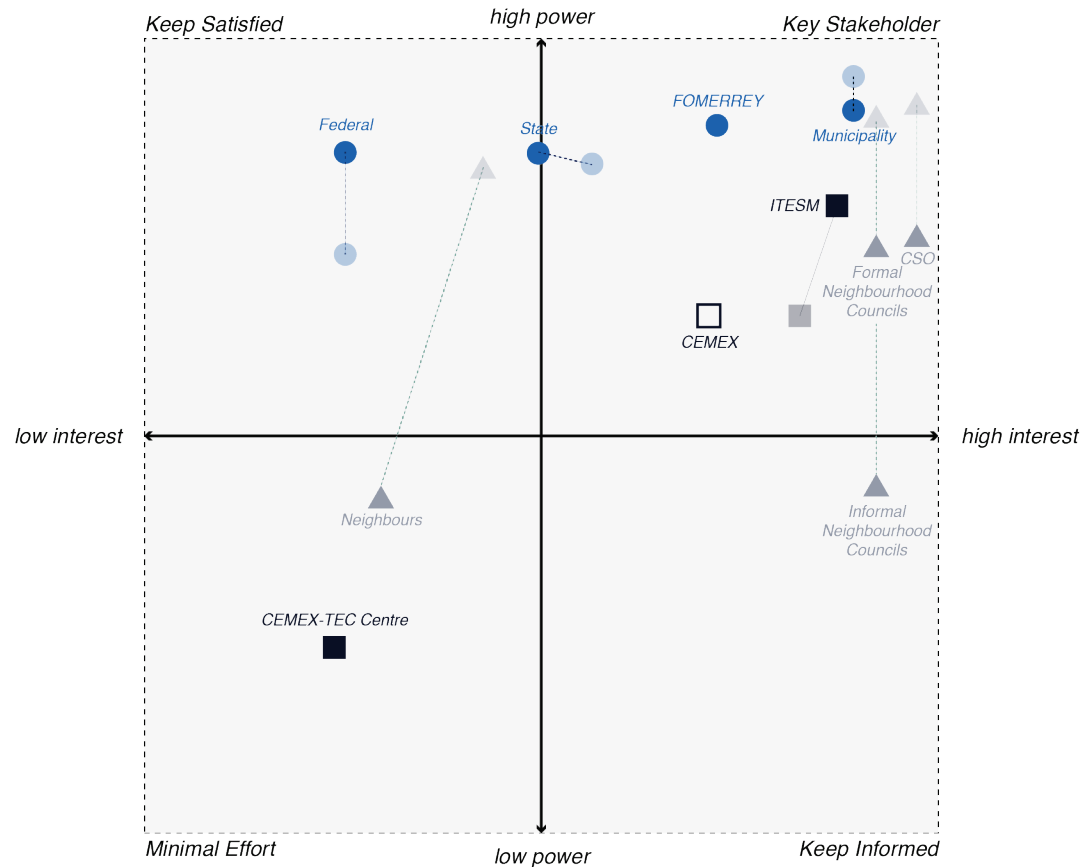
- **Heterogeneity: Demographic & Territorial**
- **Challenges:** Neighbourhood conflicts and **dispersed** efforts
 - Inactive groups: men and youth
 - Overdependence** on **one leader**
 - Lack of Collective Mindset**
 - Integration into Interinstitutional Council**

“We have to unify committees that should be working together. It won't work if there are street-scale committees”

(V.G., personal communication, 2022)



Actual Power-Interest Matrix



Public Group

Most power

Private Group

Has most **power** after government

Civil Society Group

Subjected to how **Initiative** decides they participate

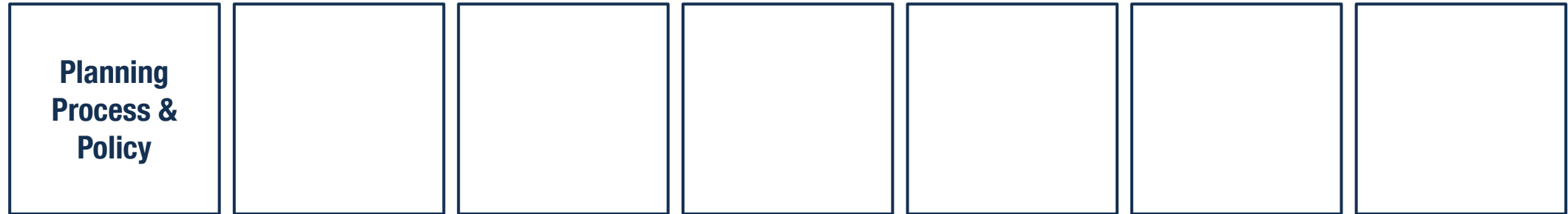
Informal councils and **individual** neighbours especially **excluded**

