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## Space, Activities and Gender- Everyday Life in Lindora, Costa Rica

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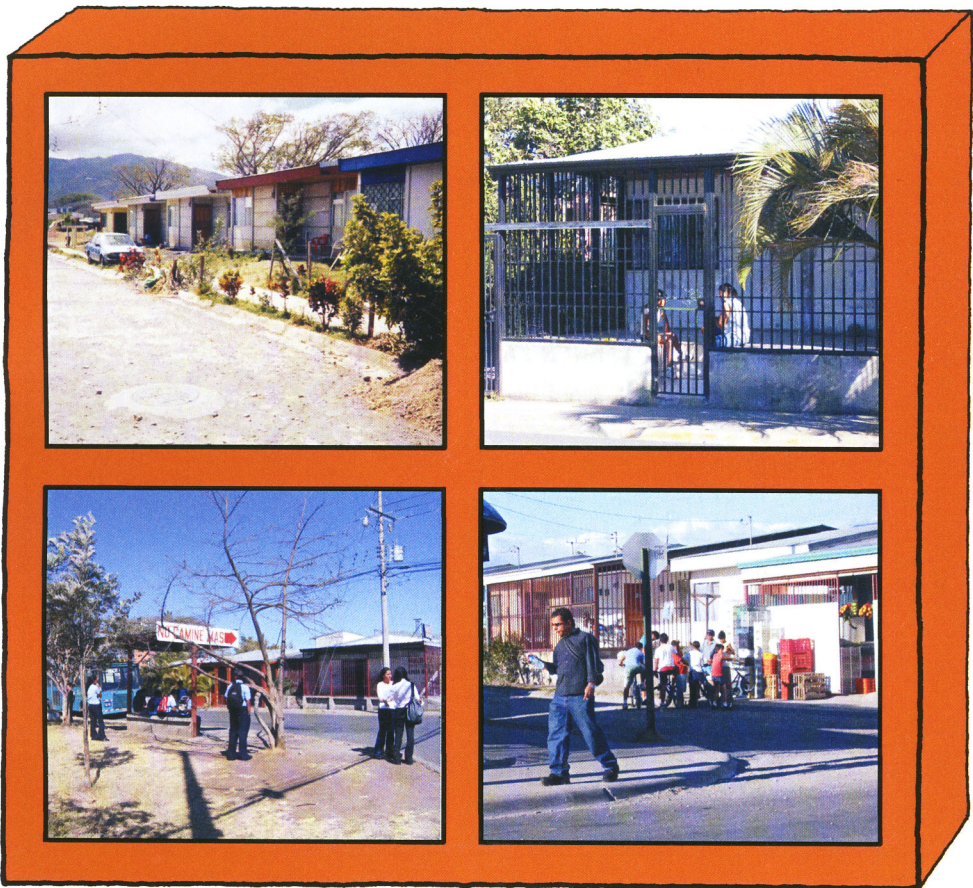


LUND UNIVERSITY

Housing Development & Management  
Architecture & Built Environment  
Lund Institute of Technology  
Sweden

# Space, Activities and Gender

## Everyday life in Lindora, Costa Rica



*Karin Grundström*

THESIS

2

# Space, Activities and Gender

Everyday Life in Lindora, Costa Rica

## Keywords (UNCHS' Thesaurus)

|                                 |                        |                        |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Architecture                    | Housing Needs          | Self-help Housing      |
| Costa Rica                      | Low-income Housing     | Settlement Planning    |
| Everyday Life                   | Residential Areas      | Strategic Gender Needs |
| Gender and<br>Human Environment | Public Space           | Urban Settlements      |
| Gender organization             | Private Space          | Urban Planning         |
| House Design                    | Practical Gender Needs | Use of Dwelling        |
|                                 | San Jose               | Women                  |

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# Space, Activities and Gender

Everyday Life in Lindora, Costa Rica

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Part I

# Starting Points



# Introduction

## Summary

Nearly half of the world's population lives in urban areas. People's everyday lives in urban areas differ because social background, class, age and gender shape experiences and determine, to some extent, which spaces in the city that can be used.

This thesis deals with the everyday life of women and men in a neighbourhood planned for low-income earners on the outskirts of the capital city San José, Costa Rica. The research uses an everyday life perspective and shows how gender organization leads to a division of labour and a use of space that differentiates between women and men's activities. There are space use patterns that reflect the existing gender organization, but there is also a pattern of women crossing borders between public and private space to perform their productive and reproductive activities.

The study shows that women and men have different needs for spaces in their physical surroundings in their everyday life, needs that are interpreted as practical gender needs in human settlements. Practical gender needs are related in the study to strategic gender needs, where access to space is seen as empowerment. An outline is proposed for a tool to analyse space, activities and gender. The tool is a map showing the relative power position of women's and men's activities in a specific place, where social status determines which activities each individual can carry out. The map is constructed to analyze what activities are carried out and by whom. Once the map of activities is established, a decision can be made about which activities to support with physical structures, in order to support an equitable use of space.

## Background to the Study

*All over the world, women play a large part in building and maintaining settlements. The level and extent of women's participation in house construction vary in different cultures, ranging from assisting the men to having total responsibility. Due to factors such as poverty and discrimination, women meet special obstacles when trying to take an active part in decision-making processes or trying to access decent shelter, infrastructure and urban services. [...]  
Providing a safe and clean living environment, especially in poor urban neighbourhoods, is a hard and difficult job, done mostly by women. It is more likely that women have low incomes and are disproportionately affected by badly*

*designed housing and neighbourhoods. Yet, when it comes to formulating settlement policies, planning settlements and designing housing programs, women are seriously underrepresented and rarely consulted, and therefore women's work remains unrecognised and their needs un-planned for (UN Habitat 2000, Box 1).*

This thesis explores the everyday life of women and men in a neighbourhood planned for low-income earners in the outskirts of the capital of San José, Costa Rica. It explores the physical surroundings and space use patterns as part of practical and strategic gender needs and proposes an outline for a tool to analyse space, activities and gender.

---

Nearly half the world's population lives in urban areas. In Latin America about 75.5 percent are urban dwellers which makes it the second most urbanized region of the world, after North America. The United Nations estimates that 85 percent of the population increase in the world up to the year 2010 will be in urban areas, especially Africa, Asia and Latin America. The reason for the increase in urbanization is that urban areas have a concentration of new investments and economic opportunities for people. Developed nations with high capita per income are among the most urbanized in the world. To meet the demands of the urbanization process, to deliver land, social and technical infrastructure requires national policies that address these issues. Many cities and urban centres do not yet have the institutions to fill these key roles, which has meant that many people must live in poor parts of cities with little or no provision of social and technical infrastructure (Satterthwaite, 2005).

Poverty lines often measured by income, which means that poverty in urban areas is often underestimated, since although people in urban areas may have more income than rural residents, they must pay to meet their basic needs such as housing, water, sanitation, health and schooling. Poverty does not affect all of the population in the same way. It most strongly affects women and children. It is believed that women headed households are the poorest of the poor and that the danger of being affected by poverty is highly related to household structures, which differs, however, in different parts of the world. In Latin America 27.4 percent of households are headed by women. Of man-headed households 38.2 percent (of all man-headed households) are estimated to be poor, and of women-headed households 37.6 percent are estimated to live in poverty. These figures are based on income levels, but other factors affect the risk for women to be affected by poverty, factors such as whether other members of the household contribute economic resources, opportunities for earning an income in the informal sector, support from other family members and the welfare system. There are also connections to the built environment, and the citation above asserts that women meet obstacles when trying to access decent shelter, infrastructure and services. To support poor women in urban areas there is a need for gender-sensitive urban development and housing

policy to take into account the facts that; women need independent access to adequate housing, adequate infrastructure for income generating activities, adequate infrastructure for reproductive work, safety and security in private and public space (Becker, 2003).

Issues of human settlements relate to both the practical gender needs, such as spaces and places to be used, and strategic gender needs, such as legal rights to land and tenure (Moser, 1994). Many studies have been conducted on issues of poverty, gender and human settlements in developing and transition countries stating that women often experience and use the urban environment differently than men. Women are identified as a vulnerable group because of their triple role which often leads to a more complex relationship to the built environment (Chant, 1996; Dandekar, 1992; Larsson and Schlyter, 1993; Moser, 1996).

---

Cities have traditionally been planned by men, without consulting women and without considering the lives that women lead in urban society. Use of public space is an important part of an individual's everyday life in cities: it is a social meeting place, it is space to express political positions and participation, and it can be a place for economic activities. Studies of the use of public space have a long tradition in architecture and planning, where people's expropriation of space, spatial identity, human activities and experiences are central issues (Broadbent, 1990; Carmona, 2003; Cullen, 1990; Jacobs, 1992; Gehl, 2004; Hillier 1984; Lynch 1986).

Related to the built environment, there is criticism that it is designed from men's everyday life and the ways they organize their lives. Many studies show there are differences between women and men's everyday life conditions related to planning and use of public space (Boverkett, 1996a, 1996b; Booth, 1996; Eneroth, 1989; Friberg, 1990; Hayden, 2000; Listerborn, 2002; Sangregorio; 1994). Feminist scholars argue that the gender organization in society leads to a division of labour between women and men, which is strengthened and reflected in the built environment (Massey, 1994; McDowell, 1999; Greed, 1993; Terlinden, 2003). Despite the many problems that might face women in urban areas, there are also advantages. Urban life has also led to the emancipation of women.

*Surely it is possible to be both pro-cities and pro-women, to hold in balance an awareness of both the pleasures and the dangers that the city offers women, and to judge that in the end, urban life, however fraught with difficulty, has emancipated women more than rural life or suburban domesticity (Wilson, 1992).*

---

Costa Rica has been a model of good practices in Central America for its active social and housing policies that have led to generally lower levels of poverty and housing problems than in the rest of the region. Despite this, there is still a housing shortage and difficulties for low-income families to access decent and affordable housing.

Housing subsidies have been directed to low-income families, and special efforts are made to help women acquire decent shelter.

Gender equality is a part of poverty alleviation. Efforts must be made to ensure women's and men's equal control over their lives and an equal right to and control over resources. Human settlements is part of this work: women and men must have the right to equal access to housing and public space to earn a living and participate in the activities of everyday life.

## Research Issue

This work is about the use of public space in everyday life. A person's access to different public spaces might depend on class, race, ethnicity and sex. Poor people are often restricted in what activities they might enjoy, such as the opportunity to earn a living, to enjoy social relations and to assert their political rights, both because they are barred from certain spaces but also because of spatial segregation. Women and men's activities take place in different spaces, at least in part because of society's gender organization leads to a division of labour that is then reflected and reinforced by the differentiated use of space. Women and men do not have the same access to different spaces for their economic and social activities; women are often more limited in which spaces they may use.

The aim of the thesis is to analyse and explain how gender organization is related to everyday activities and use of space. Does the gender organization mean that women and men perform their activities in different spaces; are these patterns of activity expressed in the built environment; and are there patterns of activity that cross the borders between spaces and statuses. This is a first step to present thoughts on how activities can be the basis for gender aware physical planning. The aim is to develop an analytical model to design places at different scales. The larger goal is more equitable access to public space for women and men's economic and civic activities, where gender equality is seen as an aspect of poverty alleviation.

## Structure of the Thesis

The thesis is in three parts. *Chapter 2* is the research framework which describes the theoretical starting points, strategy, methodology and methods used in the thesis. The starting point to the study is feminist criticism about how cities and spaces are planned and used. The everyday life research perspective is used to study people's lives and use of space. Theories are used to try to explain the *orsakssluttsatser* and the importance of gender organization for use of space. The choice of how to analyse and interpret the material follows from this theoretical starting point. A distinction can be made between description, analysis and interpretation of a study. The description comes first, then an analysis of what was described; and finally the analysis is interpreted. By analysis is meant the technical data processing through tables for quantitative material and the variations and themes that can be found in the qualitative material.



Interpretation of data is to show which results are interesting, and how and why they are interesting.

Part II presents a description and analysis of the case study, a low-income housing area at the edge of the capital San José, Costa Rica. The description includes drawings, background information and records of observations of activities. A description of the area is interwoven with the material from questionnaires, interviews, observations and a walk through. The analysis of quantitative material is presented in tables and the qualitative material is presented as themes that arose during the study. *Chapter 3* describes a walk through the housing area, Lago de Lindora. The description of the places and spaces visited are based on interviews and observations, and are presented through the persons interviewed. The walk through gives a view into the everyday life of some individuals, their activities and the spaces they occupy. The walk through visits a series of households with residents who talk about different themes that arose in the interviews. All the names have been changed. *Chapter 4* presents the background to the case study, the material from the questionnaire, maps and interview results. The intention is to present the research findings from different perspectives.

Part III is the interpretation of the results. *Chapter 5* analyses the case study from an everyday life perspective: the social context, what activities are performed and in which physical surroundings they take place. The use of space, the physical surroundings, are expressed in two patterns of space use, one that reflects the existing gender organization and one where women actively cross borders of private and public spheres. The proposals of space made by the inhabitants of Lindora are interpreted as needs based on practical gender needs. In *Chapter 6* practical gender needs are related to strategic gender needs understanding the use of space as empowerment. An outline of a tool for analysis of space, activities and gender is proposed. The tool for analysis is a map showing relative power position of women's and men's activities in a specific place. The social status, and the capital, determines which activities each individual can carry out. The map is constructed in order to analyze what activities are carried out and by whom. Once the map of activities is established, a decision can be made of which activities could be supported by physical structures, in order to support an equitable use of space.



# Research Framework

## Research in the Making Disciplines

The applied aesthetic fields such as architecture, urban planning and design, industrial design and art are establishing themselves as academic disciplines under the name The Making Disciplines (Dunin-Woyseth, 2001; Dunin-Woyseth, 2003). The name developed through continuous discussion over several years, with the aim to create an intellectual platform and an identity for researchers in these fields, since they are still relatively young as academic disciplines.

What does research mean in these disciplines, what should the theoretical basis be and what are the aims of research, are issues that have all been debated during the latest decade in, among other forums, the journal *Nordisk Arkitekturforskning* (Ahlin, 1999; Linn, 2000; Caldenby, 2000; Hjort, 2000; Nilsson, 2003). Sten Gromark writes: (2000, p. 67).

*Research in architecture aims at deeper theoretical analysis of concepts of architecture with direct relevance for conceptualizing the architecture project. This theoretical analysis might include basic concepts in architecture, as well as a theoretical perspective on architecture from empirically based starting points from cultural and social sciences. The first can be said to apply to architecture's relative autonomy, its unique internal rules, the other to its relative sociality, that is, how it participates in and supports social and cultural development processes.*

The applied aesthetic fields in The Making Disciplines are part of an academic discourse, while at the same time the new knowledge is implemented in practice or in a design. The research carried out must fulfil requirements that are relevant in an applied art while it meets the requirements of academic rigour. Halina Dunin-Woyseth writes: (2003, p. 27).

*[...] making knowledge [...] must meet requirements from two systems. The one – professional – demands professional relevance, while the other – academic – demands that it meets academic standards. It is these two demands that constitute knowledge in the disciplines, and they also should constitute making disciplines.*

There are different thoughts on the issue of how new knowledge should be produced and how to achieve academic rigour in The Making Disciplines, ranging from: The Making Disciplines are not a separate discipline in the strictly academic sense, to that knowledge from more established disciplines is used to achieve scientific rigour,

to that design in itself is research and is scientific in its own right (Groat and Wang, 2002; Downton, 2003; Dunin-Woyseth and Michl, 2001).

One possibility is to see the Making Disciplines on a continuum between scientific research and creative application (Dunin-Woyseth, 2003). Issues are defined from practice in a specific context, and the problem analysis is conducted through theoretical, historical or critical perspectives from other established academic disciplines. The new knowledge is then reintroduced and applied in the relevant context. This view coincides with the view of research's location within both academics and practice, but it is at the same time process oriented (see Fig. 2.1).

**Basic principles for The Making Disciplines**

- “Making” study object chosen from existing practice
- Put into a relevant theoretical, historical and/or other context
- New knowledge developed and re-introduced to “making”.

Relationship between:

- MD – making disciplines
- AD – academic discipline
- M – making.

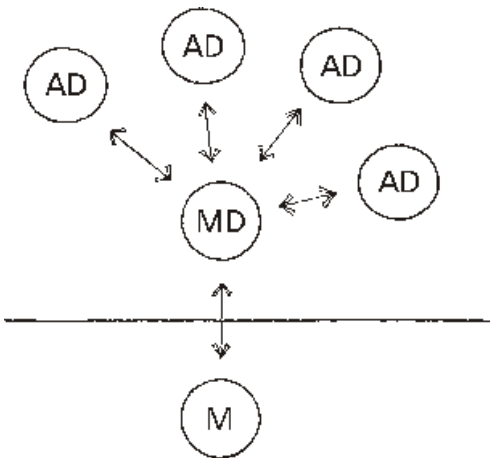


Fig. 2.1 From Dunin-Woyseth 2003.

## New Knowledge

A central question for research in The Making Disciplines is the production of knowledge itself. The traditional view of how scientific knowledge is produced comes from the positivist tradition of the natural sciences, where only empirically observed events are accepted as the basis for scientific conclusions. Since the acceptance of post-modernism – with Lyotard’s declaration of the end of the meta-narratives [grands récits] and systems of universal explanations, where metanarrative is replaced by partial, fragmentary, subjective and preliminary truths – the positivist tradition has been more and

more in question (Nordin, 1995). Experience from the complex contemporary society show that many of the problems we face can not longer be solved within a single scientific discipline.

Research in *The Making Disciplines* refers to the knowledge production described as Mode 2 knowledge production, an adaptation and development of the traditional Mode 1 (Walther-Jacobsen, 2004). Mode 1 knowledge production grew out of the empirical mathematical context, and is still seen as scientific knowledge production in which a problem is formulated and analysed within a single specialized, academic discipline. In Mode 2 by contrast knowledge is formed in a trans-disciplinary context, where several different disciplines contribute to new knowledge through a practical application. The problems formulated in Mode 1 tend to assume a production of knowledge without any particular applicability, while Mode 2 assumes that knowledge is produced to be applied, and therefore the goal is to be useful.

Production of knowledge in Mode 2 requires trans-disciplinarity in the sense that the traditional borders between disciplines must be crossed or erased to result in relevant new knowledge in more than one discipline (Dunin-Woyseth, 2004; Nilsson, 2004).

*Trans-disciplinarity arises only if research is based upon a common theoretical understanding and must be accompanied by a mutual interpenetration of disciplinary epistemologies. Cooperation in this case leads to a clustering of disciplinary rooted problem-solving and creates a trans-disciplinary homogenized theory or model pool (Gibbons in Walther-Jacobsen, 2004, p. 86).*

Production of knowledge in the *Making Disciplines* has many points of contact with Mode 2 knowledge production and trans-disciplinarity, since the aims of the disciplines is not only to produce artefacts but to generate interpretations and theories that help to produce new knowledge.

## The Academic and the Applied in the Thesis

The subject of this thesis lies within several disciplines: *The Making Disciplines*, Academic Disciplines – Gender Studies and Sociology – while it looks at specific physical context, a housing area planned for low-income families.

The central theme of the research is how people use space and how the gender organization of society affects the design of the built environment, the social consequences and to what extent there are possibilities to alternative designs.

The problem is related to architecture's relative sociality (Gromark above) and the extent it supports social and cultural development processes.

Practice in the sense of *Making* (see Fig. 2.1) is the built environment, and the academic disciplines related to the research are Sociology and Gender Studies. The relationship can be seen in a continuum from application – academic – application in the following Table:

Table 2.1 Relationship between MD, M, AD; academic and application the in thesis process

|           |                 |  |                     |
|-----------|-----------------|--|---------------------|
| Licentiat | Problem         | Gender and use of space  | Making Disciplines  |
|           | The case        | A housing area   | Making              |
|           | Case study      | Empirically based using a theoretical premises from social science | Academic Discipline |
|           | Analysis        | Theoretical analysis   | Academic Discipline |
| Doctor    | Analysis        | Development of model of analysis                                   | Academic Discipline |
|           | Re-introduction | Guidelines for changes and improvements                            | Application         |
|           | Adaptation      | Testing the analysis model   | Application         |
|           | Validation      | Theoretical analysis   | Academic Discipline |
|           | Convergence     | Final analysis model and guidelines                                | Making Disciplines  |

- The problem is studied through people’s use of the built environment
- A case study is conducted in a neighbourhood from a daily life perspective
- The analysis tests the use of public space from feminist urban planning theory
- A model is developed to analyse gender, activities and use of space
- Findings are applied through guidelines for future planning
- Validation of the model through new case studies
- When convergence is achieved, new recommendations are proposed to use in new designs.

This describes the process toward a doctoral dissertation. The current licentiate thesis describes the work so far, up to a draft tool for analysis (see Table 2.1).

In terms of how knowledge is produced, the study is closest to Mode 2; the issue is studied in a physical content; the subject lies within several disciplines; the aim of the study is to develop guidelines for normative change with direct feedback to practice.

## Theory – a Question of Definition?

Architects and planners who work in the social usage tradition, who have studied people’s use of space, refer to the concepts “analysis model”, “approach” or “scanner”, rather than “theory” when they consider the relations between people and the built environment. What is a theory? (Holme 1997, p. 50).

