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Laying Groundwork for Community-Led Activities Aiming at Local Involvement in Imamzade-Yahya Locality

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Imamzade-Yahya

2020

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1. Introduction

'Imamzade-Yahya' is one of the three localities of 'Oudlajan' district. This district was the residential part of ancient Tehran and it is located next to the Tehran Grand Bazar. This locality is famous for its famous political and religious figures. Imamzade-Yahya Tomb dates back to 800 years ago, according to the inscriptions available in the tomb which is believed to be one of the oldest inscriptions ever found in Tehran. There is also an ancient plane tree in the yard of the tomb, which is 900 years old.

Figure 1- District 12 location in Tehran, Iran[1]

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[1] Bavand consultants, Tehran District 12 development plan, 2003.
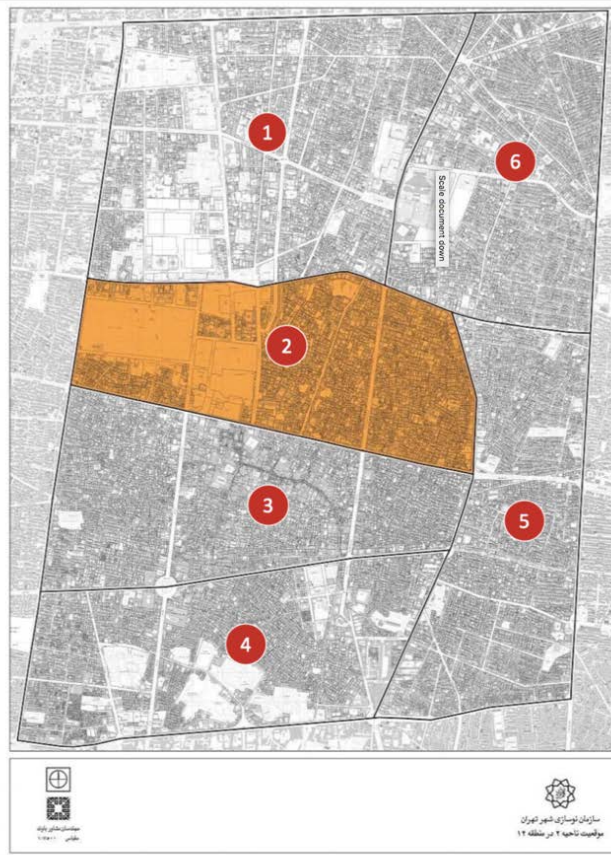
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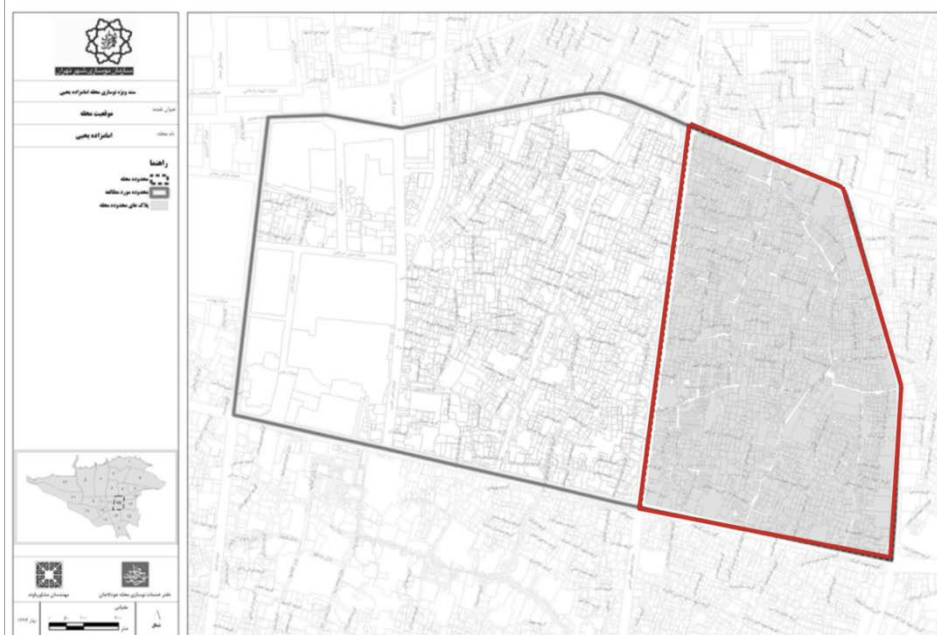*Figure 2-Oudlajan neighborhood location in district12, Tehran, Iran[2]*

Figure 3-Imamzade-Yahya locality (red area) location in Oudlajan neighborhood, district 12, Tehran, Iran[3]

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[2] Bavand consultants, Imamzade-Yahya locality development plan, 2014.

[3] Bavand consultants, Imamzade-Yahya locality development plan, 2014.

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Figure 4-Main street in Imamzade-Yahya locality

Due to uniqueness of historical houses and organic city fabric in this locality, the government decided to 'save' the area by defining it as historical heritage and enacting special regulations, which affected the land prices and delivered several socio-economic challenges in this locality. Many people moved out from the locality and left their houses. After a while when government realized how the regulations enacted on this area has affected the social fabric of the locality and how number of abandoned houses increased, decided to use tourism as a solution to revitalize the locality.