5. Conclusions

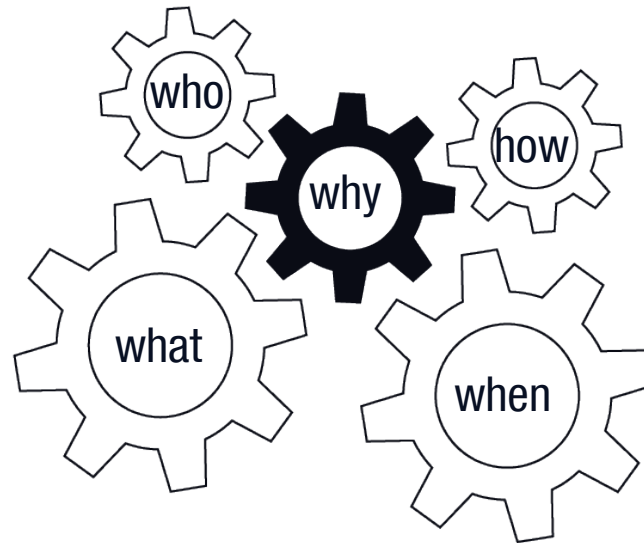
Answering the Main Question

What **factors** of **informal settlement upgrading processes** in Northern Mexico enable **community participation** to promote **community empowerment**?

Factors



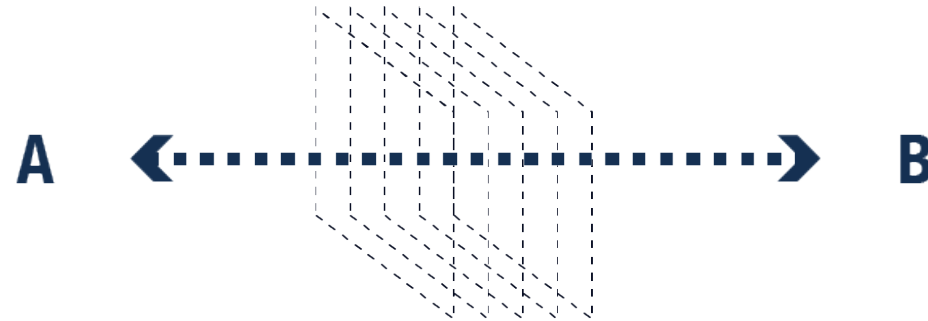
Determines what, how,
when, and who can
participate



Factors



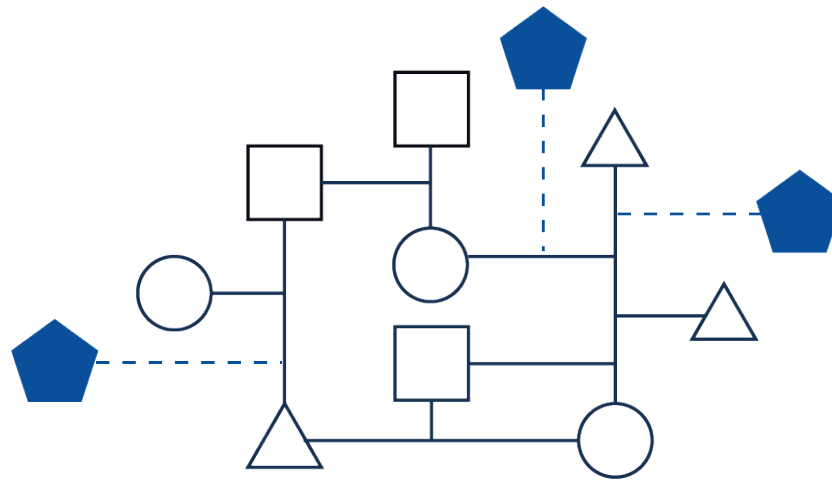
Engages and **maintains**
active participation, allows
access to **information**,
builds **trust**