*Theories are [...] more or less complex assumptions that are developed concerning context and relations between phenomenon and that we want to test in a real social situation.*

What is tested in this thesis is feminist theory on the built environment. A criticism of the built environment asserts that power relations between women and men result in a gender organization that reflects and reinforces women and men’s power positions in the

society. Gender organization lies behind the division of labour between woman and men, which is reflected in the division between private and public space in the built environment. If this is true, how is it reflected in a specific context of everyday life? Can traces of the gender structure be identified in the built environment; which everyday life practices follow the pattern; and if there practices that do not follow the gender organization, is there physical expression of them in the built environment?

In parallel with this critical review, the issue is raised of how to analyse a specific place. If the division of labour leads to women and men performing different activities in different spaces, we must first understand which activities are performed in which spaces, who performs the activities, and what are the power relations that govern which activities can be done which cannot. For architects and planners to be able to propose changes to physical spaces, they must begin with an analysis of which activities conducted, by whom and in what context. Once that is known, it is possible to consider the planning, design and placement of different spaces in relationship to activities.

## Space, Activities and Gender – the Research Field

### The Built Environment, an Instrument of Politics

In society our activities must be organized in time and space. The built environment is a part of how we structure our surroundings; where places refer to activities we do together and not just unfilled containers of space. Society sets the conditions for how the built environment is formed, and the built environment has effects on society through how it affects the activities that take place. The activities in turn affect the built environment by changing it. What is built – and not built – is largely determined by political decisions. The built environment around us can be seen as a political instrument.

*Architecture is not political; it is an instrument of politics, for better or worse. (Krier in Broadbent 2001, p. 332).*

The politics that shapes the built environment includes issues of equity; who can affect the decisions made, which issues have priority, who has influence on the built environment, whose life provides the basis for planning. Gender equality refers to women and men's equal rights, obligations and opportunities in society (Regeringen 2005). Equality between women and men is still a political goal, and the life conditions for women and men are often very different.

There are many theories to explain and show how men as a group have a superior position to women, based on the power relationship between women and men (Connell, 1995; McDowell, 1999; Hirdman, 1993). The concept of gender developed from theories defining the differences between women and men on the bases of sex.

Gender is not based on the biological difference in sex, but is a social construction that varies in time and place. The activities that are considered to belong to women and men depend on the social relations we maintain and reproduce, what is expected in terms of different responsibilities, social roles and appropriate behaviour as a man or a woman. The gender organization of a society is not permanent but is negotiated and perpetuated by being reproduced at different levels of society (Gothlin 1999).

## Gender and Development

Gender equality is an aspect of poverty alleviation. During the last 25 years there have been a number of different policies and approaches to assist low-income women to achieve gender equity. The shift in policies reflect policies towards developing countries and towards women, thus shifting between “welfare” to “equity” to “anti-poverty” to “efficiency” to “empowerment”. The empowerment approach is the most recent. The purpose of this approach is defined by Caroline Moser as follows (Moser, 1994, p.74):

*Its purpose is to empower women through greater self-reliance. Women's subordination is seen not only as the problem of men but also of colonial and neo-colonial oppression. It recognizes women's triple role, and seek to meet strategic gender needs indirectly through bottom-up mobilization around practical gender needs.*

The empowerment approach recognizes the importance for women to increase their power not as domination over others but as a right to make choices in life and influence changes through control over material and nonmaterial resources. It also recognizes that women experience oppression differently according to race, ethnicity, colonial history and current political situation.

### **Households and Gender Division of Labour**

Low-income house holds are often defined with generalizing stereotypes where the household is thought of as a nuclear family; a unit where the members have equal access over resources and to decision-making. It is often presumed that there is a gender division of labour within the family with the woman as a home-maker and the husband as the bread-winner.

However, according to Moser (Moser 1994), in most low-income house holds in developing countries women have a triple role where women's' work include; reproduction, production and community managing work. The productive role comprises work done for payment in cash or kind, the reproductive role comprises childbearing/rearing responsibilities and domestic work done by women to reproduce the labour force. The community managing role comprises activities carried out mainly by women at the community level, as an extension of the reproductive work women do, related to maintaining and ensuring resources of community interests such as water, health, care and education. Men in the community take on the role of community politics, usually paid in wages or increased status and power.



Moser continues to identify women's and men's different strategic and practical gender needs based on a definition by Maxine Molyneux. Strategic gender needs are defined as the needs women identify because of their subordinate position to men in society, a position that varies depending on context. Meeting strategic gender needs aims at changing existing gender organisation to achieve gender equity. Practical gender needs are defined from the socially accepted roles women hold in a certain context. Practical gender needs do not challenge women's subordination but are a result of them, a response to perceived necessity, and are often concerned with inadequacies in living conditions. Practical gender needs relate to living conditions and thereby to issues of the every day life and the built environment.

## The Everyday Life Approach

Everyday life is the starting point for this study. Everyday life as a scientific perspective is used by several researchers (Elander, 2001; Friberg, 1990; Åquist 2001). Even if the definitions vary, all start with the idea that everyday life is an interesting and useful starting point to study society. Ann-Catrin Åquist describes the everyday life perspective as follows:

*Using people's everyday life as a starting point for research means putting attention on daily routines and activities. These are considered in relation to the social and physical surroundings, which includes the built environment. /.../ The everyday life perspective includes both the individual's activities, marked by the social situation, and the specific time and space context (Elander 2004, p. 260).*

Everyday life includes all the normal daily activities, paid employment, family care, community managing work, spare time and leisure activities. The everyday life perspective is gender-sensitive; it shows how individuals live different everyday lives, and everyday lives of women and men are often very different. Everyday life is very important in women's studies, since it looks at the world in a different way than research directed to a specific problem area. A feminist starting point in everyday life makes women's reality and women's experience visible. According to Dorothy Smith the world can be seen in two spheres: the world of governing, the sphere where the world is run, a world dominated by men, where ideologies are created to understand the world. The other sphere is the everyday, a world of concrete social practice (Elander 2004). Women's work and activities are often linked to the world of everyday.

## Everyday Space

Everyday life activities occupy time and space. Design of space in relation to activities has a long tradition in the fields of architecture and planning, where central issues include individuals' appropriation of space, spatial identity, human activities and experiences (Carmona, 2003). The Danish architect Jan Gehl presented his studies over out-

door activities and spaces in his book *Life between Buildings* (1971). Gehl looked only at public space, that he defined as the space between buildings, and took human activities as a starting point. Gehl categorizes human activities in public spaces as necessary, optional and social. Necessary activities are those that individuals are more or less forced to, such as go to school or work, take a bus or run errands. Optional activities are those that an individual might do when she or he wants to, and if the time and place allow. The third category is social activities which require the presence of other people in the space, such as children's play or people who converse, greet or observe each other. Gehl linked the activities to conditions in public space, and thought that architects and planner can influence how space is used by creating meeting points that provide good conditions for activities, that in turn can lead to communication. Gehl emphasized the importance of first identifying what activities take place, then in which spaces these activities occur, and finally how the space can be designed as physical places or buildings (Gehl 1987, Gehl 2004). Gehl's approach was an important start for the proposal for an analytical tool presented in this thesis.

## A Feministic Theory of the Built Environment

There is feministic critique of the design of the built environment, that it is based on criteria that gives priority to men and how they organize their lives (Boverkett, 1996b; Rendell, 2000; Sandercock, 1998). There are many different political positions in feminism, which is reflected in different theories. The goal of all of them is to show the importance of sex and gender to the structure of society and the distribution of power (McDowell, 1999; Gemzoe, 2002). Architects and planners usually describe people as an undefined group: "users" or "residents" without any analysis of their access to and experience of using urban spaces. Feminist scholars have criticized these studies for being based on male dominance, and a of view human beings as a Eurocentric neutrum (Terlinden, 2003a).

### ***Private and Public: a Problematic Dichotomy***

An important issue in research on gender and use of space is the definition of public and private space. The definition is complex because it refers both to a physical place but also who has the right to enter.

According to Nationalencyklopedin public means for everyone, accessible to the general public, and refers to activities or materials that are or might be of interest to each member of a society. Public space is the part of the built environment that can be entered by anyone, such as streets, passageways, shopping centres, city squares and parks. Public places include parking lots, markets and waiting rooms, whether indoors or outdoors. Private is defined as individual or separate, most often in contrast to the public (Engström, 1994).

The definition of public and private space is closely related to the social division of labour, the male and the female. The public is associated with men, a space for politics and trade, and the private is associated with women and reproductive work. According to Clara Greed, the division of private/public can be seen as a part of the pa-

triarchal scientific tradition that dealt with the position of women in the world of men. It is expressed in dichotomies and supported by spatial division, enabling separation between public/private, sacred/profane, clean/dirty, objective/subjective, work/home, outside/inside, production/consumption, majority/minority, same/different, bread winner/housewife and so on. Greed argues that gender organization leads to a division of labour in society that is reflected and reinforced by how space in the build environment is used. Women's and men's activities are performed in different spaces; the practice then becomes part of the social code and is accepted as natural (Greed, 1994).

Defining public and private space is problematic in itself, since many studies show that the division is based on male norms: work is performed outside the home in public space, and private space, the home, is for leisure and rest. For many women this division is not relevant since the home and the near environment are used for both productive and reproductive activities. An alternative is to see activities occurring in spaces at different scale (McDowell, 1999). The criticism also questions the allocation of reproduction to private space and production to public space, since history offer many examples of care work done in public space and collective solutions for reproductive work (Hayden, 1981). In the near environment, the division of labour and the space associated has consequences for the activities performed by women and men.

*The spatial division between the public world of men, and the private world of women, means that for women the neighbourhood is an extension of the domestic arena, while for men it is the public world of politics. (Moser 1994, p. 35)*

### ***The City: Limitation or Emancipation for Women?***

The spatial borders between private and public are crossed daily. Greed argues that it is mainly women who cross borders because of their work with both production and reproduction. They are “zone-zappers” between public and private spaces, and between the functionally divided zones of the city, such as industrial, commercial and residential. In the last 20 years, feministic research has considered issues of how women and use public space (García-Ramon, 2004; Bauhardt, 2003; Kallus, 2003, Wilson, 1992) and how men dominate space through their patterns of movement and communication (Dörhöfer 2003; Paravicini, 2003; Irigaray, 1994).

The city as a life environment is seen by feministic research, on one hand, as dangerous, but on the other hand, a space for emancipation because city life often means weaker control over women's lives. Ursula Paravicini emphasized the importance of the emancipation perspective.

*The public spaces become an important issue in a very different way: they are no longer interpreted as places of fear, but mainly as places of emancipation. It means that women claim to have the same possibilities as men, to become visible in urban living spheres, to be active subjects*

*and to be empowered in the public arena (Paravicini, 2003 s. 60).*

## Field, Habitus and Capital

To study relationships between use of space and gender requires an understanding of relationships between actors and structures in society, issues addressed in sociology.

Pierre Bourdieu's theory looks at the relationship between social structures of society and actors. Structures have a concrete existence and the activities of the actors produce these structures. The social is expressed both as material structures and psychological structures. For Bourdieu power and dominance are important themes that are expressed in systems of symbols such as consumption, language, and fashion, all of which can be tools to exercise power. The actors experience the symbol systems as natural and unquestionable. Bourdieu has developed the concepts field, habitus and capital for his reflexive sociology.

The concept habitus is defined as the way human beings confront the world: our social heritage and our ways of being. Habitus is an expression of that the life people live and have lived, has an influence on their views and actions that contribute to recreate different practices, but also to change practices and thereby society. The logic of practice [le sens pratiques] is direct and unconscious; aims and meaning are interwoven in the context of the activity. Habitus and the logic of practice cannot be described as sociological conformity; the form can be specified but the content is created by living people in concrete situations. Modern society is characterized by different practices and customs with relative independence, since the content is determined by living people. Practices and customs are political since power is not exercised directly but through systems and institutions.

The concept capital refers to assets, values or resources, and includes more than economic resources, also titles, fame and family background. The concept capital is used to explore the relation between people's assets and the dispositions that make them valuable.

The concept field is a tool that has meaning when used in an empirical study. A field is a system of relations between positions held by specialized agents and institutions competing over mutual interests. Modern society appears in many independent fields such as art, profession, education, each of which has its own codes in the form of rules and values. Different social fields are not static, but change according to the actors' thoughts and interests. There are limited resources, so social life is marked by struggle for control and dominance. When investigating a field the researcher constructs a system of relations that connects the different positions within the field; what or who has a dominant position and which assets are connected to different positions. The concept field has been used in various studies ranging from exploring the cultural field in France to a study of a newspaper editorial office. The concept can be used to explore positions between individuals or groups but also between institutions or real estate. To enter a field one must know the game and

use knowledge or skill to gain as much power as possible. The possibility to act and what position an individual has in the field is determined by the total amount of capital and how it is composed. (Bourdieu, 1992; Bourdieu 1993; Bourdieu, 1995; Broady, 1991; Moe, 1994).

These concepts are the entry points to the work in this thesis to develop a tool for analysis, a map of the relative power positions of women's and men's activities in a specific place (*see Chapter 6*). The concepts are used to explore the use of space in the context of seeing it as a "field" is a starting point to analyze the different actors and to see the positions between activities as dependent on habitus and capital and to understand how an individual can strengthen his/her position in the field.

## Strategy, Methodology and Methods

Research requires a conceptual framework, defined in different ways by different disciplines (Capjon & Kvarv, 2002; Groat & Wang 2002). The definition used in the thesis is based on Johansson (Johansson 2003a, 2003b) in which methods are defined as techniques to collect data; a methodology is a recommended set of methods for collecting and analysing data that also has standards for validation of the data. Strategy is needed to focus the scientific investigation and links methodology to theory.

### Strategy

A strategy is an approach, a way to make a complex reality susceptible to research. The strategy in this thesis is explicative; to study and explain how space, activities och gender relate in everyday life. An explicative strategy means explaining and understanding a unit of analysis – in this case a housing area – with a multiplicity of characteristics and variables. According to Johansson the explicative strategy is effective to understand complex phenomena in the context in which they occur, while at the same time the strategy can link together practical professional practice and systematic creation of knowledge through research.

*The aim of the explicative strategy is to focus our attention to one unit of analysis – a case – simultaneously accommodating as many relevant variables and qualities as possible. Thus the case may be understood as a complex whole. (Johansson, 2003a, p. 3).*

For an architect to study a problem in reality means to try to understand a phenomenon within its surrounding environment, to understand a complexity with many interacting variables. The strategy to explain an issue can be done with a case study, where reality is reduced to one unit of analysis – a case – but there are still many variables if the case is studied in depth.

## Case Study Methodology

A methodology is a recommended set of methods for data collection and procedures for data analysis; the methodology used in this thesis is case study methodology. Within the explicative strategy Johansson identifies three approaches for case study methodology based on the logical ground of each methodology; deductive, inductive and adductive methodology. The different forms of reasoning give different types of answering; from deduction – a derived fact, from induction – an applicable rule and from abduction – a possible case (Johansson, 2002; Johansson 2003b).

For the deductive case study methodology the starting point is a hypothesis of what rules apply in the specific case. Evidence is sought to verify or falsify the consequences of the hypothesis. The case study methodology in this thesis is deductive in the sense that it starts from a rule; feminist urban theory studies a case and concludes by identifying real situations and relationships.

The inductive case-study methodology assumes a case, such as a group of people in a specific place, and the data needed is collected through fieldwork. From data collected during fieldwork, a description, an interpretation of, or a theory about the case is then inductively constructed. The result is the theory, where theory should be understood as concepts or systems of concepts and micro-level theory. The case-study methodology in this thesis is inductive in the sense that a case is studied in order to find facts that can generate a rule, in the sense of a tool for analysis developed from data within the case through conceptualisation.

All case study methodologies include some form of triangulation, to consider the case from as many different angles and possible. The most common form is method triangulation, which is also used in this thesis.

### **The Case Study**

The case study was developed in social sciences and is used for both qualitative and quantitative research. Today, both qualitative and quantitative methods are usually used in a case study (Johansson, 2000a; Merriam, 1994; Stake, 1995; Yin, 1984). A case is a phenomenon that is studied in its natural context.

*A case is normally determined by a combination of social, spatial and temporal aspects. The case is that which the case study eventually intends to say something about. It is the complex phenomenon in its natural context, our understanding of which the case study contributes to. (Johansson, 2003b, p. 3).*

The case chosen for study must be rich in information and selected for its purpose. Bent Flyvbjerg defines two different types of selection; random or information oriented selection (Flyvbjerg, 2004). Information oriented selection means that the case is chosen on the basis of expectations of the information content; four forms of cases are identified, extreme/deviant cases, maximum variation cases, critical cases and paradigmatic cases. A critical case is defined as a

case to achieve information that permits logical deduction if this is (not) valid for the case then it applies to all (no) cases.

The case chosen for this study is a housing-area planned for a low-income community in Costa Rica, San José. The selection of the case was based on information oriented selection; the area was planned for low-income residents, women were active in creating it and there are currently programmes and projects underway in the community. Women participated in constructing their own houses, in planning and organizing the neighbourhood and participating in the activities and programmes implemented. Even though women have such a strong position, they still mostly use their private space of their houses for the every day activities and do not have the same access to public space for their social and economic activities as men do. If this is the situation in a community where the starting conditions were so good, it is not likely to be different in other neighbourhoods. In this sense, the case can then be seen as a critical case.

The case was not chosen from “all housing areas in San José”, since access is not always possible, and key-persons are necessary to be allowed into peoples homes to do interviews. A housing area planned for low-income people was chosen with the help of a non-governmental organization, FUPROVI, who also facilitated introduction to key-persons.

## Methods

This study used mainly qualitative methods, since the main attention was to context and structures, description and understanding, but quantitative methods were also used to collect background information based on statistics (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). The methods used are interviews; walk through analysis, documentation, observations and a questionnaire. Since the problem area covers several disciplines, it was important to use methods from both architecture/planning and the social sciences. All the methods were used in a social usage tradition (Carmona, 2003).

### ***Time Plan***

A preliminary study was conducted in 2003. Several housing areas were visited and Lindora was chosen for the case study. Interviews were held with key persons, and visits were made to households.

The field work was conducted in two parts, the first in February 2004 and the second in February 2005. The questionnaire and interviews with women and staff the Ministry were done in 2004. The observations and interviews with men were done in 2005.

### ***Questionnaire***

A questionnaire (Trost, 2001) was administered in Lindora (*see Annex 1*).

The aim was to get a profile of the residents in Lindora – age, education level, employment and income – and to map which spaces in the neighbourhood are used or not used by women, men and children.

The starting point for the items in the questionnaire was first: everyday life in the sense of production, reproduction, community management work, travel and leisure activities and second: use of public space in the sense of space outside the home such as streets, parks and green areas. What activities occur in each public space, if any, and is the public space perceived as safe to be in. Are there possibilities to change the use of different spaces?

The questionnaire was distributed to all housing units in Lindora. The respondents were women, the head female head in each household, but they were also asked about their partners. Out of 385 housing units in Lindora, five are not inhabited on a regular basis and two are used for other purposes. From the remaining 378 houses, it was only possible to gather 307 questionnaires since people were not at home or did not want to or have time to answer the questions. The questionnaire was distributed by four local leaders who sat with the respondents and filled in the questionnaire. In total 300 questionnaires were used for the analysis. The households that did not answer the questionnaire were not concentrated in any particular area (*see Annex 2*). The sample is too small for statistical generalization but give a picture of conditions in the neighbourhood.

The answers to the questionnaire were analysed for frequency and correlation in SPSS.

### ***Interview***

Semi-structured interviews (Holme, 1986; Wideberg, 2002) were conducted with both women and men in Lindora and with a planner, a city architect and two staff members of the Ministry of Housing (*see Annex 3*).

The residents were interviewed to get a deeper understanding of everyday life and its spatial organization from different individuals' perspectives; how people use the neighbourhood in their everyday life, the activities, personal experiences and their own assessment of priorities and problems. The interview with the planner architects was to get the official story of how housing areas for poor people are planned, the priorities and if there is consideration for gender equity in urban planning.

The starting point for interviews with the residents was everyday life and organization of space. The starting point for interviews with architect planners was the plan and building regulations and development plans.

Interviews were held with 22 women and 18 men. They were chosen on the basis of their household structure and occupation to get a broad range of different experiences. The interviews were recorded and transcribed in Spanish. On the return visit to the neighbourhood, those interviewed were given copies of the transcription.

The interviews were analysed empirically and presented as themes that emerged during the study, and also theoretically from feminist urban theory.

### ***Walk Through***

A walk through (de Laval, 1997) was done in Lindora in the company of three key persons (*see Annex 4*).



The aim was to collect more specific knowledge about different public space in the neighbourhood by having the informants described where they were. The walk through was done to connect use of space to concrete events, activities and problems in different spaces, such as vandalism, fear, poor lighting, bad maintenance and expropriation of public land.

The walk though was planned according to different kinds of public space in the area: parks, streets, commercial zone, playgrounds and green areas.

The key persons who participated were three women, all local leaders, who have participated in the project from the beginning and who had an active role in all the activities and projects. The walk through was done during a morning. The commentary was recorded and transcribed.

The walk through and the discussions that arose were analysed together with the other interview material.

### **Observations**

Participatory observations (Sjöberg, 1999; Whyte, 1985; Gehl, 1987) were done during five days in the centre of Lindora. (see *Annex 5*).