Year	1981	1987	1997	2007	2012	2017
Population(people)	20178	16289	15418	15393	14024	11318

Table 2-Imamzade-Yahya locality population in recent decades[4]

According to the importance of this area in recent decades, many expert groups have been working and researching in this area in different time periods. Numerous plans were made and many

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[4] Statistical Centre of Iran reports

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institutions were formed in this field[5]. Even some institutions and organizations, such as the Office of Historical Area Management, ICOMOS, etc. brought their offices into this locality and settled there. Since Imamzade-Yahya locality is the oldest neighborhood in the capital of Iran, it is of special importance because most of the things happening here can turn into a role model for other cities and localities. Sometimes these role models lead to destructive effects.

Due to the economic-political position of construction and the land and housing market in Iran, historical and blight areas are the target to many plans and interventions. Interventions which are generally physical, top-down and in line with the goals of urban management and macro policies. However, many of the problems in these areas are results of previous regulations and mostly have non-physical roots, and physical actions are not good answers to them at all.

In Oudlajan's vision statement has mentioned:

> *"Oudlajan (Imamzade Yahya, Arg and Paminar) are neighborhoods which are historically famous worldwide and is located at the center of Tehran. Oudlajan hosts many residents from different races and cultures who feel belonged to this neighborhood. Their activities develop their economic situation and wealth and they host the majority of local and international travelers and tourists in Tehran who respect the local values.*
>
> *Oudlajan which includes Imamzade Yahya, Arg and Paminar is a safe neighborhood for its residents and visitors and hosts their cultural and religious ceremonies. Its historic buildings are renovated with high standards and methods that all together with the newly built environment, create an active community and sustainable living society. Local Accessibility is the first priority and the crisis are well managed.*
>
> *Owners, shop keepers, residents, youths and organizations try to create better living condition and housing projects, cultural events, educational and tourism infrastructures have developing programs. Oudlajan is one the most important and famous historic sites in national and international level[6]."*

The policies adopted now in valuable historical contexts such as Imamzade-Yahya, require large amounts of budget that cannot be met. As a result, preservation actions in these neighborhoods only 'freeze' the houses and intensify the process of decline. Since the regulations imposed in the historical areas are only restrictive, they directly affect the price of land in these areas and reduce its price drastically. In a way that the prices on two sides of a street which separates the historical part from other neighborhoods, sometimes varies up to seven to eight times. This is why the low-income groups are being replaced by the departure of the old residents from these neighborhoods.

First, the Renovation Organization of Tehran Municipality asked our team to run a project that could make investment packages determining how much money could be invested in which houses for what kind of use. These packages turned the whole district to a touristic hub. After 2 months of studying, we concluded that this project gentrifies the district and leads to displacement of the people living there. Moreover, none of current residents benefited from this project and they had no say in it. In general, according to our observations, most of the approaches adopted by the Renovation Organization of Tehran Municipality and its local development offices, due to the way their point of view about historical neighborhoods, don't consider socio-economic context. On the other hand, most of what they do is short-term. As a result, they cannot make noticeable and positive impacts and most

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[5] District 12 development plan, Oudlaja development plan, Imamzade-Yahya development plan, Tehran historical-cultural area and buildings management and preservation strategic plan and statement, etc.

[6] Bavand consultants, Imamzade-Yahya locality development plan, 2014.

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of the plans and interventions have side effects like gentrification and displacement[7]. Planning some development catalysts like turning houses to cafés, galleries, restaurants, hostels and boutique hotels changes the land prices dramatically. Changes happening so fast that most of the residents cannot adapt to and makes them leave the locality to destination of cheaper areas.

The importance of our project in this context is that we wanted to try to make the voice of the people heard by the higher institutions and create hope in the people to make a difference in their living environment and increase their quality of life. After several meetings and presentations with the Renovation Organization, we could convince them not to run this project. We put another option on the table instead. We proposed a project, providing an opportunity to build capacity for community-led social and economic development in this locality. The title of this project was 'Laying Groundwork for Community-led Activities Aiming at Local Involvement in Imamzade-Yahya locality'. In this project we tried to come up with ideas with the people living there. Ideas that could take some steps towards making their lives better, maybe through community-led touristic actions.

2. Methodology

To walk through this path, we took participatory approach. As Robert Chambers mentions[8], we tried to "avoid manuals" and "use our best judgment at all times". Thus, various steps such as identifying issues, analyzing and implementing small-scale projects were performed by residents with the support of the project facilitators. On each step, regarding to the outcomes, we decided about the next small step that we took and we "made it up as we go". The focus of this approach is to pave the way for the participation of all primary stakeholders, so that by the bottom to top approach, residents and users of the locality are given the opportunity to analyze their challenges and come up with solutions to solve them.

During this process, about 150 people participated in different steps of the projects. Some of them were interested in participating and some others were reluctant about participating in further steps. Overall, we could make more sustainable connections with 49 people in Imamzade-Yahya locality. We had some challenges in this matter; most of the people we could connect with, were old residents and house owners or old shopkeepers. Almost none of the immigrants (from other cities in Iran or countries like Afghanistan) took a part. Because they did not consider themselves entitled to participate in this process and they said "I don't know! We are new here." But in answer to the question "For how long have you been living in this locality?", they said "two years", "Five years" or even more. This was one of our issues in 'offsetting the biases' and 'triangulation'.

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[7] This analysis is a result of some interviews with socialists and urban studies experts.

[8] Robert Chambers, Whose reality counts? 1997.