Factors



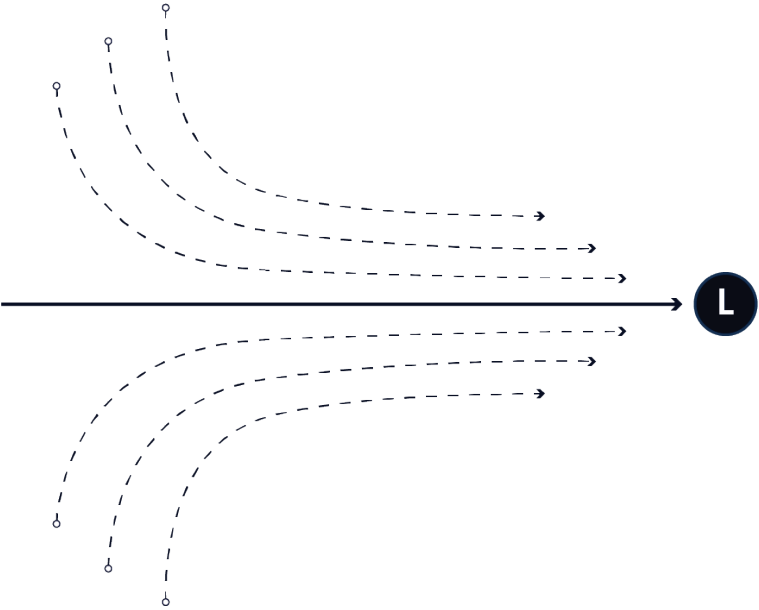
Enhance **access** to a wider range of tools and **information**, transferring **power** to **community**



Factors



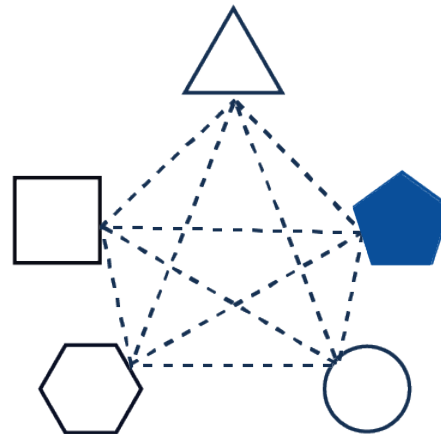
Key to **mobilising resources** and promoting **group collectivity**



Factors



Enhance **co-responsibility**
between actors, especially
the community



Factors



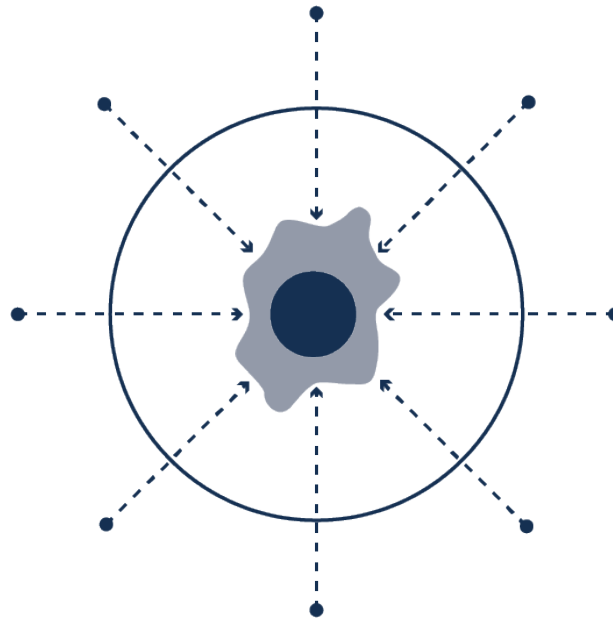
Places **group interests** over individual gain, resulting in **access** to more **resources**