The aim of the observations was to see what activities are done by which persons, who used public space and which activities could be linked to gender or age. The starting point for observations was everyday activities and patterns of movement for individuals and groups of people.

Observations were made over five days, from Thursday to Monday, at the same three times each day: 08.00–09.00, 12.00–13.00 and 17.00–18.00. Observations were noted in an observation form along with notes about special activities and persons.

The analysis is based on Jan Gehl's concept of the use of public space according to three types of activities: necessary, voluntary and social, which are related to gender and age in this study.



## Part II

# Case Study

This section presents the case study of Lago de Lindora. The main question was: How are spaces and activities organized in the everyday life of this community?

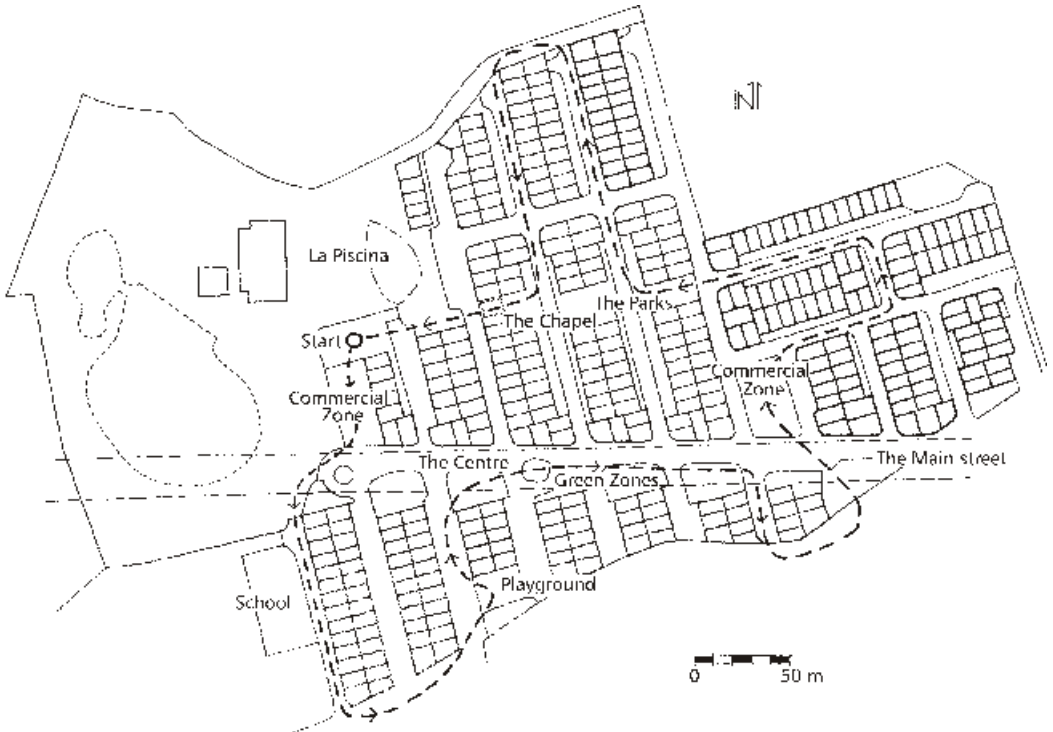
Who are the people who live in Lindora; what is their daily life; what is the household composition; what areas of responsibility do women and men have in their daily lives?

Which activities are done by women and men; what is the organization of production and reproduction; is there a difference in the activities of women and men; what are the movement patterns; what thoughts do they have on why and how men and women participate in the activities of daily life; is there a difference?

In which spaces are the daily activities done; what space is available for the residents; are there restrictions on the use of different spaces; are there suggestions for spaces for activities that currently are not allocated any space; are public and private space used in the same way by women and men, or is the use of space linked to the division of labour and gender?

Chapter 3 describes a walk through Lago de Lindora. The description of the places and spaces visited are based on interviews and observations, and are presented through the persons interviewed. The walk through gives a view into the everyday life of some individuals, their activities and the spaces they occupy. The walk through visits a series of households with residents who talk about different themes that arose in the interviews. All the names have been changed.

Chapter 4 presents the background to the case study, the material from the questionnaire, maps and interview results. The intention is to present the research findings from different perspectives.



# A Walk through Lago de Lindora

I stop a taxi outside the hotel. It heads west from the centre of the capital city San José, past the shacks of the poor clinging to the slopes, out onto the new motorway leading to the high-income villas on the hilltops with a view over the city.

We turn off the motorway to a secondary road between Sta Ana and Belén. The taxi passes a new hotel, a petrol station, some workshops, a supermarket and an expensive housing area before it turns again onto a bumpy little dirt road. We have arrived at Valle del Sol. The climate here is warmer, with hot summers and dry winds. The distant blue mountains stretch skyward beyond the flat ground that we drive across. The driver says that the housing area that we enter is on land that was previously a recreational park with a swimming pool, where people used to take the children for a picnic, and to dance and enjoy themselves. The land was given to the residents by the owner of a large estate. Lago de Lindora, the name of the housing area, lies a little away from the main road, and is so far completely surrounded by empty grassland. The neighbourhood with about 400 dwellings was established in 1998. Most of the residents come from the surrounding areas where they lived in illegal housing areas, often as lodgers. All of Lindora, everything from the technical infrastructure to streets and houses, was built through organized self help, where each household contributed 30 hours of labour per week over nearly four years.

We drive up the main street that runs under a high tension power line, past rows of houses. Several buses drive down the main street; trucks pass with building material to new houses under construction further away; a woman with a pram walks to the vegetable shop; some youth go to buy bread and throw their bikes on the pavement outside the bakery. The taxi turns off the main street and stops in front of a little white house at the end of a newly paved street.

Doña Maria Carmen welcomes me and serves coffee. She is one of the local leaders who was very active during the entire self-help housing process, and who is still engaged in the development of the neighbourhood and community. In Doña Maria Carmen's home I am introduced to Doña Julia and Doña Gloria who are also very active community members who have come to tell me about Lindora. We start by talking about the construction. Everyone participated in the self-help construction process, an experience that transformed them into a group. The construction work was exhausting; they struggled over several years, but the process led them to get to know each other personally. For many of them, it is impossible to put a mone-

tary value on the houses they built. It now happens, unfortunately, that people sell or rent out their houses, Doña Maria Carmen says. She loves her neighbourhood, and is sorry when people from the original group begin to leave Lindora.

*I like it (Lindora) very much, because we've known each other from the beginning, and it's so sad that some people rent out or sell their house. It's really so sad because it was very hard for us, and when other people come to live here, you just don't have the same confidence in them because they're not the same. We felt like we were family because we met everyday when we were working. Now, when you go to a house and knock on the door and unknown people come to open, that is what really hurts.*

The construction project included technical infrastructure such as water and drainage, a sewerage treatment plant and the concrete frames for the houses. All houses were the same model: 40 square metres for a living room, two bedrooms, bathroom and kitchen and laundry area. The houses were built as detached homes on 120 square meter plots in rows along the street, with windows towards the street and backyard. Those households that could afford to improve their homes did so gradually over the years. Doña Maria Carmen says:

*My life was very hard when I came to live in this house because they just gave us a box. Little by little we have made some small improvements: ceiling, floor tiles and everything else. /.../ My house has three rooms, a living room, a kitchen and a dining room. We've made it bigger, little by little. We also built the kitchen, because the house was smaller. Now we also want to do the fittings. I don't know if we can, because it is expensive to pay the labour and the material. This year, if God gives us work, we hope to finish the kitchen.*

Doña Maria Carmen herself owns the house that she shares with her husband. He works the night shift for a security company, and she works as a seamstress. She uses the living room for her work and to receive clients. The sewing machine is on a table in the centre of the room, so she can work and keep an eye on the street to see if anyone comes past. Over the kitchen that they extended into the backyard is a second storey where her son lives with his partner and their young son.

Doña Maria Carmen is very involved in her community. She has participated in many of the projects and programmes arranged by FUPROVI after completion of the housing construction, and she does a lot of volunteer work for poor families within a programme run by the parish. She thinks it is important to provide support to the community, because it helps to get people involved in activities that concern them personally, which improves the neighbourhood and the community.

Doña Maria Carmen speaks of support to the community

*I think that it motivates people when they see that someone is concerned about them, because sometimes you*

*know that you can't do anything by yourself, but when you see that there is support, like that little workshop that we received from FUPROVI. That helped us a lot and I think that we are a group because of that. If we didn't get the help maybe we wouldn't have had the Adulto Mayor and the parks, things that people are really concerned about, because everything is a beginning, everything has to be put into action, and they sent us people. They helped us a little and we managed the rest.*

Not only does Doña Maria Carmen know almost all the members of the community, she is also the local archivist. The postman comes to her to find out where people live. She pulls a current map of Lindora from a cupboard, and a drawing of a proposed sports facility. We take the map and go out to walk together through Lindora, to look at the spaces in the area and to talk with residents about their everyday lives and what they think about their neighbourhood.

Doña Maria Carmen  
speaks of the playground  
next to her house

Just outside Doña Maria Carmen's house is a little patch of land that was originally meant to be a green area, according to the urban plan. Doña Maria Carmen would very much like it to become a playground for the younger children. She has her grandchild living with her, and is concerned that children have somewhere to play. She likes plants and has herself planted bushes, flowers and trees to create a protected, shaded area until the playground can be established. She needs to keep careful watch to be sure the plants are not damaged, and she complains about the children who run through and destroy her work. She thinks parents do not raise their children well, to respect their surroundings.

*When you make something nice, and they don't care that their kids go and ruin it. They made a very beautiful park over there; they really took care of it, but the kids went there to play football and they climbed the trees and they just broke all of them.*

La piscina – the park with  
the old swimming-pool

We continue to the area called “la piscina” after the swimming pool that was closed long ago. There are just a few remains of it left. There are two rusty military tanks on the plot, sitting on their concrete bases. The pool has been cleared to remove concrete and reinforcement bars that could be dangerous to the children when they play, but there is no money for renovation or other improvements. The women discuss how the area could be used; they would like to make a little playground for children, perhaps convert the pool to an amphitheatre for events, plant shade trees and set up playground equipment for the children. They talk about vandalism, a constant problem. If anything is built, it must be completely fenced. There must be a lock and someone must be responsible for opening in the morning and locking it in the evening. However, Doña Julia thinks there is a problem with fencing parks and green areas, since it is important that the parks are left open to everyone, and so that the children have areas where they can run and play as they like.

Doña Miriam lives in a house near “la piscina”. We knock on the door and Doña Miriam invites us in. She tells us that this park with the old pool is her and her children’s favourite place. Her dream is to see it renovated so that it can be used by everyone in the community.

*The place that I use most with my children is over there, where the old pool is. We like it a lot because there are a lot of trees and nature. That is the part that attracts me the most, that is the part called Las Tanquetas [Women’s Park] but it is not used very much, that would be my dream, to see that park as it really should be, for women and for everyone.*

Doña Miriam speaks of the green areas of Lindora and emphasizes the importance to stimulate people to participate and to be concerned about their environment. People have to realize that they can improve their surroundings even if they are poor and the change will be slow.

Doña Miriam speaks of how people need to be stimulated to participate

*We want to make a very beautiful park with small benches so that women could go there in their spare time and feel comfortable there. There are many parks here, there are about six or eight parks. If we had started six years ago the trees would already have grown tall, but the kids climb up the small trees and break the branches, and this is really discouraging. We have to make people to understand that because you’re poor, it doesn’t mean that the place you live in has to be ugly. To plant a tree or clean a park doesn’t cost money. People have to be taught that and activated. I think that they are too passive and I feel that yes, it can be done, little by little, it won’t go very fast, but step by step it can be done.*

Doña Miriam thinks that Lindora is as a good example of what a community can achieve in spite of economic difficulties.

*I feel that we, with the help of God, can achieve a lot and be an example, that even though we have little money, we still want to live in a place that is clean and nice. That has nothing to do with money.*

Doña Miriam is one of the original participants in the self-help housing project. When she moved into the house with her husband and two children, there were no inner walls or surface covering. They had no chance to make any improvements at the beginning, but gradually they painted the walls; her husband who is a carpenter set up inner walls and put a floor in the living room. After they moved in, Doña Miriam and her husband had another son, and their eldest daughter had a daughter. The daughter works in Sta Ana, and Doña Miriam takes care of her own children and her granddaughter when her daughter is working. She says that for her every day is the same with housework, shopping and taking care of the children.

Doña Miriam says that for her, all days are the same, working with domestic work



*To me all days are the same, none are special. I do the same things, as a housewife. I do my shopping and the rest of the housework. Here we're struggling, and I pray to God to give me strength and time, which is hard because I take care of my granddaughter who is five months old, and sometimes it's difficult.*

Doña Miriam thinks that men can spend their leisure time in the streets, but women have no place to go

She spends most of her day inside her house, except when she joins in parish activities and the project for old people in the neighbourhood. She thinks there is a difference in what women and men do: men use the streets but women have nowhere to go. Doña Miriam would like a place where they can meet, with activities and training to help residents who want to start their own businesses.

*For instance, the adults and the youth go out and spend their time in the street. The women don't have a place to take for their spare time. I would like a place where the women could learn a profession instead of wasting time watching television or gossiping, talking about things /.../ I think that it would be a real benefit to have a place where people could learn and even start a small enterprise.*

From Doña Miriam's house we continue west and come to a plot for sale. It is planned as a commercial area, but no one is interested in buying it at the moment. The local residents do not have the money to invest, and the location is a little difficult for someone from outside, since the plot is so far from the centre. There are still large trees that shade the ground, and a gentle breeze blows. During self-help construction there was a community kitchen here to feed all the workers. The concrete foundation of the large stove is still there. This site would be good for a community centre where the residents could gather for their meetings and activities, according to my guides. Doña Gloria is very engaged in the project for the elderly in the area called Adulto Mayor. They meet once a week in someone's home and make short outings to provide stimulus to the elderly. She says that many elderly are treated badly, and they seldom or never leave their homes. The project is to improve conditions for the elderly.

*... there are many old people who have to sell lottery tickets or other things to survive. Others have the greatest blessing in their children. And there are others that have children who lock them in a room; they are totally harassed, psychologically. The children will not let them come to the gatherings, they abuse them verbally and psychologically, and now even the grandchildren abuse them physically. This is a situation that we have to see how we will solve, because here it happens a lot.*

So far they have nowhere to meet, but Doña María Carmen thinks that this plot would be a good place to build something for the old people. She thinks that this is a wonderful place to sit, out in the shade of the trees, and since she and Doña Gloria live close by, they

would be able to keep an eye on the building. But the instead there is a proposal to build a community hall on a plot at the edge of Lindora, behind the school. This plot is completely isolated from the houses, and Doña Maria Carmen fear this location will lead to break-ins;

Doña Maria Carmen describes a perfect place for a community centre

*And this is what we want, to build the hall here /.../ So that they can plant seeds, and bring good soil, so the old people can plant and spend their time here. I would say that it should be put here, and leave a part here, the edge to sow and here the garden downwards /.../ it is closer and we can keep an eye on it. Here is a bunch of kids that create a mess. This is exactly why they see that the community hall cannot be built over there. This is what I said to Gloria: Gloria, if the community house is built over there, it will be left with nothing inside, no interiors, no sinks, no nothing, because they would steal everything. Look at the school where they broke in five times to steal, they stole everything. That's why that place is no good for the community hall.*

We continue south towards the school, past a green area. The area was cleared so that children could play football, but it was not used and now it is an overgrown grassy area with a lot of scrap and old branches.

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The school is on the western edge of Lindora, surrounded by a high, barbed wire fence. There were no plans for a school at the beginning, but many members of the community fought for a school for the neighbourhood children. Doña Julia who is a teacher by profession was assigned to lead the group struggling to find land and financing to build the school. She describes the process of getting a big enough plot, and how she had to convince the municipality of the importance of the project.

The school, built on the initiative of the community

*After that, I had to make a special presentation to the council about the problem of the school, about what was needed for the school and everything. That was when they donated 3 million to the school. One and a half million was taken to clean up the land. With the other million the first pavilion was bought, and that is the first one that is there.*

There was only a pavilion the first year, but last year the school was extended to two rows of classrooms. The children are out and play during the breaks, but when the bell rings, they all run in again. The schools is used for two shifts during the day so that as many children as possible have a chance for education. It means a lot to have a school for the children, says Doña Julia, but she is worried about the children who do not get enough food during the day, and she would like to have a school lunch room.

Doña Gloria describes the need for food service for poor children

*Something that I have noticed here, something that is very important and really needed, is a canteen for the children. In my heart, I have a very big burden because of this, be-*

*cause I do not know, because I have seen that there are children that maybe come to school with a snack. And maybe that will be all the food they get during the day /.../ I was in the daycare centre and I know that there are children here who are extremely poor.*

Doña Julia dreams of a "real" nursery school for the children

The youngest children in the school are five years old and only attend a few hours each day. When we talk about children, we come to childcare for the youngest. There are babysitters in Lindora who take in children into their homes during the day for a fee. Doña Julia who has eight children herself dreams of a nursery school that is built according to the needs of the children, staffed by trained people who like caring for children. She herself would gladly work at such a school.

*Well, a nursery school is needed because a lot of women work and you can see that children are left at the neighbours who take care of them. A nursery, I dream of a nursery, and I would love to work in a nursery. I am a nursery teacher and I can work. I could have my own children there and I can help many children here. But well, you know, these are just projects, dreams.*

Doña Gloria says that in addition to the poor children who do not get enough to eat, there is also child abuse because of poverty and difficult social conditions.

*Above all there are a lot of abused children. Many small children come here because they do not have anything to eat, but sometimes it is because the mothers are negligent, and sometimes because there is no work.*

Doña Maria wants to put up her own beauty shop in an extension to her house

Next to the school is a house that is being extended. It is Doña Maria who is building a beauty salon. She comes and opens the gate for us and shows us the little extension. Doña Maria is a hair stylist and worked in a beauty salon in San José before she got married. She is now divorced and still lives in the house with her two teenaged daughters and a young son. She travels around to find clients in their homes, and sometimes she takes her son with her. Her dream is to have her own beauty shop, but she realizes the economic difficulties of starting a business in Lindora and finding clients. Having a salon close to home would make it easier for her to work, and at the same time she would not be forced to leave her children alone when she works.

*My idea and my vision is to be able to open my own little beauty shop. At times, it is tiring. Sometimes I have been cutting hair in Escazú at nine o'clock with my son. I try to take him with me so I do not have to leave him. But I would prefer not to have to go out on the streets in danger looking for work, and I would like to work here. I have a friend who would give me any quantity of merchandise, like clothes to sell, but the problem is that here nobody*

*pays. I would still have to leave my children alone because I would be forced to go out and sell the things in the street.*

Doña Maria has recently divorced, and money occupies much of her daily life. It is difficult to survive as a single mother with three children to support. She knows there are many women in the community with similar or even worse economic conditions, and there is also violence against women.

Doña Maria describes the economic difficulties facing single women

*My ex-husband told me, "Without me you will die, you cannot live," and I give thanks to God because here I am despite the hard and difficult moments, because my children have a pension. I receive a pension of 35,000 colones, but when they do not deposit in time and you have a deadline to pay something, it generates tension. In any case, we manage. I did not die. I could live without him /.../ I know that many women here, like me, are the boss in the house; but I also know that there is a lot of aggression and that women are afraid to leave their husbands because they don't know how they would manage economically. I think that if there was support from the government and its institutions, and they would give advice, things would be different.*

Doña Maria thinks there should be government support to fight drugs and alcoholism. For women there should be a programme to help them start income-generating activities, perhaps a factory that could provide employment for everyone.

*If here was a program with psychologists and other staff to help us in the fight against drugs and alcoholism. I think that the majority of the women can manage to be successful if there is advice and support on psychological, economic and educational levels. Here in the community they sometimes do not know the rights that they have; they do not know how to defend themselves /.../ One of the things that I would have liked to have done and that I have been supporting is a program for women to generate economic means; many communities do that. The thing is, when they do not have anything, what should they do? How do you create something that you could sell? /.../ It would be nice to have a factory here in the community, where everybody could work and generate incomes. When I read the newspaper I see how many women and many communities have been able to start some production and now they are selling, but there had to be someone, an institution, that gave them a loan so that they could start to sell, and the same activity generates the ability to pay. That would be good.*

When Doña Maria talks about her children, she is proud that her daughters help her with almost everything in the house; they try to share the domestic duties so that not everything rests on her. She is worried about the drugs that have come to Lindora, especially in connection with the teenagers. They have nothing to do, and she

Doña Maria is worried about the situation for the teenagers

thinks there is a need to engage the teenagers so that they stay out of trouble. We talk about the outdoor environment, and she says it is important for the youth to have a real recreation area so that they can get the stimulation and activities to keep them away from drugs.

*We talked about recreation centres, if there were real recreation centres the youth would be stimulated, and they would at least feel that they did not have to hang around on the streets or smoke marijuana.*

Doña Olga describes her life as a single mother

Further along the same street lives Doña Olga. Her house is very tidy inside, and she invites us to sit in the sofa in the living room. Her parents bought and still own the house. They moved to the USA and now she continues to live in the house with her five year old son. At the back of the house is a room that she let to a woman who is often home and can keep an eye on things when Doña Olga must be away during the day. Doña Olga works full-time as a secretary in San José, and when she works a neighbour takes care of her son. Since she also has to travel to work she spends most of the day away from home and often her son is asleep when she returns at night.