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Figure 1- Teenagers participating on social map

This approach gave us the opportunity to gain a more accurate understanding of the needs and paths to achieve more sustainable social and economic development in the locality. Also, since people are the analysts of this matter, by participating in this process, they feel more belonged and effective in the process of projects, which can itself pave the way for the social development of the locality. In this project, by using various participatory analytical tools such as card sorting, social mapping, cause and effect analysis, transect walk and process mapping participants have tried to identify and analyze the situation.

Recognition is the basis of any project; To get to know the locality better and better from the residents' point of view, we used two tools: 'Unstructured Interviews' and 'Social Mapping'. Then In order to understand the impacts of suggested touristic activities which was addressed by ROTM, considering the fact that these ideas are driven by a non-local actor, we used 'Effect Analysis' method. This tool made us see that participants are mentioning some other topics and we had to change the question to see the effects of 'Being Considered as a Historical Locality'. After identifying the root causes and examining the issues of Imamzade-Yahya locality by the mentioned tools, 'Brainstorming' sessions were held with participant groups to specifically discuss about solutions and suggestions to solve and cope with the existing problems and issues and improve the locality. In this process, the idea of 'Revitalizing the old daily market of the locality (Thursday Market)' was known as the first priority. That was how we started working to understand the different dimensions of their selected idea by doing 'Time- Line' tool which helped us to think of an action plan for 'Experimental Daily Market'. Later with a help of locals we practiced 'Process Mapping' tool to develop the plan.

3. Key Findings

Many experts and groups, mostly with a top-down approach, have worked on Oudlajan district and Imamzade-Yahya locality before and due to the complexity of the issues here, most of their works have had not desired outcomes. For this reason, most of the people in the locality did not want to work with us or have interviews. But, when they heard about our approach and us caring about their

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challenges, we could communicate with them and make them interested. After hours of sitting and talking together some of them told us that they will participate in the process and be a part of project.

3.1. Social Mapping

In addition to being a tool for us to explore and analyze the neighborhood, social mapping was a way to start connecting with new people involved in the process. As a result, this map was used in various stages of the project to be the starting point of the conversations. In this step, 49 people including shopkeepers, teenagers, local NGO activists, local activists, residents and some local officials participated in creating the social map of Imamzade-Yahya locality. These were the people who we could gather their phone numbers for further participations.

While participants were marking different information on the map, they made conversations with each other. New issues and analysis came out of these conversations: they marked the spots where there were unpleasant odors because of lack of decent garbage bins or the potential paths they would take to show the locality to someone from outside. They made special signs to show cases of unpleasant odors and put it in the legend of the map. For marking the paths also, they used strings. Unlike our expectations, most of the strings were showing local spots and very personal attractions. They mostly started from or ended in their own home and teenagers passed the strings through the parks or game nets where they played with their friends.

Figure 6- Social map

So many people participated in making the map and so many issues and places were marked on the map. In some parts of the map it was difficult to see what was on it and it made the triangulation challenging. With the help of the participants, the map was transferred into different layers: one layer was the streets and alleys, the second one was the strings which showed the paths and attractions, the third one was issues and problems such as unpleasant odors and unsafety and the last layer showed some places like schools, restaurants, etc. After layering the map, some people marked all houses and alleys where has been a location for some movies and series from long ago. In addition to that, some paths were marked on the layers that people would rather not go there because of reasons like unsafety, noise pollution or being crowded.

unstructured interviews and social map had two important outputs: first, we could recognize different groups of stakeholders, their key issues and tangible and intangible potentials of the locality; second, by using these tools and our continuous activity in the locality, we could communicate and build trust with the people living there. This allowed us to get the numbers of some of them for further collaboration in the next steps of the project.

Following numerous inquiries and field visits, in-depth unstructured interviews with 3 institutions, 2 local NGOs, 7 shopkeepers and residents, as well as the preparation of a social map of the locality, we obtained a common image with residents and users of Imamzade-Yahya. This image consists of information and various aspects of locality features and conditions. By classifying the information and analysis obtained, we encountered a wide range of issues and problems in the locality. Issues and problems that were often inter-connected and sometimes exacerbated.

This caused complexities and difficulties in coming up with solutions to solve them. Problems mentioned by residents, shopkeepers and local leaders in the locality were low levels of security, lack of night life, drug addiction, prostitution, child labor, immigration, poor amenities, low levels of sanitation, and the conversion of homes into storage units and manufactures, abandoned lands and houses and lack of awareness of existing projects in the locality among locals.

Through this process we could reach some of tangible and intangible potentials of Imamzade-Yahya. These potentials could play a key role in laying groundwork for social and economic development in this locality and making progress in tourism.
The potentials come in three categories:
- 'Patoqs' or hangout places like 'Baagh Peste Bak' square, bazaar and main streets, religious places, parks and playgrounds.
- Abandoned houses and lots which can be used for future developments and tourism development.
- Landmarks, both historical and local.

The 'Patoq', is a place for gathering of people with different roles in different parts of the locality. According to residents and shopkeepers, the number of Patoqs in different parts of the locality has changed a lot comparing to the past years. One of the most important steps taken by participants is marking the process of change and the historical course that some of these Patoqs have gone through. In previous decades, places such as coffee shops (traditional ones), baths and local shops were considered as locality Patoqs.