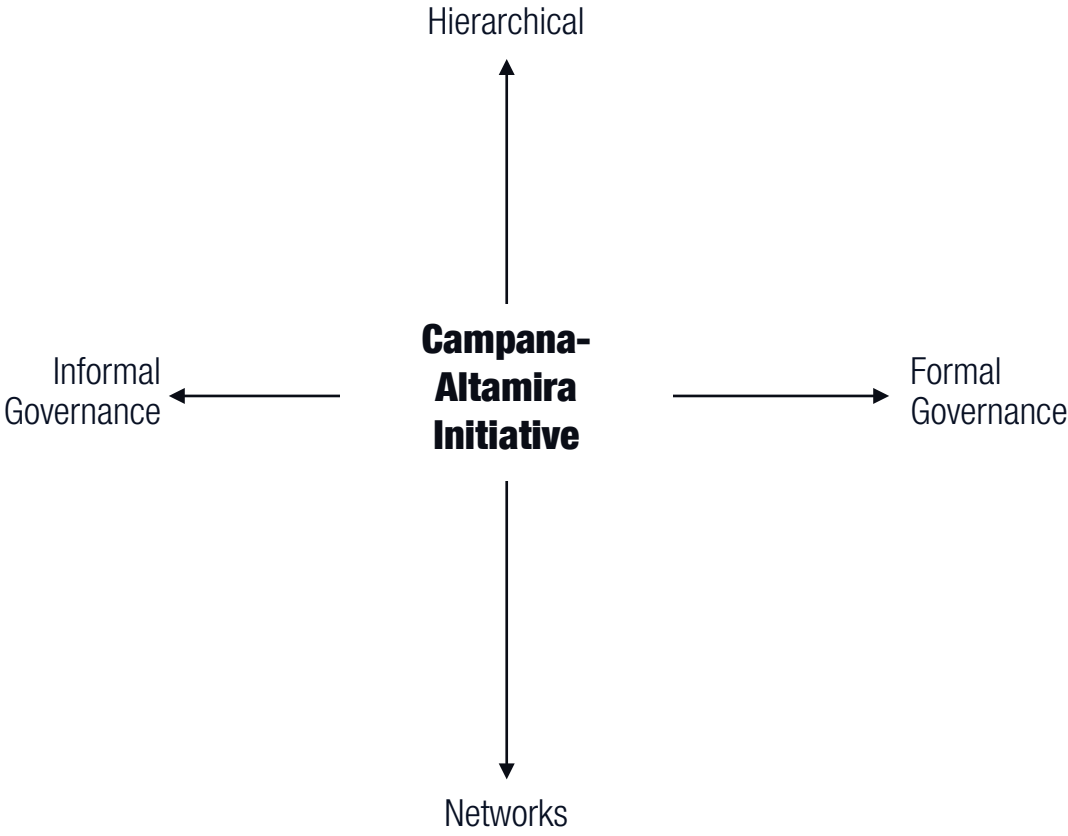
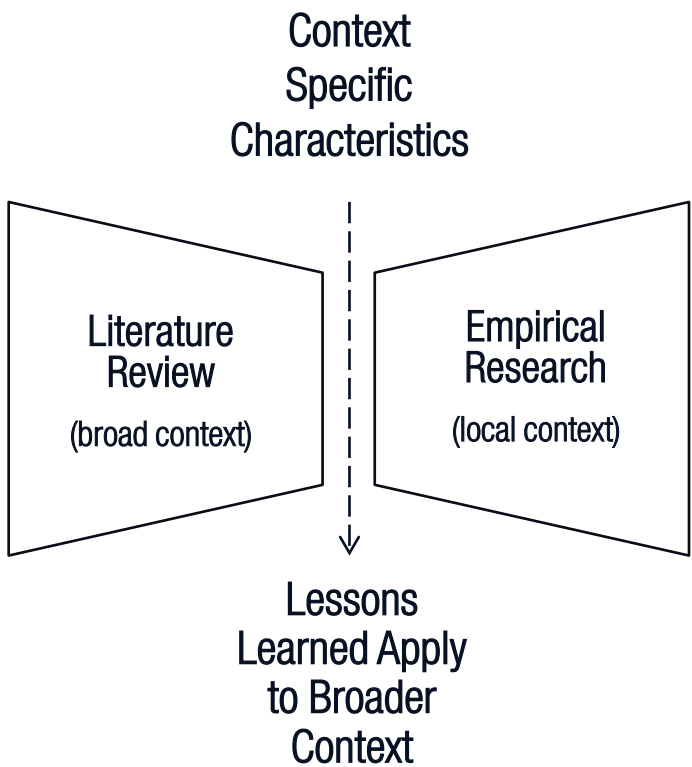
Factors



Can directly or indirectly **impact freedom to participate** from many angles



Contribution



Future Research Recommendations

- 1. Comparative Case studies focusing on other Priority Polygons in the City**

- 2. Longitudinal research on Monitoring and Evaluation stage as participation instruments are approved and put into practice**

- 3. Quantitative approach to complement findings of research, neighbours and not only councils**

Thank You