*In my everyday life I find that being a single woman with a child getting by is difficult sometimes /.../ It is a question of everyday from Monday to Friday, right. Run, run, run, but I manage. I will manage. It is a bit tiring, that is true. I work practically the whole day. I finish at 7:00 at night, pick him up. He is already sleeping when I come here, around 8.30. I leave him there; I have a cup of coffee; I watch television for a while; I go to bed at 10:00 – 10:30. And the next day is the same, the same, the same.*

Doña Olga thinks that safety is a problem with the location of Lindora

Doña Olga thinks that Lindora is like any other similar housing area with its advantages and disadvantages. She used to live in San José closer to where she works, and she finds the location of Lindora a problem in terms of safety. When she returns home from work in the evenings, she finds the neighbourhood very dark.

*Here, if you think about it a little, I feel that the area itself, because of its location, we could be faced with serious problems of insecurity. I think that there are problems regarding our location; we are in the middle of very solitary places, in the middle of large plots where in the night just about anything could happen. It would be different if it was like a city, if there were houses and all that, it would be less dangerous. I feel it would be dangerous if I would come walking here at night or would walk in this darkness, of course, it would be dangerous. We know that we have to be careful of the dangers that exist on the street.*

Insecurity is a general problem in society, according to Doña Olga, and she tells of a girl from another neighbourhood who was raped, thrown out of a car and left on her own down the dirt road just outside Doña Olga's house. She thinks that it is important that each and

every community member tries to make Lindora a safe place to live and not let anyone control their lives with fear.

*I think that nowadays lack of security is a general problem of the whole society. We are not safe in any place, how well lit or well protected a place might be, the lack of security is everywhere /.../ Everyone of us members of the community has the responsibility to make the place we live a safer place for our children. Not to allow strangers or even people who live here control our lives with fear of being attacked or that they will do us harm. You should take care of the environment where you live /.../ I also think that we who fought and worked hard together in this project, like this place a lot, and do not want it to become an uninhabitable place again, a place where people say "Lindora. No way, I'm scared to go in there." Everybody that has been a part of this project, they are honest working people. They are trying to get by, to overcome their problems.*

Doña Olga is not very involved in any projects or programs that concern the community, but says that she would very much like to help in anyway she can. Because of her long working hours, she spends most of her time in her house when she is at home, and the little time that she has left she wants to spend with her son.

We continue on the dusty street, around the corner and ring on Don Fernando's door. The courtyard toward the street is protected with thick bars. Don Fernando squeezes past the car parked in the courtyard and unlocks the gate. While we stand beside the street, we talk about the problem of the dust swirling around. Don Fernando says that the neighbours along the street have tried several times to raise enough money to asphalt the surface. The first collection ended when a man stole all the money; the second time they did not raise enough, and not all the houses along the street are willing to contribute any more.

Don Fernando describes the problem with the streets

*Another aspect that has to be improved is the surface of the streets, to get rid of the dust, because this is a very windy area. There is a lot of wind, as you can see. The trucks that pass also contribute, although they are not the cause of the problem itself. If the streets were nice, well done, especially this one that leads to the park, I think that would be so much better.*

Don Fernando describes the problems with the technical infrastructure

The part of Lindora where Don Fernando lives is the lowest in the neighbourhood, and there have been problems with the drains. When it rains, sewerage comes up onto the streets, and in one place it entered a house. The problem is both the street drainage and the sewerage treatment plant do not work as they should, says Don Fernando.

*Right now, another of the problems when winter is coming closer is the sewerage treatment plant that does not work well in winter. We have problems with sewerage. This has*

*to be improved. Then, a little bit more organization amongst the neighbours with the rain water. Because they are badly organized, the majority of the people have the rain water in the sewerage pipes. Therefore, they collapse when it rains a lot, even if it rains a little, actually.*

Don Fernando invites us into his house where he lives with his wife and their three children. His wife was expecting their youngest child during the construction. It was she who heard about a self-help housing project here in Lindora and convinced her husband to come with her to have a look, and they decided to move here. Don Fernando is satisfied with the surroundings and thinks that Lindora has improved little by little over the years. He thinks that women and men participated equally in the past, but at the moment there is a need for the whole community to take action. What worries him most is the drug problem. His wife adds that there are drugs sold in one of the houses close by. Don Fernando speaks of his concern for the adolescents who get addicted to drugs, teenagers who are unemployed and have no access to any education. He thinks it is of great importance to the whole community to solve this problem and get the adolescents engaged in some income-generating activities.

Don Fernando thinks that women and men participate to the same extent

Don Fernando is worried about drugs, especially related to the situation of teenagers

*Look, I will tell you honestly because I know that in this situation youngsters may get in to drugs, and you know that this destroys the kid just as much as the family. You already know that this brings the whole family down. It starts with the teenager and ends with the whole family. This is the truth. I know about many cases here. What has to be done is to end this situation; apart from ending it you have to find a solution, and create something where the kids can learn a profession, so they can work with something. They will then help themselves just as much as their families. /.../ I estimate that at least 50 do not study or work. They do not work because nobody gives them work, because they are mostly too young. They do not study because they do not have the resources, and that is where the problem is.*

Don Fernando sees a need to give special support to teenagers through education so that they do not end up unemployable. There should be somewhere they can go, but he sees the difficulty of finding any suitable plot, since the only land that is left is zoned for green areas where it is forbidden to build.

*There is a place where it would be possible to construct a simple building, a suitable place. However, it is forbidden to construct on the green areas, according to the municipality. As a community we can fight for that, that we do not have any other place where we can put up a building. We need a place like that, so the kids can learn.*

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After Don Fernando's house we continue past what was once a playground. A broken swing stands at an angle, next to the overturned

remains of a fine, decorated bench; the trees are broken off and the area is full of overgrown, half meter high grass. Doña Silvia who lives next to the playground talks about how hard they worked to fix the park last year. Her daughter brings photos to show how fine it was; trees in a row around the entire playground, flower beds with bushes, swings, a slide, a sitting area with fine benches and tables. When the playground was ready, it was quickly destroyed by gangs of youth who went past it. Doña Silvia has collected some of what remained of the benches, and a broken table, and keeps them on her plot in case they can be used again. She thinks it is so sad that they were not able to keep the playground, but she is glad in any case that the youth gangs no longer hang out near her house, since both she and many of the neighbours felt threatened.

Doña Silvia describes how the playground was vandalized

A gravel road runs alongside the playground. A large number of trucks with building materials to the new building sites further on pass by while we stand and talk at the playground. It is dry and windy, and dust flies into our eyes. We return to the main street. Next to the bus stop in the western part of the main street is a little well-kept green patch. It is cared for by two men who live next to it, says Doña Maria Carmen. There are about 10 small trees; their trunks are carefully whitewashed; the grass is mowed and there is no scrap.

Passing traffic

Opposite the bus stop is a small centre with a green grocer, some small shops, a bakery and a little restaurant. There are buses every 10 minutes, and this is the liveliest spot in the area, with people getting on and off the buses, who stop to shop and perhaps chat with an acquaintance. There is a big cleaning going on in the bakery: all the furniture has been moved out to the street while the shop floor is washed. A pick-up truck stops outside, a man climbs out and takes a carton of eggs from the platform and delivers it to the bakery. He stops for a drink and a cigarette outside the shops and chats with one of the bus drivers who stopped on the other side of the street.

The street outside the green grocer is not asphalted, and the daughter of the house collects water to sprinkle the pavement to hold down the dust. An older woman comes to buy vegetables and talks for a moment with a woman who has just collected her child from the bus. A girl about 10 years old cycles past and stops at the house opposite the green grocer, where she knocks on the door. Her friend comes out, and they start playing with Barbie dolls, sitting in the courtyard towards the street.

We continue along the main street past a couple of grass patches where some boys are kicking a football. Sometimes the game moves to the streets, but when a bus or car passes, they move back to the grass. Four young boys cycle past down the street, sling their bikes to the side and start playing.

On the eastern part of the main street is an area that currently consists of a gravel heap with a couple of football goalposts. Half of the area is planned as a commercial zone, and the rest is intended as a public green space. Doña Gloria has heard that the plot is sold, but that the new owner has not received building permission.



There are three telephones standing next to the space towards the road. They are used a lot, but also vandalized often, according to Doña Gloria.

*And that is the problem, that they grab the phones and take out the earphones. They break them, they sit on top of them, they start to insult the people here. It is a constant problem.*

Doña Isabel dreams of a supermarket

Doña Isabel lives next to the commercial area, together with her son who is a teenager and studying at a college. Doña Isabel sits in her rocking chair on the veranda towards the street and tells us that she really prefers to live in the centre of a city where all services are close by. She thinks that there is a need for a supermarket or a food store in Lindora, to save her having to do errands in Santa Ana. She hopes that the plot in front of her house will be used for that purpose.

*What I would like to have more than anything, is a well stocked shopping centre, because it is a bit far to go to Santa Ana to shop. You have to take the bus and then wait again. /.../ That is why I thought that on that plot they should put the shop. I said, that would be great, a shopping centre so that everything is close to us. If you want to have a piece of chicken, then you can but it, if you want to eat something else, there you buy it.*

Doña Isabel describes her situation as a single mother during the self-help construction phase

Doña Isabel works full time in San José. She talks to us about the self-help construction phase when for over four years, she had a full time job and managed to participate by spending every weekend and a day off at the construction site. At first her boss thought that she spent every weekend on the beach since she was so sun tanned, but when she told him what she did he was very supportive. Even though Doña Isabel worked as much as she could, she still had to pay a worker to fulfill her part of the work obligation. It was a difficult time, and she says that she sometimes feels sorry for her son because she feels she deprived him of his childhood.

*Well, it was very difficult, because I have always worked away from home, Monday to Friday, and on the weekends I came here to work, with the boy who was small, only a month old. Then I had to pay a worker because of the hours I had to fulfil, I could not do them, because they were 8 days and I only had two days off, Saturdays and Sunday. I left home from Monday to Friday; Saturdays and Sundays we had to come here to work on the construction of the house, holidays, days off, Christmas, Easter, all those days of vacation. It was a big effort to contribute with the hours that were required, it was very hard. /.../ Yes, it was a very hard time, and when I think of it, sometimes it really makes me sad because I deprived him (her son) of many things, because I think that as a child he never had childhood.*

Doña Isabel has little time to participate in any activities herself, and thinks that most people are busy working and keep to themselves in their houses.

*Well, it depends, sometimes people meet in a house, or otherwise people just stay in their own house. Those who want to cooperate will cooperate and will come, but in general, everybody just stays at home. Most of us here work, most of the women here work, and most are family heads, so generally they all have to work, right.*

She has a little time over on weekends to chat with the women living around her. She thinks that women make time to talk with each other: they ask how things are, talk a little while and keep an eye on each others' houses to help each other see there are no incidents. She does not really know what the men do, but thinks they probably sit inside and watch television. No one passes her own house because the commercial area just looks like an abandoned plot.

Doña Isabel speaks of women's and men's spare-time activities

*... neither men nor women pass by here, it is like an empty plot, it is like, what can I say? People stay locked up in their houses, because here the only thing the majority of the people can do is watch television. There is no cinema here; there is not even any entertainment in Santa Ana. So on Sundays people here are watching games or watching television, you never see the husbands or the men on the street, really; they are never seen, not even at night, because there is nowhere to go. Maybe if there was, I don't know, a billiard hall, that would be where everybody would go, if there was something like that where men would go, a bar let's say. But since there isn't anything like that here, I suppose that all the men who are here are all locked up in their houses and watch television, because on Sundays I have never seen a man. But if you go to the houses you can see them glued to their TV watching football. But, what do I know; if there is a game on a Wednesday night there are many men who meet in the houses to watch the game. That's actually what men like and you will not see them out here, not at night, not during the day. Well, on Saturdays and Sundays, I actually never see them, and if they should pass by it's with their wife. But to see them go for a walk, just like that, you really never see that.*

We stroll towards the edge of the eastern side of Lindora and come to a house behind lush vegetation. We visit Doña Nina who is in her mid sixties; she is retired and receives a small pension. She lives with her older brother and her 92 year old mother who she cares for. Her son also shares the household, but has his own room with a private entrance built at the back of the house. Since her mother is rather nervous, it is difficult for Doña Nina to leave her alone in the house. She describes her daily work and responsibilities.

Doña Nina describes her responsibility for her old mother

*I get up at 5:30 a.m. and I prepare lunch for my son who goes to work. Then I stay up. I have some chickens and a couple of dogs to take care of, and then I start doing the laundry and I make breakfast for my mother; then I continue with the things I do, and I might have to go to San José or to the hospital for some medical control. This is my work: I cook, do laundry, iron. If I have to go and do grocery shopping, I do that. My mother is a very nervous person, because of her age. When I go out, she waits for me in the room at the back until I return. She keeps herself busy talking to the parrots and taking care of the fish. She is under my responsibility. /.../ I almost never go out, except when we go out with the Adulto Mayor group for a walk. I cannot go out much because I cannot leave my mother alone*

Doña Nina describes the need for a church or a chapel

Doña Nina participates in Adulto Mayor and she thinks they need a building for such community activities. Like many of the other women, she goes to Mass on Sunday and thinks that a church is an important need. Currently church services are held in a steel shed that was built as a materials store during construction. A church building is necessary not only for Masses but also for funerals and to hold wakes.

*A goal that we have is to raise a parish church. We need it very much, because the place where we celebrate the Mass now is a material store, but at least we have that. We have to fight to get the land. /.../ We have the school now, thank God, and now we need the church and a community hall, that is also needed; so that all the residents can meet and do activities like the Adulto Mayor group, who now has to meet in some ones' home. We also need a place to hold a wake when someone dies.*

Doña Nina says it is mainly women who work for the best of the community, and thanks God that women have been given such strength.

*We, the women, are the ones who like to work for the community and for everything to be very nice. Praise the Lord who has given us the strength and the willingness to work.*

Doña Ana takes care of her grandchildren and watches over the street

The next house we pass is where Doña Ana lives. She is in her sixties and has a pension because she is too sick to work. She lives with her adult son, her adult daughter and son-in-law and their three children. Doña Ana previously worked in the health care services and still provides some service and support to the residents. She can give a massage for muscle pains, help with injections. She does this voluntarily to support the community. She was more active previously, but as her health declined, she stayed at home more. Her son worries about her if she goes too far from the house. She likes to bake and has moved the cooker into the living room so that she can keep

an eye on what is happening on the street. She does the housework and takes care of her three grandchildren during the day. She sometimes offers cookies to the children playing outside the house, and since she is home all day, she helps keep an eye on the neighbours' house to prevent burglaries. She thinks that Lindora is generally a peaceful neighbourhood, even if there are problems with drugs and alcohol.

Doña Ana struggled for 17 years before she could move into her house and sees it as an investment for her children.

*In general, this is a calm area. Just like everywhere else, there are social problems. There are many people with problems in the whole district of Santa Ana. We have been very lucky to have received help, and we live in a very special place and it has to be taken care of.*

It is a long process to get everyone to agree and cooperate in the community, says Doña Ana. She thinks that the willingness to cooperate is currently very poor, but she does not really know why, perhaps it is the way people live and work. On the other hand she is positive that the women have worked most, and it is now time for the men to do their part of the job.

Doña Ana thinks that getting people involved in activities is a long and difficult process

*There has always been the problem that women work more than men do, from the very beginning. About 80% of the labour in this project has come from women. I worked away from home but I never quit coming here to work; I was the boss of the household, but there are many couples where the woman worked more than the man. There is always an excuse, that is what I think, men more often avoid obligations. /.../ We have an area for a sports field, but the fathers of the families, the men, do not contribute their part. If they would work as we women always do, we would already have had a very nice sports field. But the men prefer to play in the street rather than start working on the sports field. /.../ It's a disgrace, and it would be the last thing we need, that the women make the field so that the men can go there and play. I will not sign up for that.*

Doña Ana serves us coffee and cookies. Don Julio looks in and also takes a cup. He tells us about the road he is working on, and that there will soon be a dedication of the plot on the main road where a college will be built.

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We walk toward the north and see several places where the house owner has expropriated and fenced public land. Doña Julia tells us that on her street, a woman has fenced in some of the green area, which she clearly keeps very nice with new plants and regular watering. But that land was meant for the children, who now have to play on the street instead. Others build fences around parts of green areas, effectively annexing them to their property. Still others build storage and other small sheds on the land. The neighbour across fenced his plot and part of the land meant as a common green area.

Expropriation of common land

There are large trees that shade the verdant grass growing behind the fence. Doña Maria thinks that green areas should be for the children, so they do not have to play on the street.

*... we dreamed that in the green area that is supposed to be here, the children could go to play, but the woman took over everything, she took over that, and if the children went in there, they were kicked out, told off and everything. Therefore, there isn't anywhere they can play. They have to play here, they play on the street, that is where they have to play ... all of the children, you should see it, it is full of children here and they don't have anywhere to play, there are no parks, no areas for them.*

At the end of the street is a house in the same condition as when it was built. The floor is concrete with many cracks. There are inner walls, but no ceiling, and the wind blows in between the outer walls and the roof. This is the house of Doña Julia, a housewife in her forties who lives with her husband, their eight children and one granddaughter. Doña Julia takes care of the household and the children during the day, and her husband repairs cars in a garage that has been added to the house.

Don Esteban runs his own business and finds it hard to support his family. He feels it is his responsibility to cover all the costs of the family even though their eldest son is working.

*Sometimes good and sometimes bad. Some days there is (work) and other day there is not. Hard /.../ It is hard with such a big family; there are young ones and older ones, some are studying. One is working, but he doesn't help much with the expenses, since they are big now. I have to pay everything that concerns the house, right; water, lights, the house, food, everything.*

Doña Julia speaks of the construction phase during which she worked with the administration. She still thinks that it was unfair that some people had to leave Lindora because of requirement that each household had to contribute work. For single mothers the work load of thirty hours per week was impossible to fulfill, since they also had to work to support their families. The majority of the work that was put into the construction was done by women. Some parts of the heavier construction work were done by men, but they were all paid to do the job. Doña Julia describes the situation:

*... for the work that was called construction, we were all women, if you came during the week you would only see women, there were only one or two men, and the few that were here were all paid. They were paid a salary to work here, because if not, there wouldn't have been any men. For example, the one responsible for a house was always a man, but they were all paid and no one was a voluntary worker. Because they also had to support their families, they had to be paid so that they could work the whole*

*week, because if not there wouldn't have been any men here.*

Doña Julia who has lived in Lindora since the construction phase thinks that the women of the community have been fundamental for its development and finds it difficult to understand why men have been so little involved. Maybe they just got used to the fact that the women do everything.

Doña Julia wonders if men got used to the fact that women do everything

*I do not know, maybe the men got used to that the women were the ones participating in everything that they didn't want to. I do not understand, you see that I do not understand that, because I think that in other communities there are more men. Here, I don't know, the men got used to that the woman were the ones working and organizing everything, they got used to it and because of that, now I think that here the women were fundamental to everything and are fundamental to everything. [...] To the programs that they want to realize the women are the ones that have made the neighbourhood a community. When the community police were formed by women the men almost never came, and that was supposedly to keep watch at night. Therefore, I think, that the man is in the house, the man can make it safer, right, for the man and for the woman, but there were more women who came.*

Doña Julia is related to nearly fifty people in Lindora. One of her favourite relatives is Doña Emilia who lives next door.

Doña Emilia lives with her husband and two daughters in a house at the end of the street. She is a housewife and also works with paid domestic services and beauty treatments for women in the surrounding areas. Doña Emilia used to work in a beauty salon, but after she married and had children she receives her clients in her home or travels to their home. Her husband works with construction and attends evening classes to complete his school diploma, and he is often away. Doña Emilia tries to do her income-generating activities when her daughters are in school or during weekends when a neighbour looks after the girls. The girls have their lunch at home, since no meals are served at school. The girls are 10 and 12 years old and take the bus to school. Doña Emilia describes an ordinary day:

Doña Emilia describes how she combines her domestic activities with income-generating work

*Well, a day like today I get up at 4:15 to make breakfast for my husband, and to make him lunch. He takes lunch with him to save money. Then I iron uniforms, tidy up the house. The girls start at noon; today is a day when they start at 12:30. I prepare their snack, because they take a snack with them. They take fruit; today they took melon, watermelon and oranges and a small bottle of juice. Then I prepare the school bags, that is the backpack with the things they should take with them, what they need today. I have to hurry them in the bathroom and polish their shoes. Their lunch, they always have lunch at home and bring*

*their snack with them, because they finish at a quarter to six, so they bring their snack, and they leave after lunch. I go with them to the bus stop to make sure they get on the bus, and then I have my lunch. Then, because I did the laundry yesterday, but I didn't have the time to fold the clothes yesterday because I had a client, I have to fold the clothes in the afternoon. Then my husband comes about half past two or three in the afternoon and I have to make him coffee, prepare his clothes because he goes to night school. He starts at six o'clock and finishes at nine forty-five. Then the dinner in the evening and prepare the uniforms for the next day. That is the daily routine. /.../ Sometimes I sit down and sew socks or do something, there is always something to do in a house, work to be done.*

Doña Emilia wants her daughters to play close to the house

Doña Emilia works with various income generating activities in between her domestic work. Sometimes she bakes bread or prepares other food that she can sell to do everything she can to help her husband with the household expenses. Her daughters help her sell the bread, but Doña Emilia does not want to expose her daughters to the dangers of the street, so she sends them to the homes of people she trusts in the community. Doña Emilia watches over her daughters when they play in front of the house, and is worried that they might be hurt or even kidnapped. She would rather that her girls play inside the house or in the front yard where she can keep an eye on them.