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Figure 7- Social mapping

Previously, the abandoned houses and lots were considered as issues and problems for the locality. These houses are often old houses that have been abandoned for various reasons, such as cultural heritage regulations which prohibit any intervention from the owner, or are owned by people who cannot afford renovating and reusing the houses, or are properties that have been purchased, abandoned or destroyed by organizations such as Municipality or Endowments. But many of these properties have been mentioned by locals for having the potential to visit and be introduced to tourists historically and according to their traditions.

According to the historical background of Imamzade-Yahya locality, which dates back to different periods of ancient Tehran, this locality has very valuable historical landmarks. 'Nawab Bath', 'Modares House', 'Kazemi House', the tomb and shrine of Imamzade-Yahya and several schools and historical houses are among these. People considered these as part of the heritages of this locality and pointed out the authenticity and uniqueness of these buildings. The local people want these places to have a local use and provide services and facilities for locals as well as the visitors.

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Figure 8- Social mapping

The findings can help improve the proposed tourism routes. For example, overlapping tourism routes layer with layer of issues, can help choosing a safer route. This review can also lead to minor interventions such as improving lighting and security situation. Other issues such as the impact of hostels or other tourism services in the neighborhood are other options that provide the opportunity to study and make more accurate decisions about the development of tourism in the locality.

3.2. Effect Analysis

After using the tool 'Social Map' and putting it into different layers with the help of participants, some facts were recognized by them as the main causes of the issues in their locality. On the other side the Renovation Organization of Tehran Municipality (ROTM), addressed some of the touristic activities as the solutions to the same challenges, referring to two specific projects; The Arian Hostel and Nan-o-Namak Restaurant.

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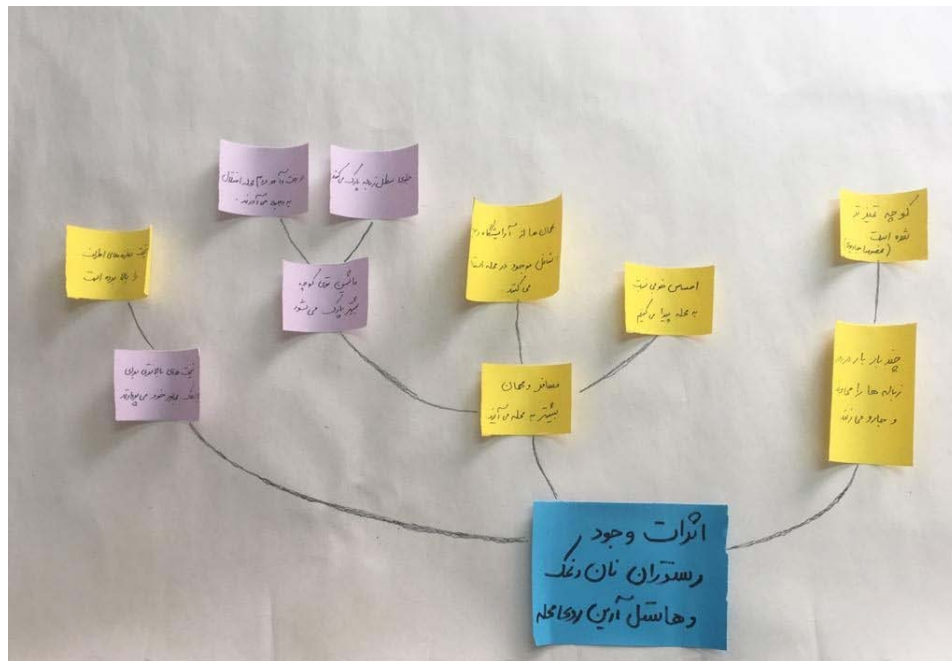www.humanitarianheritage.com

Figure 9- First effect analysis

In order to understand the impacts of suggested touristic activities which was addressed by ROTM, considering the fact that these ideas are driven by a non-local actor, we used 'Effect Analysis' method on the two mentioned projects with 11 people participating including 2 grocers, 2 barbers and a butcher near the hostel, 3 women who were in charge of a local gym and 3 shopkeepers on other part of the locality. After a while we realized that the newly opened hostel is not known to many of the locals except the few who live around it. Few more had heard about the hostel project, but it was either so new or so insignificant effect that they had no idea to add to the tool. And the Nan-o-Namak restaurant was mainly closed but locals were saying that they are either not willing to serve the locals since they consider themselves a high-level restaurant or the prices are so high that the locals cannot afford. The only comment on these two touristic places which was reflected by locals was the parking issue and traffic which is usually made by their customers.

Two positive effects were also mentioned by the participants: according to them, due to the establishment of the Arian hostel, travelers and guests come to the locality, who sometimes use the services available in the locality; But the amount of use is not significant and does not really benefit residents and businesses. In addition, according to participants, the municipality pays more attention to the cleanliness of the alleys around these places and as a result, their alleys have become a little cleaner.

Therefore, we decided to change the main question of our method to "*How Does Being Considered as a Historical District Affects the Life in This Locality*". By asking this question, an attempt was made to write down the negative and positive effects of the subject on paper with the help of participants and to measure its successive effects. This process first started with the groups we already knew and then for triangulating the analysis, we shared it with other people in the locality and made the changes. In this step of the project around 25 people including people in a barbershop, owners and customers of a Falafel shop, owner of a local teahouse, 2 old grocers, people in a mosque after saying their prayers and 2 employees of the municipality participated.

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Figure 10- Second effect Analysis

In this analysis, positive effects are marked with yellow cards and negative effects are marked with purple cards. As shown in the photo, only two potential positive effects were mentioned for being considered as a historical district. The historic attractions of the area bring tourists to the locality, which can be considered as a source of income for some local businesses. But in the current situation, even though tourists come to the locality to visit, no one buys anything from local shops.

"Which benefit? Some days 20 tourists come to the locality with their leader but they even don't like to buy a bottle of water from our shops. Maybe because we are not fancy enough! They buy a piece of 'Barbari[9]' from that bakery and they eat it all together[10]".

"Let's imagine that lots of tourists come here. Why are they (the officials) talking about good restaurants? There isn't even a good toilet here. Is paving the only touristic facility? Ok, it was asphalt before and now its paved. So, what[11]?"

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[9] Barbari: name of an Iranian traditional bread.

[10] One of old residents and shopkeepers of Imamzade-Yahya locality.

[11] The owner of a teahouse in Imamzade-Yahya locality.

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The mentioned negative effects of being considered as a historical district are much more significant than the positive ones. The negative consequences shown in the photo above with purple cards, often stem from the restoration regulations and restrictions of construction imposed in this locality to 'preserve' historical and cultural heritage. These regulations have caused a sharp drop in the price of land and property in this area through years, and the difficulties of obtaining a renovation permit, have pushed the old houses and shops in the locality to the brink of destruction.

> *"My mother lives here, in a 200 square meters house that is too old and has many problems. We can afford to repair the house but they don't let us do that. I've even bought an apartment for her but she doesn't like to move. What should we do now[12]?"*

This has significantly reduced the quality of life in this locality and has caused Imamzade-Yahya locality to gain some notoriety. Older residents have left the locality and have given their homes to small manufactures and workers' homes. Many of houses have remained abandoned, causing several negative effects. Those who continue to live in here are very dissatisfied and disappointed with the current situation in the locality and struggle with problems such as business stagnant, uncleanliness, insecurity and similar problems.

> *"You see this house behind there? The owners used to live here. But, the Cultural Heritage Organization picked on them and they could not repair their house. I mean they also could not afford to. So, they rented it to some other guy and he made 2-3 square meters rooms out of it and rented them to many other people. You have to see here at nights! Otherwise, this alley was one of the best ones in this area[13]."*

According to the participants and their analysis when using various tools, problems are often rooted in the restrictions made because of being considered as a historical district and the difficulties on the way of to obtain repair permit.

> *"When they get something from us, they have to give something back[14]!" (He is talking about the restrictions made in construction and reducing the price of their land and houses).*

These factors lead to insecurity, uncleanliness, mugging, the exodus of old residents, the infiltration of Tehran Grand Baazaar and its supporting services. Factors that reduce the quality of life in the locality, turn the it into an undesirable locality. People also discussed how the government poses different rules and regulations to create difficulties and make the residents tired from the situation. In this way, when they get tired, they sell their property in a lower price just to get rid of those difficult situations. The municipality organizations who now are the owners, turn these properties into touristic hubs and attractions when they have enough money and make more and more money after that. But at the moment most of the acquired properties are still remained abandoned and deprived.

3.3. Brainstorming and Card Sorting

After identifying the root causes and examining the issues of Imamzade-Yahya locality, 'Brainstorming' sessions were held with participant groups to specifically discuss about solutions and suggestions for solve and cope with the existing problems and issues and improve the locality. This was a group of 21 people consisted of shopkeepers, local activists, residents and youth and teenagers.

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[12] One of previous residents of Imamzade-Yahya locality.

[13] One of the old shopkeepers on the main street of Imamzade-Yahya locality.

[14] One of old shopkeepers of Imamzade-Yahya locality.

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Figure 11- Brainstorming and card sorting sessions

Several suggestions were made during 'brainstorming' sessions by different groups. Each person presented his/her idea and strategy and it was discussed and analyzed in the group. Some ideas were criticized and opposed, some were approved and written down, and some were written down with some changes. The ideas that were finally approved by the group were written down on cards by the group of facilitators and placed in front of the eyes of participants. The written cards were taken to different groups and after presenting them, they were discussed and ideas were added to it or notes and criticisms were written on them.

'Card Sorting' was modified and completed, and to increase the validity of these suggestions in groups and triangulation, other groups discussed about them.

However, due to the specific time conditions of this project and the impact of the Covid-19 epidemic, it was not possible to form a large group of analysts for this task, and inevitably the facilitators re-read the conversations with the analysts and according to their emphasis in previous meetings. Criteria such as administrative and legal feasibility, the extent and manner of impact on their locality, residents and shopkeepers, speed of implementation, as well as the results of studies of various experiences were used to judge and prioritize the ideas. In this process, the idea of "Revitalizing the Old Daily Market of the Locality (Thursday Market)" was known as the highest priority.

> "This street had a 'Panjshanbe-Baazaar' (daily market) in old times. you could find anything in it. Most of the locals bought their stuff here, what now[15]?"

> "Those days that there was a 'Panjshanbe-Baazaar' here, Our business was more prosperous. More people came to the locality, we sold more and the locality was safer[16]".

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[15] Member of Imamzade-Yahya locality counsil.

[16] One of local activists and old shopkeepers of Imamzade-Yahya locality.