*I do not let my girls go out and play anywhere, because I do not want them to get used to playing in the streets, it makes me afraid, staying in the street can be dangerous: a man could come in a car and take them with him, or a car with a drunken driver could run them over or they could have an accident in the street. So I try to keep them from playing on the street for as long as it is possible. When they want to bicycle I sit down on the pavement when they play for a while, but otherwise no. I want them to play here inside the house and I have things for them. I have a blackboard that B. made them and I buy them crayons and colours so that they can play here. Or M's girls from over there come here to play with them, but games that they can play in front of the house without having to go out in the street and expose themselves to dangers, that is very important.*

Doña Emilia describes how her house was broken into

On the street where Doña Emilia lives there have been a series of burglaries, and her house was once broken into, but luckily the thief did not have the time to take anything. She is not worried about her personal safety but is worried about leaving the house because of the risk of burglary.

*Well, it's safe in the sense that you go out without being afraid, yes, but the security of the house makes you afraid, because in the beginning they were stealing a lot here. That is what I'm afraid of, to leave the house and maybe*

*when I come back, they have already burgled here. Thank God they didn't steal anything, because just when my little girls opened the door the thief got out through the window and he couldn't take anything with him.*

Even though she works during the week and on weekends, she sees herself as a housewife, and thinks it is important that there is a woman at home. She wants to be at home when her daughters need her, and supports their school work even if it means that they only have rice and beans for dinner. She says it is an advantage to have a husband who is willing to help in the household, together with her daughters.

Dona Emilia thinks that it is important to have a woman in the house

*Well, as you can see, we do practically the same things here, because when I don't do the things, he does, because in this house at least I have the advantage that my husband is not a macho man. /.../ That is the advantage. Here we do not say that the woman does the housework, here are we the two of us, the four of us because my daughters make the beds, do the dishes, they sweep, they do everything. So that is an advantage, and we share everything. Here it is not like that: because he is the man he does not clear the table, he does not do the dishes, no. There are times like one Saturday that he was here early and I was serving coffee, they called me and I had to leave immediately to do nails, and I had the whole table there, with the glasses and the dirty plates, then he told me that I should go and that he would take care of it. The beans have to be soaked, "you just go and I will prepare them". When I came back the beans were prepared, and I just had to come and make the rice and do whatever I would do for dinner.*

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We turn back towards the centre of Lindora and pass Don Manuel's house. He is sitting in a rocking chair on the veranda behind burglar bars. Don Manuel is in his forties, unemployed, and lives with his wife and two adult sons. He has worked with various jobs in construction and transport, but was injured in a car accident and has not found a job since. His oldest son runs a pottery at the back of the house, where also Don Manuel sometimes works.

*Right now, I am not doing anything, but I have always worked with everything. But what I have worked in most is construction. My profession was more than anything in construction, I have worked as a truck driver, I have taken care of horses, I have done a bit of everything in this life, a pirate taxi driver. After the accident, I even drove an informal taxi, as they call it "pirate". Now I am taking a course at Minas in carving wood and arts crafts. There are times when I work here with pottery.*

Don Manuel describes his employment

We look into the the pottery workshop where both sons work. They have added a room at the back of the house where they have a pot-



Don Manuel's house is used by his sons for their pottery

ter's wheel and a kiln. They proudly show some coffee mugs and wall decorations they have produced. The radio is on high volume and they are much too busy to talk for long.

Don Manuel was responsible for construction of one of the blocks during a year and describes his difficulties in training women to carry out the work, even though he says that many women worked just as hard as men. For everyone who participated, the houses are invaluable because of all the effort they put in their work.

*It was very hard, it really cost us a lot, the price that the house has cannot be said in money, because as I said, it cost us tears of blood.*

Don Manuel thinks that Lindora has experienced rapid development

Don Manuel thinks that there has been rapid development in the area, and he has good expectations for the future since Lindora is part of such an expansive region. Don Manuel says that there should be an association or group that can organize, support and implement development in the neighbourhood and complete the projects that have already started.

*What is needed is to form a good association for local development, with people who really care about the project. And through that association finish what is needed, the playgrounds, parks, gardens, make a good nursery school as well. There are many single mothers here that work. We have one in a house but it does not fulfil the needs. I know that people worked a lot for that, but I think you should do one the way it should be, in a proper way for the children, with all the basic services and everything.*

Next door to Don Manuel lives Don Gustavo who is retired and lives with his daughter's family. We stop and chat a moment. He tells us that he spends all his time at home. All his days a just a like; he does not work with anything, and he is not interested in the activities arranged for the elderly. He watches his young granddaughter and laughs as she plays and cycles around in the courtyard next to the street.

In the northern part of Lindora, there are three small parks in a row, a break in the rows of houses. The long sides of the houses face the park: concrete elements, no windows or doors that could open out. This means the parks mainly function as thoroughfares. None of the adjacent houses feel any responsibility to care for them, and they are full of litter. One of the parks has a few trees left where some children climb and play. This park is used by Doña Cristina who is runs a daycare and in her home nearby.

Doña Cristinas uses part of her house for her income generating activities with child care

Doña Cristina is paid to take care of children and uses her house as a nursery. The children spend most of their time in the courtyard in front of the house; she usually takes the children there for a bit of sun, and so that the boys can play ball. Most of Doña Cristinas time is spent earning money by caring for children.

*I get up at six o'clock in the morning, I pick up kids, I make breakfast, my husband goes to work. The kids go to school,*

*I stay with them, I make them the morning snack, at nine or ten, I make lunch, clean, I tidy up the house, I make lunch, I give them lunch at 11:40. Afterwards they rest, they sleep for a while. Afterwards at three o'clock in the afternoon I make them a snack and then they play or rest for the rest of the afternoon, and then their parents pick them up at 4:00 or 5:00 in the afternoon. I stay with my own in my house. It is tiring!! Everyday. It is a weekly routine, from Monday to Friday it is a routine. Everyday is the same. It is tiring.*

Doña Cristina lives with her husband and their three adult children. She thinks that security is the main problem at the moment in Lindora. Doña Cristina thinks that there is a need for a police station in the area because of the lack of security.

Doña Cristina thinks there is a need for a police station

*... security is needed, because you do not see a police officer here, we don't have that from the government, the state, whatever. They come and make rounds, they walk around and they leave, but there is no security as if they would be here, have a police station or something like that. That is what the area doesn't have, and it is needed.*

At the opposite side of the park we meet Don Juan. He is out on the street washing his van. Don Juan drives a minibus in and around San José. He does not have fixed working hours but works both weekdays and weekends, whenever he is needed.

Don Juan describes his work as a driver

*I get up at 4.15 in the morning; I leave ten to five, something like that. I pick up an employee of a construction company over there in San José in the Central Park and I bring him here to Santa Ana. Afterwards, if I have another run I make it during the day. I practically use all my time for transportation. Afterwards, in the afternoon I pick him up again, the employee and I leave him in San José. That's it basically. /.../ I also drive people that are going out, mostly on excursions. Local people who are going somewhere, some beach, some touristy place, some spa, or some football game. Often to football games, teams from around here that are going to play somewhere else. So, I take them there.*

Don Juan is married and lives with his wife and four children. He has extended and improved the interiors of his house and invites us in to the living room. His wife has a beauty salon in an extension of the house towards the street, and he has built an apartment on the second floor that is rented to a woman.

Don Juan has made extensions of his house for different income generating activities

He says that he does not himself participate much in any activities, but his wife runs a health-program for women in the area, and he hardly ever sees his mother because of her involvement in the community. He thinks that more women than men are engaged in activities, because women are closer to the community and men are the providers of the families.

*I believe that there are more women than men (who are engaged in activities). The man is more dedicated to being the provider of the house. Therefore, he goes to work, from work to home and so forth. The woman is more into the community, she relates more to the neighbours and with the rest of the community. Therefore, she participates more. I believe that women participate more than men do.*

Don Juan thinks that there is a need for better ways of communication

Don Juan who is busy with his work and his family thinks that he is not always updated on what is going on in the community. It is always the same group of people who participate in the community managing work, and he thinks that more information could attract more people to cooperate. He proposes better means of communication.

*... there are times when you're busy at work, with the family and all that, many times you don't bother about what the development association is doing, and the association does not communicate a lot either with the neighbours. There is no real way of communication, like, let us say, a board that says what they are doing, some folder that the neighbours print, so that the neighbours can know what they are doing, if they are planning something, in what projects they are working.*

Don Juan is aware of many projects underway, and he is one of those who think there needs to be a place to meet, especially during the winter.

*But there is no place where we can meet, like if we want to make an activity, a sale of whatever to be able to fix the street, to fix the parks, for all the things that are needed. The school needs a lot of things, the church, the community hall, a football ground is needed. There is no place where you can say: "let us make the activities here". Especially during winter, because during summer it can be done in the parks, but during winter at night, there is no place where you can say that the meetings will be held, or where the development association can have a meeting with the neighbours if they want, or where they can make some activity, whatever, there is no place that allows us to meet.*

Don Juan thinks that Lindora is a safe neighbourhood

Don Juan thinks that Lindora is a calm and safe place. The break-ins that have occurred are because people leave their houses unattended or that there is no protection, such as iron-bars and fencing, on some houses. He also thinks that the environment is safe for the children; he says his children never had any problems and that they play just outside their house. The streets are safe for the children since both the traffic and speed of cars along the secondary streets, where he lives with his family, is low.

*... not many cars pass here, there are few cars passing by, and the majority belong to the neighbours from around here. Those of us that have cars try to drive slowly, so that there won't be accidents with the children or anything like that.*

In the last park in the row is a metal shed that was used for storing materials during construction. It is now used as a chapel for the parish to which Doña Maria Carmen belongs. They meet here on Sundays when a priest comes to hold the service. She unlocks the large padlock and we go in to sit for a while in the heat. Doña Maria Carmen describes the church's voluntary activities for the poor. She is active in them and helps with distributing packets with nappies, food and clothes to families in need.

Chapel in the park

Doña Carmen lives next to the park with two children and her mother. Her daughter is often out cycling, and her bike lies on the driveway up to the house. Even if Doña Carmen lives close to one of the parks, she never uses any of the space, but spends her days inside her house:

Doña Carmen speaks of the importance of maintaining the parks

*No, I always stay here inside the house. Besides, we don't have any nice parks, most of my time I spend here.*

Doña Carmen does not think there is any park she can use. It is a serious problem for the community, how to conserve and maintain the green areas. Doña Carmen thinks there is currently no space that can be used for activities.

*(The parks) yes, they are a bit neglected. You can count the parks that are well kept. Sometimes the problem is that to maintain a park you need funds and people to take care of them. Most of the parks are practically unusable; they are a piece of land with nothing on it. There was a playground, but it was destroyed by gangs that don't have anything to do and instead of taking care of the parks, they destroy them. That is a problem for the community, and it is a very serious problem. It takes a lot because sometimes you don't know what you can do about it. There is no choice. There is no football ground or basketball court or something like that, that can be used for some activity.*

Doña Carmen lost her job six months ago and is trying to find a new job. She is 42 years old, and her age is a problem in getting employment. She applied for a job in a supermarket, but tells us that everyone is looking for younger people to hire.

Doña Carmen describes her difficulties to find a job

*I have made many applications, but now everywhere the maximum age for a job is 35 and I am going to be 42. Because of my age, I have a lot of trouble finding a job. I also have problems with my eye sight and that affects me a lot when I am looking for work. I have almost always been rejected because of my age. Here I am just waiting, but no one has called me. I have made applications everywhere, but there's nothing. They are looking for people between 18 and 35, after that you're left out.*

To get some income, she rents out a room in her house. She sometimes can have a few hours work with someone who rings and needs help in the household. Doña Carmen tries to work while her daughter is in school, since she does not want her to be home alone. Her son goes to college and looks after himself in the afternoons.

*Since the second half of last year until now, I have not had a steady job. Sometimes I iron or clean someone's house, but it is not on a regular basis. I am retired, I am a widow and I have a pension from the Social Security. I also rent out a room. /.../ Sometimes they call me to clean some house or iron and in that case I leave for an hour or two. I try to go out when my daughter is at school.*

Down the next street from Doña Maria Carmen, lives Don Carlos with his wife and her four children from a previous marriage. Don Carlos himself has eight children who sometimes come to visit. Then his wife keeps to the second floor of the house. Don Carlos works in construction and has his own company, which means his income is irregular, but he manages. The house has been extended with an extra half storey, where all of them sleep. Towards the living room is a balcony with a fine staircase. Theirs is one of the largest houses in Lindora and is often used for meetings.

Don Carlos led the "Green Patrol" for the children

Don Carlos has been involved from the beginning. During construction he led the Green Patrol, a group that made outings with children and planted trees and shrubs for the future. He thinks that the project was very successful in delivering houses, but failed in providing the community with space for various activities.

Don Carlos says that no land was assigned for community spaces

*If we talk about the common areas, I can honestly say; that was a 100% failure. The first association was very efficient in the housing project, assigning every house. But I'll say it again, it was a failure. /.../ It was a failure in the sense that no land was assigned. Well, for a school, yes, but for a church, no, for a community hall, no, for a sports ground, no and for other recreational activities, no. Or let us say, they did not think of the future at all.*

Don Carlos thinks that it is mainly the women who work to improve Lindora day by day, and tells us about different projects women have to plant trees, to fight drugs and to give the children a better upbringing.

*There is a great difference in Lindora. If we talk about men and women we could say that women are more active. More active because it is women who have been concerned about making Lindora a better place every day, within the limited possibilities that exist. There are many women that have made beautiful parks around their houses, planted trees, fixed their streets, and improved the education of the children. Groups have been formed to educate children, which are outside their own families. Above all there are religious groups; there is the Baptist Church,*

*the Catholic Church and the Christian Church, divided into three groups. So, I have seen that every Saturday the Baptist Church has a large group of up to 50 or 60 children because they give religious education, and also other education against drugs.*

Don Carlos has participated in various projects in addition to the Green Patrol and thinks that the Adulto Mayor is the most successful one. The group still functions well.

*The other activity in which I have participated a lot is Adulto Mayor. My wife has also worked very hard and when I can't come, she can, but we have always been in the lead working to form a good team that works. I believe that it has been one of the most productive, efficient projects, and we can see that it has a lot of capacity to grow. One of the few projects that have lasted is Adulto Mayor.*

Don Carlos thinks that Lindora is a calm and safe neighbourhood, compared to other neighbourhoods that he knows. He feels safe walking the streets at any time of day or night, in spite of the robberies that have occurred.

Don Carlos thinks that it is safe to walk the streets at any time of night

*I consider, that under the current circumstances, Lindora is one of the safest areas of Santa Ana, I really do think so. There have been many break-ins into the houses, but it is people who come from outside, that is practically confirmed. But the break-ins have decreased a lot, because people have started to look out for each other. That is what I think, that Lindora does not have a problem; that there is a lack of security, if you see it in my way. Because here in Costa Rica there are places you cannot enter at night, you'll get your self killed if you're a stranger. In Lindora you can get up at three, four o'clock in the morning and walk around everywhere and go home again, without any problem.*

We meet Don Julio at the birthday party of one of his grandchildren. He lives with his wife in another house, but his daughter and his family live here, where he is sitting and eating birthday cake. Don Julio is very happy to live in Lindora, and is one of those who think that the location is an advantage because of the other neighbourhoods under construction in the vicinity.

Don Julio thinks that Lindora has a good future

*I believe that this is a community with a great future, because we have a lot of commerce in the surroundings, many new areas. There is a lot of urbanisation happening around us, which favour us to to a certain extent, because it raises the value of the property. It partly favours us because the municipality cannot ignore us. They cannot permit than an area like this turns into a place full of drug addicts, or thieves, because our surroundings do not allow that.*

Don Julio works six days per week as a security guard at a school in San José. He not only guards the school building, but also helps the students.

*Security agent. /.../ I work in a school, so I have to deal with the students. Sometimes I give them advice; sometimes I have to be a doctor. That's what it's like when you work with young people, you have to make them conscious of things. That is what I do, most of the time.*

Don Julio speaks of the plans for a football ground

Don Julio talks about plans to build a football ground to keep the children from playing on the street. Don Julio has been involved with sports all his life, and thinks it is a way to lead a healthy life. Both his adult sons are also interested in sports, and when the children were young, their common interest made it easier to communicate with them. Don Julio thinks that sports is a good activity for youth, and will try to develop the plan for a football ground.

*You know, we have such a project here, in this sector; we are looking for a way to build a football ground here. Everywhere football is the passion of the children, and it is to avoid that the children play in the streets. That is the initial idea, but if it is possible, we could in the future open up courts for basketball, volleyball, so that everybody can spend their time in a healthy activity. But this is something that is just an idea right now, nothing else. We're trying to see how we can make it happen.*

Now we have completed a full tour around Lindora and return to Doña Maria Carmens house, still talking. Isabel, Rosa and Maria are unanimous that it was mainly the women who built Lindora and who are still most involved in the community. Although the women have been so strong, Doña Gloria thinks that male chauvinism has a great influence on life in Lindora, and very few women are liberated.

*Here we are raised in a "macho" society, but the problem is that women are chauvinists, and not feminists. Here men have a lot of power; we are only a few women who are liberated. Because here there are many women who don't say a word in front of their husband. /.../ We have made so much community work; to clean up parks, collect garbage of all kinds, plant trees and everything. And the work is different for women and men. Women have a greater capacity to give, and a greater ability to bear things. Men on the contrary, no, men want everything at once, and children are the same.*

Doña Gloria speaks of machismo

Doña Gloria thinks there are few women who are feminist as she is. She describes what machismo means, and how narrow this kind of thinking is, but it is the reality for most.

*Here in Lindora you see it clearly, the man is the boss of the household. Well, where the woman is the boss it is because they are alone or widows. However, if the man says*

*no, it is no. If I buy something that my husband does not like, he makes me return it. That is not right because a marriage or a relationship is like a business deal, an enterprise where the two have the same authority, where the two have different beliefs and the children are the common future. But, it is not only the man, because here are men who hit their wife, men that do not hesitate to insult their wife in the middle of the street, and it should not be like that. Or men that spend time with a mistress when they have a wife. They were raised with the male chauvinist idea, that he man is strong, the man does not cry, the man is brave, the man is the one who works, who provides the food, and that you should stay at home, because you are only useful for cooking, and raising children, not for studying. To me that mentality is so narrow. Still, there are many families here with that mentality, and the woman does not free herself, she needs guts to free herself. They are few, the women from here who are liberated. I tell them: you're young, do something, don't have any more children, life is not for having so many children, the situation is difficult and your husband is not worth it.*

Doña Isabel offers us a cool drink as we talk in the heat of the afternoon.

It is getting dark, and Doña Isabel rings Doña Juana who has a car that she sometimes uses to drives people who are willing to pay.

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Doña Juana comes to collect me. She tells me that her husband works in a car repair garage in New York, so she had to bring her three children with her. They squabble in the back seat all the way to San José. It is rush hour and the trip takes 2.5 hours.



# Another View of Lago de Lindora

## Costa Rica

Costa Rica is a small, comparatively prosperous, republic in Central America with 4.3 million inhabitants. The standard of living is higher than the average for Central America, although there has been a large decrease in public spending on health care and education since the 1980s because of a growing budget deficit and fears of inflation. Since the 1940s the country has had a welfare policy that today means all employed persons and their families are covered by health and accident insurance and a national pension system. The country has changed from a traditional agricultural to a modern economy dominated by industrial production and services. Unemployment is relatively low according to the statistics. Despite the relatively high standard of living, the proportion of poor has increased during the last two decades (Landguiden, 2005).

### General Facts



|  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| Area   | 51,100 km <sup>2</sup>     |
| Population                                     | 4,300,000 (2004)           |
| Population Density                             | 78 persons/km <sup>2</sup> |
| Annual Population growth                       | 1.6%                       |
| Urban Population                               | 61%                        |
| Capital, Nr of inhabitants                     | San José, 345,600 (2000)   |
| Literacy, both women and men                   | 96% (2001)                 |
| GNP/capita                                     | USD 4,361 (2004)           |
| Aid received by government                     | USD 2,000,000              |
| Unemployment, excluding underemployment        | 6,7%                       |
| Women in the work force                        | 32.6% (2003)               |
| Men in the work force                          | 67.3% (2003)               |
| Population who live on less than USD 2 per day | 9.5% (2000)                |

Source: (Utrikespolitiska Institutet, 2005).

In the report the State of the Nation 2004, based on surveys from 1990 to 2003, it is estimated that poverty in Costa Rica has decreased from 27 percent in 1990 to 19 percent in 2003. In these figures poverty is defined as insufficiency of income per family (Estado de la Nación 2004, p. 106). A family is defined as poor if the income cannot satisfy the basic material needs of each member. If the income

cannot cover the cost of the nutritional needs of the family, the family lives in extreme poverty. However, at the same time it is stated in the report that the number of households who live in poverty are increasing if the definition of poverty is broadened to include monetary income and unsatisfied basic needs (ibid, p. 104). The total number is estimated at 195,300 households, based on the number of households known to have low income together with an estimate of a number of households registered without a known income. Unsatisfied basic needs is defined to include, except for income, access to decent shelter, health, education and other services (Gutierrez, 1997).