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> *"My shop is in front of the shrine (Imamzade-Yahya Shrine). Those days when there was 'Panjshanbe-Baazaar' (daily market) there was a line of people at the door of my shop. I sold 3000 sandwiches in one day[17]!"*

> *"People who came for pilgrimage, did their shoppings and had their fun[18]".*

In the same process, reasons from analysts increased the credibility of this idea as the preferred idea to implement. These reasons were:

- Thursday market as their local heritage.
- Helps the prosperity of existing businesses.
- Helps the dynamism and vitality of the locality.
- Improves security level by increasing traffic in the neighborhood.
- It is a source of income for the residents of the neighborhood.
- There are many people in the neighborhood who have home-made products.
- Offers goods to the residents of the locality in good prices which suits different groups with different level of income.

3.4. Time-Line

When we started this step, the whole country was dealing with Covid-19 pandemic. So, we could not bring the participants together and we had to go to them one by one or in groups of 2 or 3. Overall 18 people including grocers, owner family of a Falafel shop in front of Imamzade-Yahya shrine, barbers, some other old shopkeepers and a group of young people which were linked to local NGOs and one of them had majored in Urban planning. According to the residents of Imamzade-Yahya locality, the daily market had started operating in the mid-1980s, on Thursdays and continued to operate until the early 2000s. The venue for Thursday was the Bazaar in front of the Shrine of Imamzade-Yahya, till near Bagh-Pista Square (one of the oldest Patoqs in the locality).
Because many people have come to the shrine for pilgrimage on this day and it has been a good opportunity to sell goods. The market, as its name implies, was held on Thursdays every week from noon till night, with vendors from inside and outside the neighborhood selling their goods.

The items sold in this market have been very diverse and numerous. Fruits, vegetables, clothes, antiques, dishes and utensils, home appliances, etc. were sold in this market. In addition, the shops located on this street also sold their cheap and auctioned goods in their shops on Thursdays. Buyers were often from the locality, but people from outsid also came to the market for shopping.

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[17] Owner of a Falafel shop in Imamzade-Yahya locality.

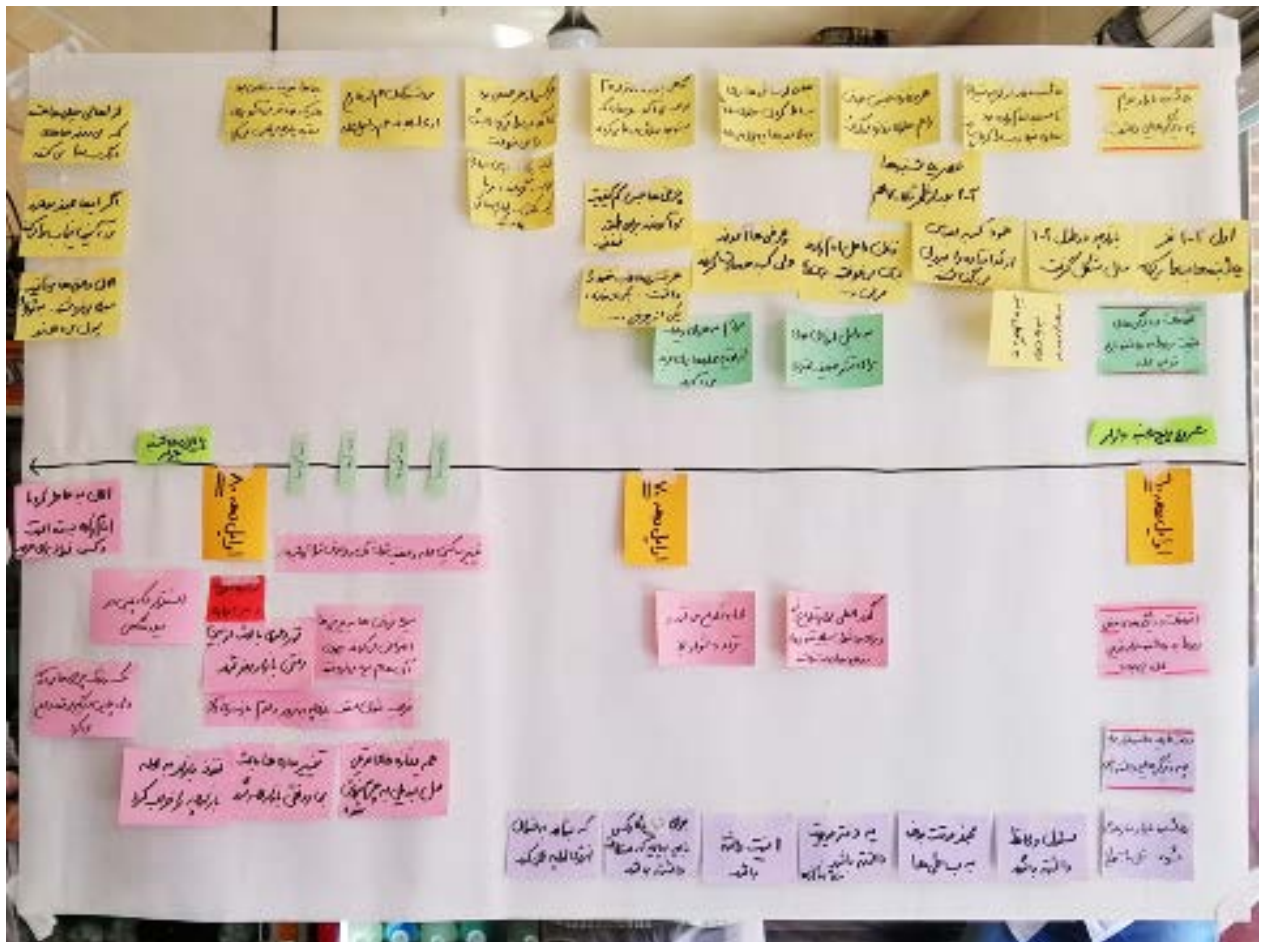[18] One of old residents of Imamzade-Yahya locality.

Figure 12- Daily Market Timeline

Drivers passing through this route did not enter this passage since they knew the market is being held on Thursdays and the locality is crowded on specific hours. According to an old shopkeeper in the locality, the daily market had boosted their business significantly and their sales had risen. On the other hand, there were also some fruit shops that were against this daily market. Because on this market there were some people selling fruits with really cheap prices and fruit shop owners could not compete with them[19]. But in the early years of the 2000s, municipality officials, following their policies at that time and according to some complaints made from fruit shop owners began to confront with peddlers in order to control and stop them, which led to clashes between vendors and municipal officials. Police also entered the conflict, and during the chasings, one of the vendors was shot and killed by police. After this incident, no peddlers operated in this locality.

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[19] Because shopkeepers had to pay tax and rent, they could not offer that much cheap prices.

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Figure 13-Daily market timeline

Experimental revitalization of an old daily market after almost twenty years and after all ups and downs and tragic stories of how it was shut down, requires careful action and planning. It needs many rounds of coordination, meetings and bureaucracy between the relevant and influential institutions and bodies to obtain the required permits. On the other hand, to initiate this market, local sellers should be attracted and invited to be present on the experimental version of the daily market, for a specified period of time so that we can monitor the process and evaluate the results and the way it affects the locality. By studying the results of evaluation, necessary changes can be made in different parts of daily market. To make this stage happen, a group of participants from locality came together to brainstorm, think, plan and make the necessary arrangements.

There were many questions in the minds of the group members. By Card Sorting tool, all questions were written down in a brainstorming session. Later, the questions were categorized and some of them were answered. Other ones were listed so that the team can answer them on the road.

3.5. Process Mapping

At this level, to find answers for the questions and to recognize the different actions and processes needed, the tool 'Process Mapping' was used and 11 people participated who were a some of the people participating in creating the 'Time-line'. Using this tool, we divided the steps into three parts: input, action or process, and output. After this step, we installed the accommodations and processes in chronological order, based on their precedence and latency, on a large sheet of paper, and related the inputs and outputs to them.

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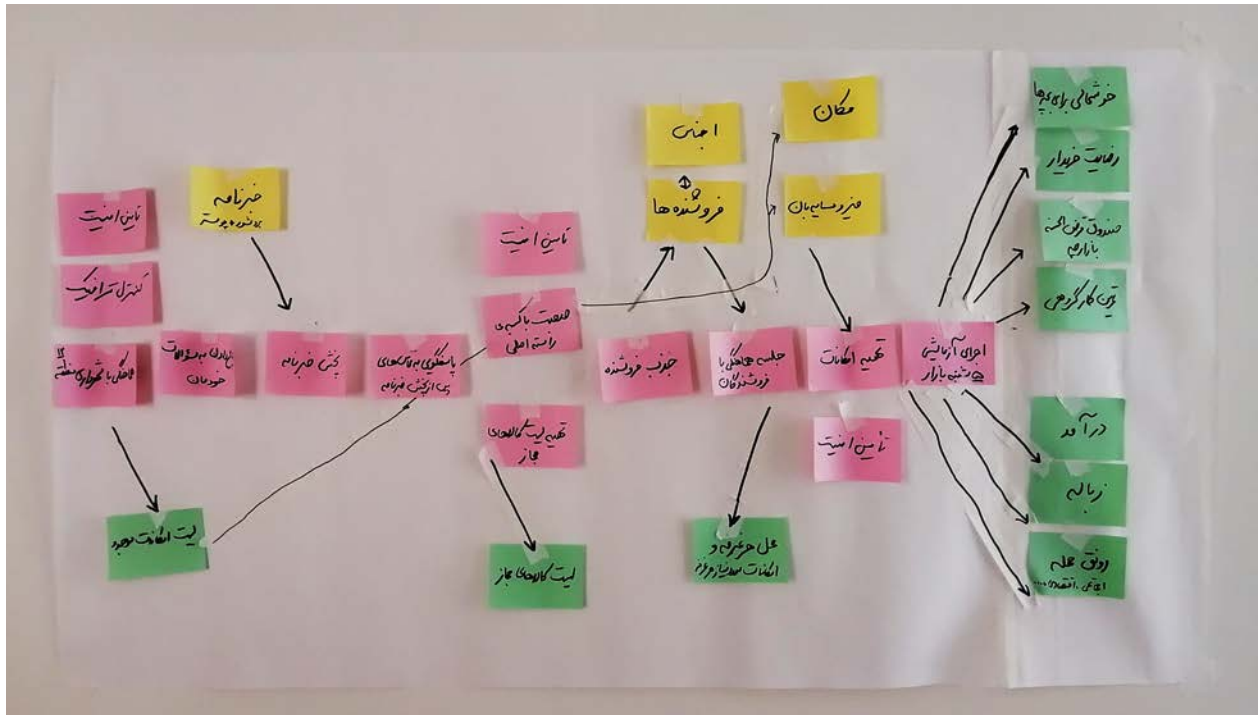www.humanitarianheritage.com

Figure 14- Process Mapping

First, the planning team outlined requirements such as security, traffic control and coordination with the municipality to prevent potential conflicts like shooting at the sellers in the past. This coordination and their results will set the conditions and specify the list of available facilities. For example, the planning team decided to provide desks and canopies for sellers in order to be more formal and in good order, and as a result more attractive for the sellers and the buyers. In this case sellers can continue to sell their products in different weather conditions. Being formal and in good order is also important because there are many people in the locality who really need to sell their products in the market and make some money but they are ashamed of street peddling. Making the market a bit formal, can help this obstacle.