## Gender Equity

State of the Nation 2000 mentions gender as a theme for the first time. The report presents a range of indicators concerning women's and men's conditions ranging from issues related to economy, employment, health and domestic violence to issues of politics and human development.

This report estimates the proportion of poor households as 20 percent of all households. It observes that the proportion of poor woman headed households has increased. In 1998 poor woman headed households were 22 percent of all households, and that increased to 29 percent in 1999. Among man headed households, 15 percent were classified as poor in 1999 compared to 16 percent in 1998. The report describes this as the feminization of poverty. Women under 34 years of age were the poorest group of woman headed households.

Women's part of the total labour force was estimated at 32 percent in 1998. According to the report women work more often than men in jobs with low productivity and in subsistence activities, mainly in service, trade and manufacturing. Areas where women were particularly underrepresented include architect, engineer, professions related to natural resources, sales and electricity supply. Women's income generating activities are not always reported in official statistics since they are often outside the formal employment sector.

The report describes women as mainly responsible for reproduction activities, caring for the family, which confines women to the private sphere. This is also reflected in women's chances to participate in production. More women than men, 100 women per 30 men, reported that they could not spend more time on productive work because of their responsibilities to care for family members. A large part of unpaid household work is done by women, and the report estimates that it is worth 9.8 percent of the GDP. Women who work only in the household are economically disadvantaged because they are not entitled to a pension or health insurance.

Primary education is the same for girls and boys. The average education level is 7.7 years for the population over 15 years. There are more girls than boys at both secondary level and university, where there are 2.7 percent more women than men students.

The report states that there is a distinct public agenda for achieving gender equity, but that there are still many tasks to be solved.

## Urban Development

In Costa Rica more than half the population lives in urban areas throughout the country. More than two-thirds of the population lives in the central valley, in the Gran Area Metropolitana [GAM]. GAM includes the capital city San José which has grown into a metropolitan area with three other cities and a number of villages. GAM is bounded by mountains and volcanoes, and there is limited space for expansion for new urban development. A new urban development plan for GAM, Plan Nacional de Desarrollo Urbano, was developed in 2001 (Fournier, 2001).

There is an increased segregation between rich and poor housing areas in the metropolitan area. In the poor areas, on average 28.6 percent are woman headed households, compared to the country average of 22.7 percent. The poor housing areas are concentrated to the outskirts of the metropolitan area, often on land not suitable for construction and with problems related to water and sanitation (Estado de la Nación 2004).

### **Housing Policy**

Since 1986 Costa Rica has promoted housing through a financing system, Sistema Financiero Nacional para la Vivienda [SFNV], which has resulted in a better housing situation than in the rest of Central America. The system has allowed involvement of both public and private entities, such as cooperatives, private and public banks and non governmental organizations. SFNV has several instruments including a direct subsidy for housing [el bono] administered by the Banco Hipotecario de la Vivienda [BANHVI] that allows low-income groups to obtain housing. The subsidy can be used to buy or construct a house and is proportional to the household's economic capacity. The authorities demand legal property ownership to grant loans and subsidies (Guitierrez, 1997). In total 207,600 bonos were granted from 1987 to 2003 (Guitierrez, 1997; Estado de la Nación 2004). There are, however, still problems in the housing sector, and it is estimated that one third of the total housing stock of the country, or 300,000, are in urgent need of upgrading (Estado de la Nación 2004).

## FUPROVI

La Fundación Promotora de Vivienda (FUPROVI, 2005) is a non governmental organization that has worked with housing for low-income families. FUPROVI has, since 1987, worked with organised self-help construction as one way of reducing the cost of housing through the participation of the household. Improved housing is part of FUPROVI's main goal to promote social, sustainable development and to support the improvement in the quality of life of poor people. The target population is low income families, who often come from illegal settlements in urban areas. The initial credit for construction comes from FUPROVI's revolving fund and is an intermediate loan

during the construction process. The community starts the process of legalising their settlement along with the construction, and when the settlement is complete and legal the families are eligible for the government subsidy and for a mortgage from a government approved financing institute. From its start FUPROVI received a large part of its financial support from Sida (from 1995 the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) but is today an economically self-sufficient organization.

## Lago de Lindora

Lago de Lindora is situated in the Gran Area Metropolitana some kilometres outside the city of Santa Ana. The land was previously a public park around a lake that now has dried out. The community was given a piece of land from the land owner of a former hacienda and carried out self-help construction projects financed partly by a subsidy [el bono] and organized with the support of FUPROVI.

The land northwest of Sta Ana was previously farmland that is now under rapid urbanisation with both commercial areas and housing areas built for high and middle income groups. Lindora is

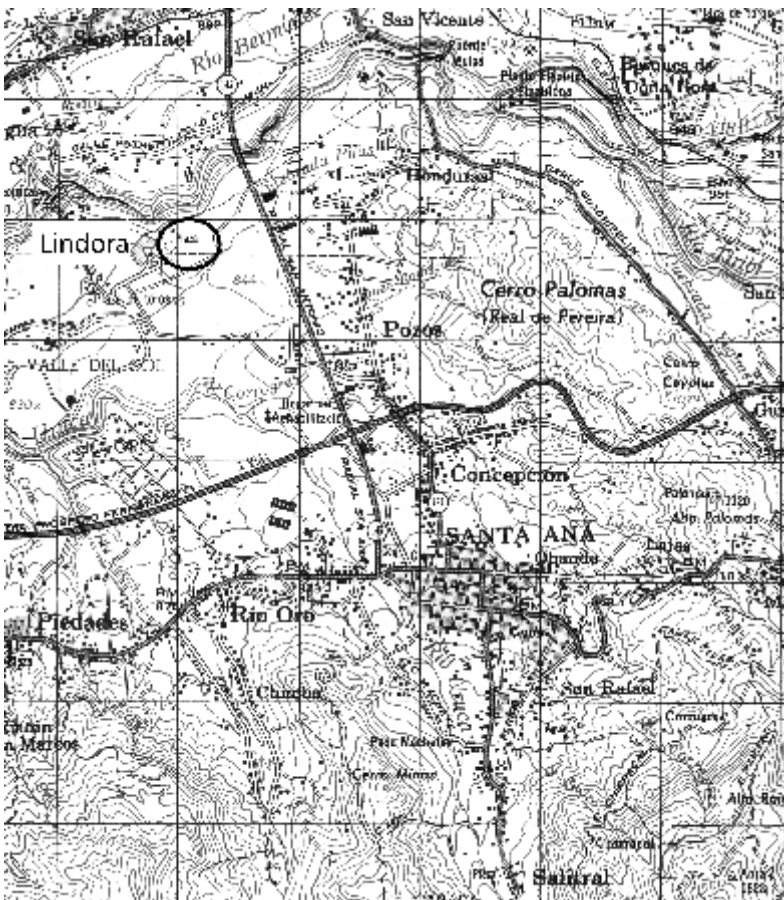


Fig. 4.1 Map of Lindora and Santa Ana.

two kilometers off the main road; it consists only of private housing and is at the moment entirely surrounded by farmland (see Fig. 4.1).

## The Urban Plan

The layout of the urban plan was drawn by FUPROVI and approved by the local authorities. The Costa Rican building code (Costa Rica 2000) regulates land use and sets minimum standards for plot size, density and safety zones for different types of housing. Some general minimum standards for low-income housing areas include:

- Plot size: 120–150 m<sup>2</sup>
- Width of plot facing street: 8–12 m
- Commercial zones: 2 m<sup>2</sup> per plot
- Greens and playgrounds: 10% of the land
- Access roads: minimum width 11 m, secondary streets 8 m
- Protection zone for water wells: 20 m
- Protection zone for water treatment plants: 10 m
- Protection zone from main roads or highways: 7–11 m
- Protection zone from high tension lines: 20 m.

The urban plan is a grid with 385 single, detached houses (see Fig. 4.2). Due to the sloping terrain only parts of the land could be used

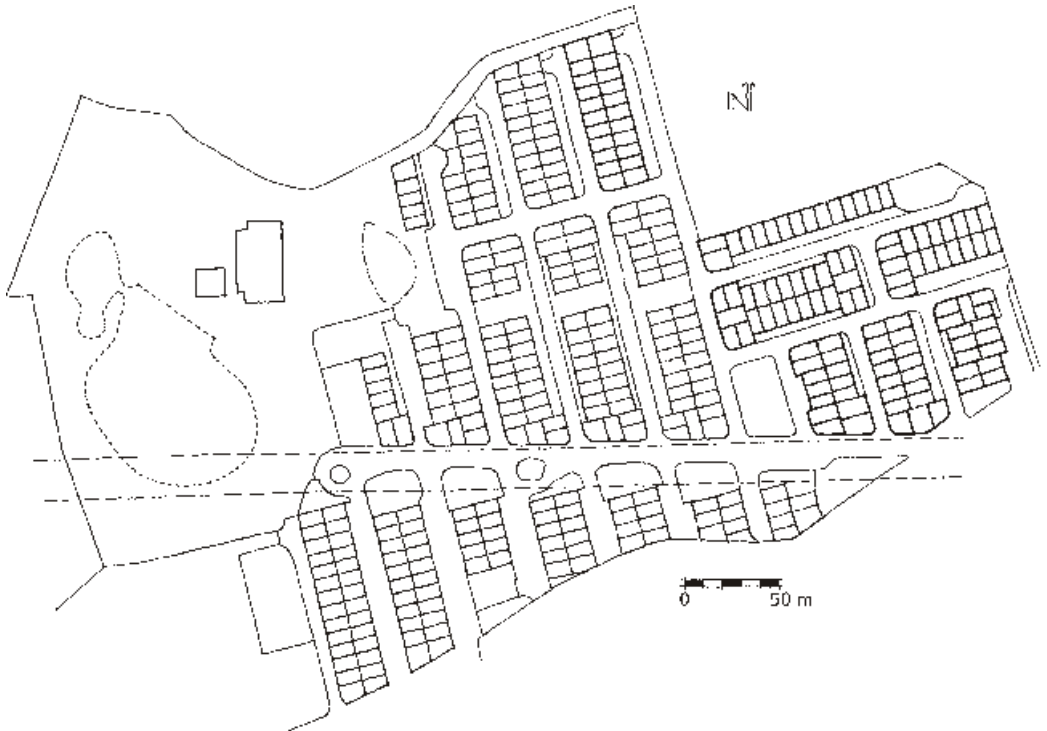
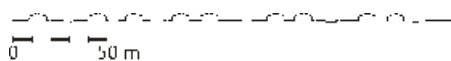


Fig. 4.2 Urban plan and section Lago de Lindora.



for housing. A high tension line runs through the area from east to west, and the safety zone divides it into two parts: one to the north and one to the south.

## Space for Activities

The design of the plan, the regulations and the condition of the land has meant that half the land for the housing area consists of space for streets, commercial zones, green areas and parks. Although there is a lot of space, it is not used very much by the residents for their social, recreational and/or economic activities (*see quote Don Carlos*).

### **Green Areas**

In the design of the urban plan efforts were made to increase the space for green areas. In the northern part of Lindora, green zones [zonas verdes] run along the streets to create space for children to play. Green zones are also found along the main road under the high tension line because of the need for a protection zone. Parts of the green zones are sometimes taken over by the households adjacent to it who use it for storage or fence it and use it as a part of their private garden (*see quote Doña Julia*).

There is one park planned to be a playground in the south. There are three small parks cutting across the blocks of houses in the north to form a passage between the streets and to create space to be enjoyed by the neighbours. In one of the small parks an old building material storehouse serves as a chapel on Sunday mornings. Trees were planted in the parks after the construction phase was finished, but most of the trees have been broken and only a few remain. In the park to the north there are two old military tanks and a ruined swimming-pool [la piscina] left from the time that the land was part of a public park.

The municipality is the owner and official caretaker of the parks, greens and the streets, but in reality it is up to the community to make any improvements and to keep up the maintenance. Both economic resources and peoples' participation is needed to maintain these areas.

### **Using Parks and Green Areas**

Only 18 percent of the respondents in the questionnaire state that they use the parks and green areas. Most people spend their time in their houses and do not use the parks and green areas (*see quote Doña Carmen*). The reason they give is lack of time, 47 percent, lack of seating, lack of things to do and bad maintenance are other important issues (*see Table 4.1*). As to whether these areas are used differently during the year, 38 percent think that they are used more during summer.



*The playground.*



*The parks in the north.*



*A park*



*The former bodega used for a Sunday sermon.*

Table 4.1 Reason for not using parks and green areas

|                     | Nr of respondents | % of questionnaires |
|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Have no time        | 142               | 47%                 |
| No seating          | 97                | 32%                 |
| Nothing to do       | 86                | 29%                 |
| Bad maintenance     | 83                | 28%                 |
| It's not clean      | 60                | 20%                 |
| Not nice atmosphere | 55                | 18%                 |

Of the very few who say that they use the parks and greens, one third use them to play with their children, 17 percent use them as passage ways for walking and 13 percent use the parks when they work with maintenance. There is little difference in the responses about the amount of time they themselves use the green areas or the time their husbands/partners spend there. The only residents who spend significantly more time in the parks and on the playground are the children (*see quotes Don Juan, Doña Emilia*). Children who play outdoors also spend time in the streets and in the courtyards in front of the houses. It is more common for girls to play in the front courtyard facing the street, and for boys to ride their bikes in the streets. During the observations only ten percent of the children riding bikes were girls. Football is played on the streets and on the small greens along the main road. During the observations only a 0.5 percent of the children who played football were girls.

When it comes to using the playground 21 percent of the respondents say that their children use it. Of those who say they use the playground themselves, 32 percent go to the playground with their children and 38 percent see the playground as a place to socialize.

### Streets

An access road leads through Lago de Lindora from the main road to Sta Ana in the east, leading on to new developments further west. There is heavy traffic running through Lindora due to construction in the new areas. Asphaltting the streets was financed by the residents who live along the streets. Not all streets are finished, and dust sweeps through the air when heavy traffic drives past (*see quote Don Fernando*).

There are two bus stops along the access road and buses leaving every ten minutes to Sta Ana, Belen and San José.

### Using the Streets

A majority of the respondents, 68 percent, think that the street system is not safe for people. Of those who think that there is a problem, 30 percent say there are few pedestrian streets, 33 percent think the traffic is too heavy and 65 percent think that cars and trucks drive too fast. Other issues, such as the lack of asphalt and bad maintenance, are raised by 18 percent of the respondents.

Children play on the streets. Most side streets have very little traffic and some parents think it is not so dangerous for children to play on the streets (*see quote Don Juan*), while others are afraid there could be an accident with children hit by buses, trucks or cars, since there is no clear demarcation of the street (*see quote Doña Emilia*).





*Street in Lindora.*



*Street in Lindora.*



*Cycling in the street.*

It was observed that twice as many women as men walked along the main street during daytime, but fewer girls than boys are seen in the streets. When walking or passing in the street, women and especially girls walk in company with someone else, 68 percent of the women and 80 percent of the girls, whereas 40 percent of the men and 70 percent of the boys walk or pass in company with someone else. Only women were observed leaving and picking up the youngest children at the school.

Talking to another person in the street was done by twice as many men/boys as women/girls during observations. It was more common for women to talk to someone in relation to another activity, such as waiting for the bus or doing errands, standing close to each other when talking. It was more common for men to call out to someone in the street and to talk to others in the street when passing by or driving.

Passing time on the street, just hanging about, is done by men and boys. Men stop by the bakery, buy something to drink or eat, have a cigarette and pass their time in the street and the sidewalk. Teenage boys stay at the bus stop, or go around on their bikes passing time, waiting for friends or for something to happen.

### **Social Infrastructure**

Lindora was planned as a housing area and the only social infrastructure that exists is the school that was built on the initiative of the community.

There are plans to build a college along the access road to Sta Ana. The plot has been allocated, but construction has not yet started.

### **Using Social Infrastructure**

A majority of the respondents to the questionnaire, 85 percent, consider that there is a lack of social infrastructure in Lindora; 37 percent think that the service that they need is within an acceptable distance.

The highest priority was for a local police station and a health clinic, followed by a college and a day care centre (see Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 Social infrastructure lacking in Lindora according to respondents

| Social infrastructure | Lack of service<br>nr responses | Lack of<br>service % |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| Police Station        | 262                             | 87%                  |
| Health Clinic "EBAIS" | 254                             | 85%                  |
| College               | 243                             | 81%                  |
| Day care centre       | 182                             | 61%                  |
| School                | 10                              | 3%                   |

### **Technical Infrastructure**

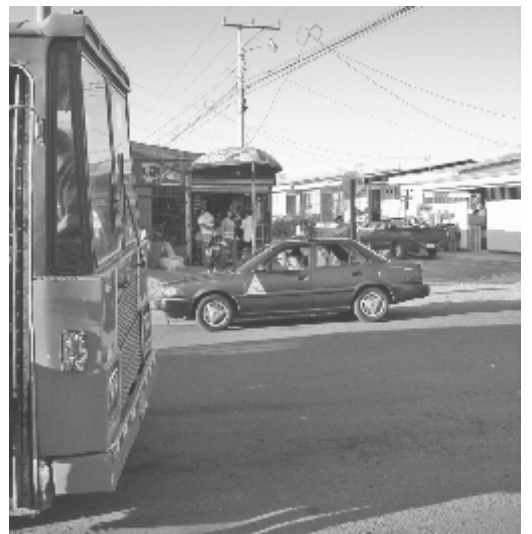
The technical infrastructure – electricity, water and drainage – was constructed during the self-help construction phase at the same time as the houses. All houses have water and electricity, and a treatment plant for the sewerage was built.



*The school.*



*The bus stop.*



*Traffic passing at the centre.*

### **Using the Technical Infrastructure**

The treatment plant is not always in function since there have been problems with break-ins. The lower parts of Lindora have experienced problems with sewerage during winter (*see quote Don Fernando*). The pressure on the infrastructure is increasing as the population grows because households let rooms to family members and/or tenants.

### **Commercial Service**

There are two plots planned as commercial zones, one along the main road at the centre of the area and one to the west. On the central plot the urban plan permits a building to be constructed on the south side of the square, leaving the north part to be used for a park.

There are at least fifteen different types of small shops and manufacturers in Lindora: a grocery store, a small restaurant, an electrician, a garage, a potter, a carpenter, a small bakery, a hairdresser and a number of beauty shops and small foodstores.

### **Using Commercial Services**

Shopping and running errands, such as buying food and clothes, is done in nearby Sta Ana or San José. A small supermarket is requested by 55 percent of the respondents.

It was observed that an equal number of men and women shopped at the bakery and the local greengrocer in the small centre of Lindora. Of the children who were sent to do errands 56 percent were boys.

### **Workplace**

There is no real place of employment Lindora, but there are many residents who use their homes for income-generation. According to the questionnaire, 65 percent of respondents would like a locale that could be used for income-generating activities.

## **The Houses**

The houses are detached houses of 40 square meters, (*see Fig 4.3*) all the same type, planned for one living room, two bedrooms, a bath and kitchen/washing facilities. The plot size is an average of 120 square meters and the houses were constructed along the street, with windows facing the street and the backyard. The organized self-help construction phase included the technical infrastructure of water and sanitation and the basic housing unit without interior walls, ceilings and fittings. The families have, as far as their economic situation has allowed, gradually finished and/or extended the basic housing unit, but there are still houses where no improvements have been made. Those who had the means to make improvements are satisfied with their homes, and those who involved in self-help construction from the beginning say their houses are priceless because they cost them so much (*see quotes Don Manuel and Doña Daniela*).

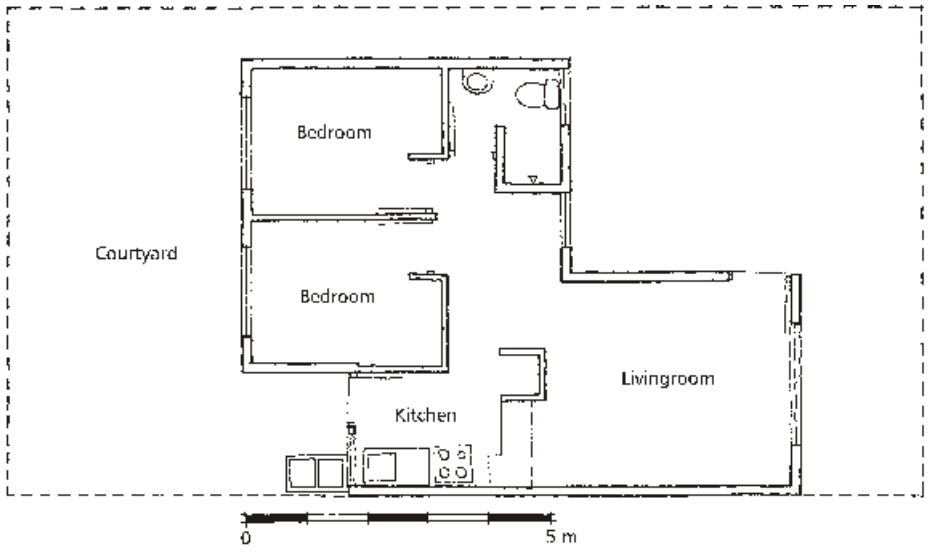


Fig. 4.3 Plan of a house.