For this purpose, efforts will be made to negotiate with the district 12 municipality and the of sub-district 2 municipality of district 12 to provide the facilities required for the experimental version of daily market.

The next step would be to inform the residents of Imamzade-Yahya locality about the experimental revitalization of old daily market so that they are invited to share their thoughts about how to perform and also to sell their homemade products in daily market if they are interested. The team insisted on homemade and handmade products so that it can help the locals have an income in this way. It was also possible for the residents to inform the planning team with their comments, criticisms and suggestions in this regard, so that if possible, changes could be made or a solution could be provided. The information will be provided by setting up a newsletter in the form of a brochure to be distributed in the locality and a poster to be installed in crowded spots of locality like 'Patoqs', bakeries, mosques, etc. Some contact numbers were announced in the newsletters as communication channels so that the audience could reach out with their comments or their will to collaborate.

According to the stories told from years ago, one of the reasons that created conflicts and resulted in shutting the old daily market down, was the complaints of some local fruit shops who didn't like the daily market fruit sellers. Because they didn't pay rent or tax and could have cheaper prices and fruit shops were not able to compete with their prices. In order to prevent such complaints, we need to

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control the products which can be sold. After this stage, it is necessary to have final talks and coordination with the main shopkeepers of the locality, which are close to the venue of daily market and are affected directly by that, and to have their satisfaction and have their sensitivities in mind. Based on the list prepared, the final sellers of the booths will be announced and informed. Some vendors may withdraw after one or two weeks. In this case they will be replaced by another vendor from the rest of the list. As the date for experimental performance of the daily market approaches, a vendor coordination meeting will be held to determine the location of each table, the needs of each booth, and the terms, rules, restrictions, and facilities available for them.

Due to the crowdedness of main street of Imamzade-Yahya locality, especially on Thursday afternoons, it was decided to hold the experimental performance in the upper courtyard of the Kazemi Park, located in front of Imamzade-Yahya shrine. In this way it would be easier manage it and provide security. The final step will be the actual experimental performance of Imamzade-Yahya daily market for few weeks on Thursdays.

It should be noted that renting the booths in the experimental phase is free of charge and the sellers won't need to pay.

After using the 'Process Mapping' tool and identifying and writing down the required processes, actions and resources, an operational action plan was written to be provided to the Renovation Organization of Municipality of Tehran to do the inter-organizational coordination and to obtain the necessary permits and take the final organizational actions.

The probable outputs predicted by the planning group include many different cases. Earnings by sellers and buyers' satisfaction were considered the main outputs of this market. By studying and observing similar local markets, one of the unpleasant and problematic outputs is the high amounts of waste and garbage generated in them, which requires management and coordination with the Services department of municipality to collect and dispose them.

Figure 15- Planning for the daily market

According to the planning group, if the results of evaluating the experimental version of daily market is good and leads to making it a permanent market which is held every week, the locality and its businesses will be more and more prosperous. In the future, if the market is stable, a fund can be formed in which the costs collected from renting the tables will be collected and spent to help improve the daily market and its sellers and producers. Again, these are the outputs if the evaluation results

are acceptable. Outputs and results are affected and dependent on performance and the feedback and evaluations that result.

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4. Conclusion and the Way Forward

In conclusion we would like to address some of our achievements, challenges and hopes. When we started the project, people had less hope in participating due to many developing programs imposed in this locality by different organizations and their consultants in the past. After observing the process and being part of the participatory process, locals slowly trusted and came up with their ideas and hopes. During the project our findings tried to challenge The Renovation Organization of Tehran Municipality's objectives by presenting another way possible to analyze the current situation and potentials in Imamzade-Yahya locality. We must say though they followed the project but it was not fully supported! Many people will assume that the Renovation Organization of Tehran Municipality as one of the powerful organizations which is mainly in-charge of developing different neighborhoods and localities and the organization is familiar with the participatory approach as well, but underneath all slogans they make about 'participation', 'local' development and so on, they are moving towards their own objectives. These objectives which almost have low or no impacts on the local development and the quality of life in those areas.

We believe that the process we started, gave the locals and the team an opportunity [maybe] to break or pause the top-to-bottom programs to create a chance to discuss and understand how they live and what they dream for their living environment.

Therefore, implementing of an experimental action plan for local daily market to understand its hidden dimensions to develop this idea as their heritage and other side-projects like local podcast which was proposed by one of the young participants have got their importance in finding hope for Imamzade-Yahya and to continue the participatory practice.

At the moment due to some internal organization bureaucratic issues, Covid-19 pandemic and our contract expiration date on 03. Nov. 2020, our project has been stopped but we are trying to find a way by searching for other ways possible to fund and support our proposed project.

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