A house in Lindora.



A house in Lindora.

## User Influence

Respondents consider that women have greater possibility to influence changes and improvements in the housing area. More than half the respondents, 61 percent say they would use the public space more if they could influence its use and design (see Table 4.3).

Table 4.3 Respondents opinions on user influence

|   | Completely agree | Partially agree | Do not agree |
|---|------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| I have the possibility to influence how the public space* is used                   | 29%              | 27%             | 43%          |
| I would use the public space more if I could influence the use of it                | 61%              | 17%             | 19%          |
| Men have more possibilities to influence changes and improvements in public space   | 25%              | 42%             | 32%          |
| Women have more possibilities to influence changes and improvements in public space | 47%              | 45%             | 8%           |

\* Public space is in this context *área comunales*.

## The People of Lindora

The majority of the people who moved to Lindora in 1998 came from other housing areas in the vicinity, where many lived in illegal and crowded conditions, often as lodgers. More than half the households who now live in the area have family ties with other households in Lindora.

## Demography

The total population among the 300 households that took part in the questionnaire was 1392 divided into the following groups (see Table 4.4).

Table 4.4 Population according to questionnaire

|                                       | Female | Male |
|---------------------------------------|--------|------|
| <i>Children</i>                       |        |      |
| Children aged 0–12                    | 142    | 205  |
| Children 12–17                        | 91     | 90   |
| Grandchildren living in the household | 29     | 27   |
| <i>Adults</i>                         |        |      |
| Parents                               | 300    | 213  |
| Adult children > 18                   | 81     | 106  |
| Relatives                             | 38     | 30   |
| Nonrelatives/ tenants                 | 24     | 16   |
| Total                                 | 705    | 687  |

There are 584 children under the age of 18 and 808 adults. The population consists of 705 females and 687 males. There are more young boys than girls, and more adult sons than daughters, who live with their parents. In the other groups there are more females than males. Concerning heads of households, there are 87 households,

or 29 percent, headed by women. Out of the 300 respondents, 62 have no children under eighteen years of age in their household.

**Household Size**

The average number of persons per housing unit is 4.6 persons. The number of people per unit ranges from two to 16 (see Fig. 4.4) although this does not mean that they live in the same household, since families have constructed extensions for relatives and tenants.

**Age**

The age of the respondents range from 19 to 27 years of age (see Fig. 4.5). There is a concentration of respondents aged 35 to 45 years.

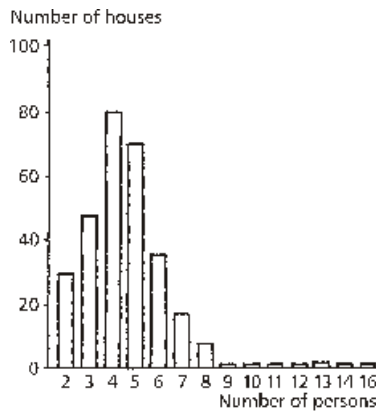


Fig. 4.4 Number of persons per household.

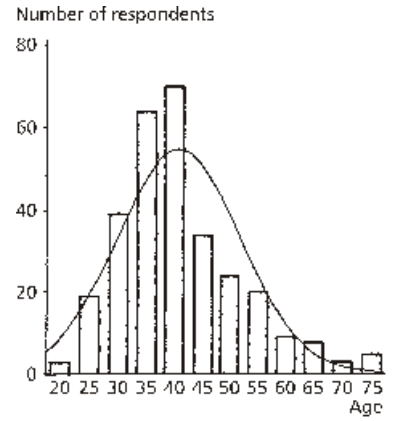


Fig. 4.5 Age of the respondents, compared to a normal curve.

**Civil Status**

About half the respondents are married, and almost 75 percent are married or share their household with a partner (see Table 4.5).

Table 4.5 Civil status of the respondents

|           | Frequency | %     | Cumulative % |
|-----------|-----------|-------|--------------|
| Married   | 170       | 56.7  | 56.7         |
| Partner   | 47        | 15.7  | 72.3         |
| Single    | 54        | 18.0  | 90.3         |
| Divorced  | 22        | 7.3   | 97.7         |
| No answer | 7         | 2.3   | 100.0        |
| Total     | 300       | 100.0 |              |

**Education**

Primary school has been attended to by 59 percent of the respondents, another 27 percent has continued to study at secondary school (see Table 4.6).

Table 4.6 Level of education of respondents

|                  | Frequency | %     | Cumulative % |
|------------------|-----------|-------|--------------|
| No education     | 13        | 4.3   | 4.3          |
| Primary school   | 177       | 59.0  | 63.5         |
| Secondary school | 80        | 26.7  | 90.3         |
| College          | 29        | 9.7   | 100.0        |
| No answer        | 1         | 0.3   |              |
| Total            | 300       | 100.0 |              |

**Relatives**

More than half the respondents, 56 percent, are related to other people in Lindora.

The longer people have lived in the area, the more likely they are to be related to other residents (see Table 4.7).

Table 4.7 Households that are related compared to how long they lived in Lindora

| Related | Time of living in Lindora<br>Since its construction |           |    | Total |
|---------|---|-----------|----|-------|
|         | 4-6 years   | 1-4 years |    |       |
| Yes     | 85  | 69        | 15 | 169   |
| No      | 62  | 51        | 15 | 128   |
| Total   | 147   | 120       | 30 | 297   |

**Occupation**

The majority of the women, 168 persons or 56 percent, state “housewife” as their main occupation. There is a variety of different occupations, of which the most important one is paid domestic services, 11 percent, the second most important is to work with sales, 6 percent, of the respondents (see Fig. 4.6).

When compared to income, the figures show that some of those who state housewife as their main occupation also have an income from a paid job. Those who have an education/official title do not always have an income (see Table 4.8).

Table 4.8 Occupation in relation to income

| Work                  | Income |     |           | Total |
|-----------------------|--------|-----|-----------|-------|
|                       | yes    | no  | no answer |       |
| Housewife             | 11     | 156 | 1         | 168   |
| Stylist               | 8      | 2   | 0         | 10    |
| Paid domestic service | 32     | 2   | 0         | 34    |
| Childcare/school      | 11     | 0   | 0         | 11    |
| Officework            | 11     | 0   | 0         | 11    |
| Unemployed            | 1      | 1   | 0         | 2     |
| Factory               | 9      | 0   | 0         | 9     |
| Trade                 | 6      | 1   | 0         | 7     |
| Miscellaneous         | 10     | 1   | 0         | 11    |
| Saleswoman            | 17     | 2   | 0         | 19    |
| Hotel                 | 9      | 0   | 0         | 9     |
| Hospital /care        | 1      | 0   | 0         | 1     |
| Cook/ food            | 6      | 0   | 0         | 6     |
| Sewing in the home    | 2      | 0   | 0         | 2     |
| Total                 | 134    | 165 | 1         | 300   |



When compared to income, the figures show that seven percent of those who state housewife as their main occupation also have an income from a paid job. Among the women 45 percent state that they have some sort of income generating activity.

The respondents' husbands and partners work in construction, transport, security and different types of technical work (see Fig. 4.7). Construction work is the most important occupation where 22 percent are occupied, followed by 17 percent who work with transport. Security, trade and technical work each occupies 12 percent and 3 percent are unemployed.

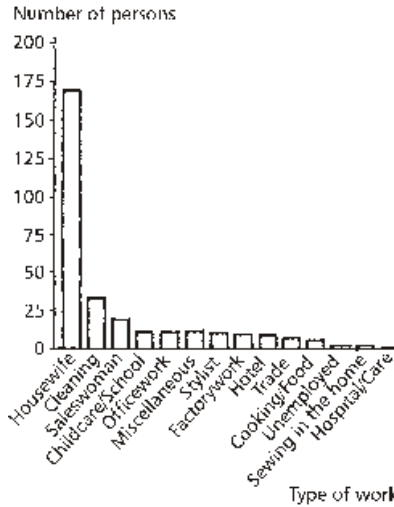


Fig. 4.6 Occupation of women.

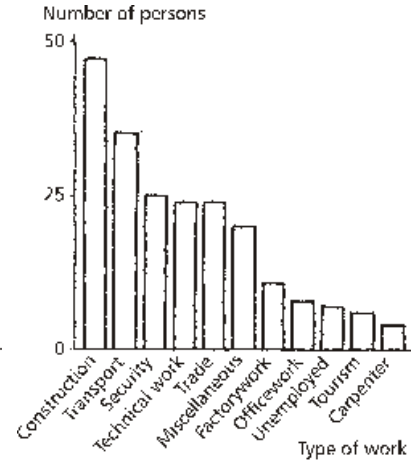


Fig. 4.7 Occupation of men.

**Income**

The income of the households varies a lot; from 20 to 500,000 colones per month and family. The minimum salary in 2003 was 85,385 colones (Estado de la nación 2004). In Lindora 34 percent of the respondents state they have a family income that is 90,000 colones and less; 80 percent say they have a family income which is less than 160,000 colones per month, or the equivalent of two minimum salaries. The median is 100,000 colones (see Table 4.9). The question of income was not answered by 34 persons, or 11 percent, which is the highest figure in the study. Some respondents stated that income is a personal issue; others said they did not know their monthly income.

Table 4.9 Income per household

| Monthly Family income, Colones | Frequency | %     | Cumulative % |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-------|--------------|
| 21– 30 000                     | 8         | 2.6   | 3.0          |
| 31– 40 000                     | 15        | 5.0   | 8.6          |
| 41– 50 000                     | 4         | 1.3   | 10.2         |
| 51– 60 000                     | 43        | 14.3  | 14.3         |
| 61– 70 000                     | 20        | 6.7   | 21.0         |
| 71– 80 000                     | 15        | 5.0   | 26.0         |
| 81– 90 000                     | 25        | 8.3   | 34.3         |
| 91–100 000                     | 33        | 11.0  | 45.3         |
| 101–120 000                    | 31        | 10.3  | 55.7         |
| 121–140 000                    | 18        | 6.0   | 61.7         |
| 141–160 000                    | 29        | 9.7   | 71.3         |
| 161–180 000                    | 13        | 4.3   | 75.7         |
| No answer                      | 32        | 10.7  | 86.3         |
| 181–200 000                    | 24        | 8.0   | 94.3         |
| 201–220 000                    | 1         | 0.3   | 94.7         |
| 241–260 000                    | 4         | 1.3   | 96.0         |
| 281–300 000                    | 6         | 2.0   | 98.0         |
| 301–320 000                    | 1         | 0.3   | 98.3         |
| 341–360 000                    | 3         | 1.0   | 99.3         |
| 381–400 000                    | 1         | 0.3   | 99.7         |
| > 400 000                      | 1         | 0.3   | 100.0        |
| Total                          | 300       | 100.0 |              |

## Everyday Life Activities

### Reproductive Activities

As primary caretakers of family members with the main responsibility for domestic work, reproduction takes a great part of women's time. Women bear the main responsibility for reproductive work related to domestic work and caring for other family members. The amount of time spent on these tasks by women varies according to household composition and time spent on productive activities.

#### **Domestic Work**

Of the women responding to the questionnaire, 58 percent spend more than 60 hours per week doing domestic work, 14 percent spend 20 to 40 hours per week on domestic work, and another 14 percent spend 5 to 20 hours (*see Fig. 4.8*). Women's domestic work is largely related to who they care for in their households: their husbands, parents and/or children and grandchildren. Domestic work is time consuming since most work is done by hand, and is provided at different times to different members of the household (*see quotes Doña Miriam, Doña Emilia, Doña Maria*).

#### **Caring for Other Household Members**

Caring for other household members is another important task for women. Of the women responding to the questionnaire, 67 percent spend more than five hours per week taking care of children, 40 percent spend more than 60 hours per week on childcare (*see Fig. 4.9*).

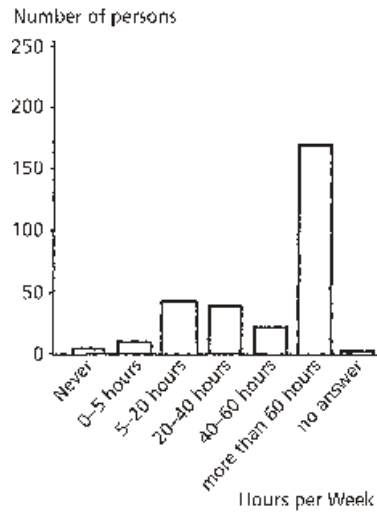


Fig. 4.8 Hours per week spent on domestic work by women.

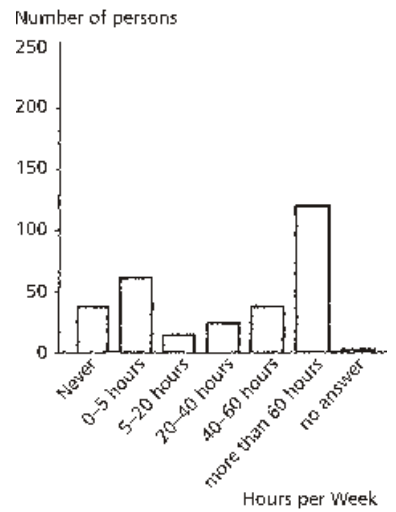


Fig. 4.9 Hours per week spent on childcare by women.

Of the respondents in the area 27 percent state that they have someone who takes care of their children when they work. The most common is that a family member looks after the children (see Table 4.10).

Table 4.10 Arrangements for childcare

| Childcare arranged with: | Frequency | %    |
|--------------------------|-----------|------|
| Familymembers            | 42        | 14.0 |
| Other relatives          | 4         | 1.3  |
| Neighbours               | 11        | 3.7  |
| Caretaker                | 7         | 2.3  |
| Other                    | 17        | 5.7  |
| Total                    | 81        | 27.0 |

Caring for older relatives, such as older sisters, brothers and parents is also a responsibility for many women (see quote Doña Nina).

**Community Managing Work**

When it comes to community managing work, only five percent work more than five hours per week, 25 percent state that they never take part in any community activities and 68 percent participate less than five hours per week (see Fig. 4.10).

**Spare Time Activities**

Of the respondents 46 percent have less than five hours per week for their own leisure and 40 percent state they have between five and 20 hours per week spare-time (see Fig. 4.11). The observations showed that leisure activities that take place outdoors are mainly children playing and people stopping to talk to each other.

**Travel**

Bus is the most frequent mode of transportation, and it is used by 94 percent of the respondents. It is used for travelling to work, for run-

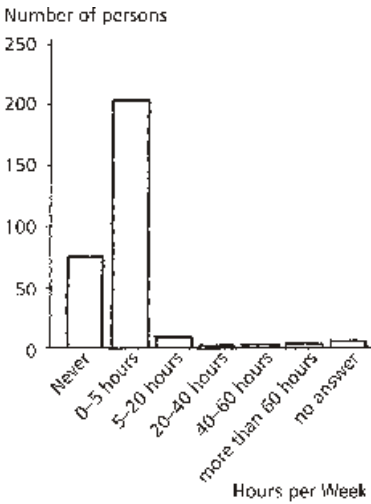


Fig. 4.10 Hours per week spent on community managing work.

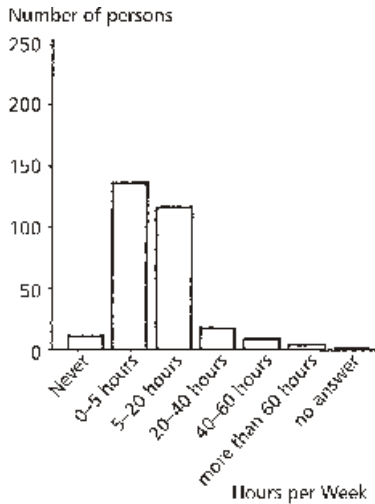


Fig. 4.11 Hours per week spent on spare-time activities.

ning errands, for spare-time activities and for older children going to school. It was observed that twice as many women as men travel by bus, but an almost equal number of boys and girls.

Of the respondents, 38 percent state that the family owns a car. The car is used for errands, spare time activities and for men to travel to work (see Table 4.11). Taxis are used to travel to health clinics and for emergencies.

Table 4.11 Modes of transportation in relation to activities

| Use                             | Mode of transportation |     |      |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|-----|------|
|                                 | Car                    | Bus | Taxi |
| The man/husband travels to work | 28%                    | 20% | 1.3% |
| The woman/wife travels to work  | 7%                     | 28% | 2%   |
| For errands                     | 31%                    | 83% | 34%  |
| For sparetime activities        | 23%                    | 43% | 8%   |
| Other type of travel            | 5%                     | 24% | 25%  |

Concerning travel, almost 30 percent state that they travel to work every day, eight percent travel to work some times per week. Traveling to do errands is done now and then by 41 percent of the respondents, a few times per week by 32 percent and a few times per month by 21 percent.

## Productive Activities

Both women and men work with productive activities (see Fig. 4.6 and Fig. 4.7). For those who work in Lindora, both women and men use their houses for various kinds of production. Both women and men use part of, or extensions of, their houses for small shops selling, mainly various types of food. Housing is also income generating through letting out rooms or parts of the house to tenants.

Whereas the houses are used by both women and men, it was observed that street vending was done only by men and boys.

Among the respondents, 45 percent state that they have some sort of income generating activity.

Table 4.12 Location of place of work

| Location of workplace   | Frequency | %     |
|-------------------------|-----------|-------|
| Nearby Lindora, < 20 km | 71        | 23.7  |
| In the home             | 31        | 10.3  |
| Far from Lindora >20 km | 26        | 8.7   |
| In Lindora              | 7         | 2.3   |
| Total                   | 135       | 45.0  |
| No work                 | 165       | 55.0  |
| Total                   | 300       | 100.0 |

When it comes to where the respondents carry out their income-generating activities, 24 percent work in the vicinity of the neighbourhood, less than twenty kilometres outside Lindora. Of the 300 respondents, only ten percent work in their own homes and nine percent work far from the housing area, more than two kilometres away. A little more than two percent mention the housing area as their workplace (see Table 4.12).

Of the respondents, 45 percent work five hours or more per week with some sort of income generating activity. Out of these, 24 percent, work 40 to 60 hours per week, nine percent work more than 60 hours per week, five percent work 29 to 40 hours and another five percent work five to 20 hours per week (see Fig. 4.12).

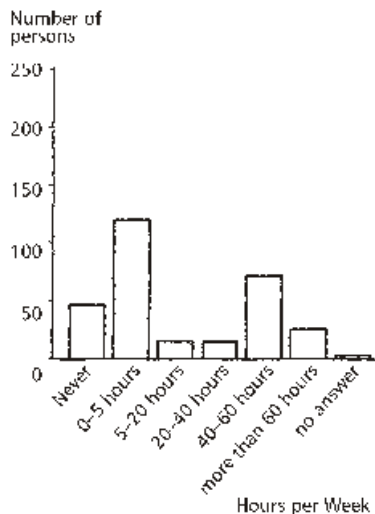


Fig. 4.12 Hours per week spent on income generating activities.

**Paid Services**

Paid domestic services is one way for women to earn an income. The work includes domestic services carried out in other people’s homes such as cleaning, but also work that can be carried out in their own homes, such as ironing or sewing. It is common that this type of work is irregular (see quote Doña Emilia and Doña Carmen). Another type of services carried out in the home is childcare (see quote Doña Cristina) and beauty treatments (see quote Doña Emilia, Doña Maria).

Men who work with services work with repairing cars (*see quote Don Esteban*), construction (*Don J Carlos*), transport (*Don Juan*) security guard (*Don Julio*).

### **Trade**

Using the house to produce goods to sell is done in different ways. Women produce different types of food, like bread and salads that they sell door-to-door to people they know in the community (*see quote Doña Emilia*). Men sell goods such as windows, used tyres, pottery (*see quote Don Manuel*).

Street vendors come to Lindora to sell various merchandise such as vegetables, fruit, eggs, shoes and clothes. They arrive on bike, on foot or in pick-ups and then walk around on foot and call out to sell their products.

### **Unemployment**

There is unemployment in the area both among women and men (*see quote Doña Carmen*). Many are concerned about the youth (*see quote Don Fernando*).

## **Security and Safety**

### **Crime**

There have been a number of break-ins in the houses in Lindora and there has been an attempt to form a community police [policía comunitaria] to reduce the number of break-ins and make people feel safer. There were, however, not enough people who were willing to participate in the activity to form a group (*see quote Doña Julia*). The wave of break-ins is seen as a general problem in society (*see quote Doña Olga*) but also that the victims are those who do not have special security protection, such as burglar bars, or who leave the house unattended (*see quote Don Juan*).

The community has experienced problems with drugs and alcohol. The drugs are said to come “from outside” but there are people within the community selling and distributing drugs and alcohol (*see quote Don Fernando*). Problems that were reported on the questionnaire were problems with drugs, alcohol and prostitution. Drug problems were mentioned by 55 respondents, alcohol by six, and prostitution by five. Prostitution is mentioned as a consequence of drug abuse. Domestic violence is also named as a problem (*see quotes Doña Maria, Doña Gloria*).

### **Safety**

A majority of the respondents, 72 percent, feel safe in their neighbourhood during daytime. The feeling of safety decreases as the day turns into night, and at night 57 percent feel safe and 42 percent feel unsafe (*see Table 4.13*).

Table 4.13 Safety in relation to time of day/night

|                  | Yes | No  | No answer |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----------|
| During daytime   | 72% | 28% | 0.7%      |
| During evening   | 67% | 31% | 1.3%      |
| During the night | 57% | 42% | 0.3%      |

The reason for not feeling safe is related both to personal security such as fear of robbery, that was mentioned by 32 percent of the respondents, and to physical security such as fear of break-ins that was mentioned by 37 percent of the respondents. Traffic was considered dangerous by 23 percent and 15 percent considered the street lighting to be bad. Of the respondents, 16 percent saw some type of other security problem, mostly related to sale and abuse of alcohol and drugs.

Some places in the neighbourhood were seen as more unsafe than others. Concerning the question if the respondents felt unsafe in any particular place 37 percent or 111 persons answered that they did; 22 percent felt unsafe at the bus stop, 20 percent felt unsafe in the street, 19 percent felt unsafe in the parks, 18 percent felt unsafe in the street leading up to the main road, 17 percent felt unsafe at the playground. Other places than those specified in the questionnaire were also named by 19 percent; most frequently mentioned were the areas by the school and the old swimming pool.

When it comes to when respondents feel unsafe the situation is quite complex. The highest percentage of respondents feel unsafe only at night or lump together day, afternoon/evening and night. There are also other respondents who feel unsafe only during daytime, when houses are left empty while people are away working, or only during afternoon/evening (see Table 4.14).

Table 4.14 Places and times of day/night where respondents feel unsafe

| Places     | 1 | 2  | 3  | 4 | 5  | 6 | 7  |
|------------|---|----|----|---|----|---|----|
| Parks      | 6 | 3  | 19 | 1 | 12 | — | 15 |
| Playground | 2 | 4  | 12 | 1 | 6  | — | 13 |
| Street     | 8 | 1  | 22 | 2 | 4  | 2 | 21 |
| Bus stop   | 2 | 21 | 18 | 2 | 1  | 1 | 20 |
| Dirt Road  | 1 | 1  | 16 | 1 | 3  | — | 13 |

1 Times Day Only

2 Afternoon/ Evening Only

3 Night Only

4 Day and Afternoon/Evening

5 Afternoon/Evening and Night

6 Day and Night

7 Day, Afternoon/Evening and Night

There are also people who think that safety is not a problem in Lindora and that you can walk around at night or day without “being attacked” or robbed (see quote Don Juan).

Surveillance is mentioned as one way to help each other look out for each others houses for those who worry about break-ins (see quote Doña Ana, Doña Isabel).

## A Quiet Neighbourhood

Lindora is perceived as calm by many of the residents even though there are problems (*see quote Doña Ana and Don Ramón*). The region is seen as expansive which can be an advantage for Lindora, even if Sta Ana is a poor region (*quote Don Julio*). Lindora's isolation and that there are only residential houses means that the neighbourhood is quiet, which is an advantage but can at the same time be perceived as insecure (*see quote Doña Olga*) and that transportation is needed to reach social and commercial services (*Doña Ana*).



## Part III

# Conclusion and Discussion

This section presents the interpretation of the study. The case study in Lindora shows a number of everyday life patterns. It is also clear that gender organization and division of labour separate women and men's activities by assigning them different roles and areas of responsibility. In this section attention is given to how this separation is expressed in the built environment and what are the different patterns of space use observed. Later a tool for analysis is proposed, a conceptual framework the help architects and planners work with space, activities and gender.

Chapter 5 analyses the findings from the case study from an everyday life perspective, the social context, what are the activities and in which physical surroundings activities take place. The use of space, the physical surroundings, are explained through two patterns of space use, one that reflects the existing gender organization and one where women actively cross borders of private and public spheres. The proposals of space made by the inhabitants of Lindora are interpreted as needs based on practical gender needs.

In Chapter 6 practical gender needs are related to strategic gender needs, understanding the use of space as empowerment. An outline of a tool for analysis of space, activities and gender is proposed. The tool for analysis is a map showing relative power position of women's and men's activities in a specific place. The social status, and the capital, determines which activities each individual can carry out. The map is constructed to help analyze what activities are carried out and by whom. Once the map of activities is established, a decision can be made of which activities could be supported by physical structures, in order to support an equitable use of space.



# Everyday Life in Lindora

## Social Context, Activities and Physical Surroundings

Everyday life has many forms. People with different backgrounds and experiences – housewives, women and men with salaries or running enterprises, unemployed, children, the elderly – live all or parts of the everyday lives in the housing area. Individuals might lead different everyday lives, but there is at the same time a social context with common experiences, a division of labour and gender organization that helps create and recreate the activities of everyday life. These are conducted in a specific context of time and space, with differences between men and women in the use of time for different activities, and where, in what space, these activities are done.

## Social Context

The residents of Lindora have relatively low incomes; 80% of the responses to the questionnaire report an income under two minimum salaries. The residents have typical low paying jobs: the men work with construction, transportation, as watchmen or mechanics, while the women work with paid domestic services, trade and various services around the house. Women have the main responsibility for reproductive work, regardless of whether they are also engaged in productive work. Both men and women do productive work. About a third of the households in the area are headed by single women.

The case study shows that women's reproductive responsibilities extended from the house to the neighbourhood level, since they are the ones who have been primarily active and responsible for projects and programmes carried out in the community. In the common experience of the community, from the self-help construction process, to the programme to support construction of the school, to the management of the neighbourhood; women have been more active.

A larger number of women than men are in the neighbourhood during the day, even if men both live and work in the area. Half of the women are housewives and have domestic work as their main task, which means they spend most of their time in their homes. Men who work in Lindora performs their productive activities in space adjacent to the home, a pottery or food store, but they are not in the private space of the house when they work. The houses are used for most of the everyday activities in Lindora. The public spaces – streets, green zones and park – are mainly used as passage ways for necessary activities such as getting to work or school and to buy to the shop to buy bread and vegetables.

## Shared Experiences of the Community

The community of Lindora is young; people have only lived here since 1998 and have not had much time to become a community. On the other hand over half the households are related. The field study identified three areas where the community could be said to have shared experience: that the area was built with organized self-help, the support the community received, and the participatory process.

### ***The Self-help Construction Phase***

Lindora was built with organized self-help construction and each household was required to participate with at least thirty hours of labour per week. Some households had problems fulfilling the workload and had to leave the project (*see quote Doña Julia*). Other households that joined the housing project at a later phase could pay a fee when entering the construction project. Most of the construction work was done by women. Those women who were housewives participated with their labour during weekdays, while their husbands/partners worked mainly during the weekends because they had wage labour during the week (*see quote Doña Julia*). The area took more than three years to build and the process was perceived as very difficult (*see quote Don Manuel, Doña Isabel, Doña Julia*). For those woman-headed households that did not have the support of other family members or friends, participating in the construction process was very difficult (*see quote Doña Isabel*). The high difference in participation during the construction phase by women and men is explained in different ways, some refer to the division of labour within the household and others to the differences in willingness to cooperate (*see quote Doña Carmen*).

Most of the work was related to construction, but during the construction phase a nursery was organized for the children accompanying their mothers. There was also an activity called the green patrol [patrulla verde] where children planted trees and flowers for their future home. A canteen was constructed to provide food during the days. Cooking and taking care of children was assigned to elderly women or women who did not have the physical strength for construction.

For those who participated in the self-help construction phase the effect of knowing others in the community is seen as very positive. The situation of everyone knowing each other is, however, slowly changing as some people have moved or have let their houses to tenants (*see quote Doña Maria Carmen*).

### ***Support to the Community***

The community was supported by FUPROVI over the years, through different programmes and projects, such as a group working with maintenance of the parks, a programme for garbage recycling and a local safety-programme called Policia Comunitaria. The most durable and prosperous project is a group of people who work with the elderly in the community called Adulto Mayor that was started because of the difficulties facing many of the elderly (*see quote Doña Gloria, Don Carlos*).

There have also been activities carried out within the community, such as finishing the construction of the streets and asphaltting the surfaces to avoid the dust. The members of the community belong to different congregations that participate in activities to fight drug-addiction, support poor families and organize prayer meetings.

The support provided to the community has been important in that it helps motivate people to get involved in activities that concern them personally and it improves the neighbourhood and the community (see quote *Doña Maria Carmen*). More support is wanted, especially to start economic activities, to fight drugs and domestic violence (see quote *Doña Maria, Don Fernando*).

The support in the form of projects and programmes is well known to the residents and it is recognized that the community has received support from outside, even though not everyone has participated and not all projects have survived.

### **Participation and Management**

Participation has been an important feature of community life since the start of the self-help construction phase, but at the moment the willingness to participate in activities is low.

Participants in previous projects say how hard it is to get people involved in activities, and that it is usually the same small group who do most of the work. People need to be stimulated to participate (see quote *Doña Miriam*) and it takes a lot of work to get people to agree (see quote *Don Manuel*). It is difficult to motivate people to participate with their labour to improve the neighbourhood when sometimes all their work is wasted, as in the case with the playground that was vandalized (see *playground*).

Most say that women participated and still participate most in activities, from construction until now, with everything from watering trees to collecting money for needy children. Different reasons are given for why women are most active. Some people think it is natural since women spend so much more time in area, and that women have a greater capacity to give and share (see quote *Don Juan, Doña Nina, Doña Gloria*). Others think the situation arose because women were so active in the construction process from the beginning, and they have just continued working (see quote *Doña Julia*).

Not everyone participates since the possibility to participate in any activity depends on the personal situation of each member of the community. Those who work all day with either productive or reproductive activities do not have time to participate (see quote *Doña Isabel and Don Juan*). On the other hand there are also people who have the time but do not know how to contribute. To engage more people in activities a new community organization, more information and communication is suggested (see quote *Don Manuel, Don Juan*).

There is a general view that the community members themselves must contribute their work if there are going to be changes and improvements.

## Household Structures and the Ideal Family

Although there are many kinds of households in Lindora, it is hard to get away from the dominant view of an ideal family: a woman who is a housewife and a man who is the breadwinner. Women identify themselves as housewives, even if they work and earn money in addition to doing their domestic tasks. Men see themselves as the breadwinner even if they do not always have any income.

Some of the women who live with a partner agree completely with the family structure where the woman is a housewife and the man is the breadwinner. They think it important that there is a woman in the house, and they are there to take care of the family. They want to be available at home to help (*see quote Doña Emilia*).

There are other women who see a problem with this ideal structure: partly because women are capable of doing more than cooking and taking care of the children; partly because the economic difficulties of single women; and partly because of the problems they have in caring for their children, doing their domestic tasks and working in paid employment at the same time (*see quote Doña Gloria, Doña Maria*). Some of the women who were critical had themselves experienced problems, suffered domestic violence in a previous partnership, are single with children and cannot manage to earn enough, have experience of an alcoholic partner and must both support their child and have responsibility for the household.

The men who participated in the study were all married or living with partners. There are no households headed by single men in Lindora. Men never described themselves as anything else than a breadwinner. Some men mentioned the difficulties for single women who had to support their own household.

## Activities – Division of Labour

There is a clear division between productive and reproductive work in Lindora, and women have the main responsibilities for reproductive activities. Reproductive work is linked to domestic activities in ones own home, such as caring for children and other members of the household and all the normal household tasks. Women also have the main responsibility for community managing work, which in Lindora means the projects and programmes implemented for the benefit of the community, such as building a school for the children, the project for the elderly, activities with churches and maintenance of parks and green areas.

How much time women spent on reproductive work depends on the structure of the household, how many people who must be cared for and the proportion of productive activities done by the woman. Women spend a lot of time on domestic work and their responsibility for other family members. How much they work with community managing depends on how much time they have left, but the general view is that women make the time.

Half of the women in the questionnaire reported that they also were engaged in some income generating activity. One third of the

households are headed by single women who are responsible for both reproductive and productive work.

The men interviewed saw productive work as their main task, whether or not they did any. The responsibility for, financially, supporting the family is mainly seen as the man's responsibility, by both women and men. Many men work long hours outside the neighbourhood, every day in the week, and those with small economic resources feel this is a very heavy responsibility (*see quote Don Juan, Don Esteban*).

Even if both women and men in a household work with income generating activities, it does not necessarily mean that the incomes are evenly distributed within households, or that women and men decide together how to use the resources (*see quote Doña Gloria, Doña Maria*).

## Work and Care

It can be difficult to combine the responsibilities for care with paid work. Since women have the main responsibility for other members of the family, many think it is their duty to stay in the home and be available to help whenever needed (*see quote Doña Emilia*). It is common that women try to do their income generating activities between other tasks, and those with children try to work when the children are in school (*see quote Doña Emilia, Doña Miriam*). Single mothers who work and do not have a relative to look after their children, and cannot afford to pay for childcare, choose between leaving children at home alone or taking them along to their work place (*see quote Doña Maria*). Those who work full time and have arranged childcare are away for most of the day and do not meet their children often (*see quote Doña Olga*). Caring for older members of the family can also be a problem, if they cannot stay home alone (*see quote Doña Nina*).

## Physical Surroundings – Use of Space

The case study in Lindora shows that there are two patterns of space use: one that reflects the existing gender organization, and one where women actively cross the border between private and public.

The division between private and public space, can be understood to reflect and reinforce the existing gender organization where women have a lower social status; where private space is related to women/reproduction and public space is related to men and productive activities. The division of private and public space is found on different levels or scales: the first level is where the division of space is within the house, the second is at neighbourhood level where the private is linked to the house, while the public is linked to the street. There is also a division at city level, where private is the housing area while public includes work places, public institutions, streets and square.

## Private Space – The House

The house is used for both reproductive and productive activities depending on the individual's everyday life. Some people work outside of Lindora and use the house as a place to eat and sleep, while others use the house for just about all their everyday activities, both production and reproduction.

### ***Space Use that Reflects Gender Organization***

There is a use of space that reflects the division of labour between reproductive and productive work that separates women and men's activities into private space for reproduction and public space for production.

Men who work at home do it in space that is dedicated to production. There are several men who have income-generating activities in Lindora: a shop, selling used tyres, repairing cars, manufacturing pottery and windows for sale. All of these activities take place in a garage, an extension to the house or on the street, all separate from the private space where reproductive activities are done. The space for productive activities is in the same building as the home, but belongs to public space.

Women who mainly work with reproduction, domestic work, childcare and community managing work, perform their tasks almost entirely in the private space of the home. Domestic work for the household is done in the individual home. Community managing work such as meetings, different projects, religious gatherings, all take place mainly in homes. Activities for the elderly, such as excursions, and occasional events to raise money for the needy are either arranged outdoors or in the chapel, but the preparation including cooking food for sale, takes place at home.

### ***Extensions and Modifications to Houses***

The use of space that reflects the division of labour between women and men can be seen in the modifications to houses. Extensions related to production, men's work, are new rooms to produce goods and services. The back-yard behind the house is covered for income-generating activities, and it is also common to construct extensions towards the street. The space is protected with burglar bars and is used to production. Extensions for women's productive work are towards the street, with an entrance from the street or the garden next to the street; the space is used to sell services such as childcare or beauty treatments.

Modifications for women's reproductive work are mainly enlargement of the kitchen and laundry, since the kitchen in the original design was very small. The back garden might be partly or entirely built over and used for domestic work, cooking, laundry and is built together with other private space for reproductive activities.

### ***Crossing the Space Border***

There are uses of space that go over the division between public and private, where reproductive and productive activities take place in the same room, but this applies only to women's use of space.



Some women who perform both reproductive and productive activities in their homes use the same space for many different tasks such as sewing, baking bread to sell, receiving clients, cooking, watching over the neighbours' house and taking care of children. The women are at home, in the private space for reproduction, and at the same time performing productive, income-generating activities that are normally associated with public space.

### ***Extensions and Modifications to Houses***

The use of space that goes over the border between private and public is expressed physically in the modifications made.

Women, who work with both productive and reproductive activities in their houses, have made changes so that they have their working space in one part of the living-room to facilitate contacts with clients who visit them. One example is Doña Elena who is tied to her house due to health-problems, but because of her earlier employment in the public health sector she helps people in the community with various minor health problems. She receives clients in her house and has moved the kitchen out into the living room so that she can manage to cook for her family, receive clients in her house, offer them some small refreshment and at the same time have a good view of what happens in the street. Since she spends her days in her house she also keeps an eye on the street and watches over her neighbours' houses to avoid break-ins.

Another example is Doña Maria Carmen who works as a seamstress in her house and uses part of the living room for her workplace where she has her sewing machine and receives her customers. Her work place faces the door to the street. Clients stop on the street outside the house and call out for her through the door, and from her workplace she has a good view of people who pass by house.

Doña Gloria, who is a housewife, helps her husband keep the accounts for his company and is very active in community managing work and the programme for the elderly, has decided to move the kitchen from the back of the house to the front, facing the street. She says she knows this is very common in Europe. Having the kitchen towards the street will make it easier for her to communicate with people passing by and to see what is happening on the street.

### ***Differences in Use of Space***

The case study showed that only women work with both productive and reproductive tasks in the private space of the homes, such as in the kitchen and living room. The men who have income generating activities at home do their work in extensions that are not linked to the home's private space, even if they are in the same building.

This difference is related to the division of labour and women's responsibility for reproductive activities. The women who use private space for productive activities switch between the two kinds of work. The border between private and public space is crossed and is not relevant for the work that is done.

## Public Space – The Neighbourhood

Like the home, public space is used for both reproductive and productive activities. Men but not women perform productive activities in public space at neighbourhood level, which in Lindora means the streets. At this level, women's productive activities take place entirely indoors, in the private and public space of the house.

Both women and men, young and old, use public space for reproduction tasks, such as necessary everyday activities, transportation and consumption. The groups least visible in this space are teenage girls and older men.

### ***Space Use that Reflects Gender Organization***

On streets and other public places the use of space reflects the division of labour into reproductive and productive work, which separates women and men's activities.

The men who used public space for productive activities came by cycle, on foot or in pick-ups and vans to sell goods. Technicians, such as electricians from the power company, also came to work on the street or with technical infrastructure in public space.

Women did not use streets or places in the neighbourhood for production, but did these tasks at home or outside Lindora. Their income-generating activities were to sell products to clients they knew, or individuals who had ordered a product or service, so the public space was used only for transport. All production and sales were done indoors.

Reproductive activities carried out in public space are mainly related to the necessary activities of everyday life, going shopping, travelling by bus to work and school, strolling along the main street on the way to do errands and on Sundays to go to a religious service.

Women using public space for reproduction carry out activities such as caring for others; women walk with a child in a pram, collect children from the bus stop, meet them at school or go to visit someone. Women and girls usually walk together with someone, often in groups. They take the bus to Sta Ana or San José to do errands. Public space is also used for social activities, especially to chat with someone they know. Girls cycle and play on the green areas, in parts and on the street, but usually play close the home, in the garden or on the veranda behind the burglar bars.

Men who use public space for reproductive work carry out activities such as accompanying children to the bus, take the bus themselves to do errands, take their children for a walk and pass the shop to buy something. Men and boys use public space more than women and girls for social activities. Boys cycle around with gangs of friends, kick a football together; teenagers sit in a group by the bus stop and call out at people who pass; men buy a drink at the shop, stand on the street, smoke and talk with each other.

### ***Crossing the Space Border***

About the same number of women and men use the public space at neighbourhood level. The difference is in their activities.

It is mainly men and boys who use public space for social activities, but women and girls also do, for example to meet and talk, but

more often in connection with another activity such as to buy bread and stopping for a little while to talk with a friend. Women need a reason, an excuse, to be in public space. They go to shop and talk to someone as they do their errand. They take a walk with the children and a pram to visit someone. When they want to talk with someone, they stand outside the house and call and then stay close to the house and talk. Women do not use the street unless they have a clear, specific task.

### ***Modifying Public Space?***

It is much more difficult for the residents to make any changes to public space at neighbourhood level, compared to their own houses. There are many suggestions from both women and men for improvements in Lindora, new activities and buildings or spaces, but the main problem is that there must be a plot for a new building, financing, organization of implementation, people willing to contribute voluntarily and not least permission from the municipality. The only building that came about through community initiative was the school, which was not part of the original design of the area.

### ***Differences in Use of Space***

Differences in the use of public space at neighbourhood level follow the division of labour into reproduction and production. More women than men are engaged in reproductive work, such as taking children to school, while only men use public space for productive work. At the same time men use public space at neighbourhood level for reproductive activities such as taking their children to the shop or kicking a ball around with their sons or younger brothers.

A clear difference between women and men is that men use public space at neighbourhood level for social activities, and men dominate the space through their patterns of movement and communication. They occupy space by driving cars, kicking footballs and cycling around the neighbourhood in groups, and by talking loudly and shouting, mainly to other men. Men's activities in public space, such as selling, officials such as bus drivers and technicians from the power company create a background for communication between men, rather than women. If women and men talk together, the conversation is usually initiated by the man, although the opposite can happen.

## **Public Space – City Level**

Public space can also be understood at city level. At city level the housing area is private space for rest and care; the city with industrial and commercial zones are public areas for productive activities.

Both women and men use the city space for everyday activities, although most women do their reproductive work in Lindora, and a large number of men are engaged in production work outside the housing area.

### ***Space Use that Reflects Gender Organization***

At city level there is also a division of space that reflects the division of labour into reproductive and productive work that separate women and men's work.

Lago de Lindora is a small housing area in a region undergoing urbanization with new housing and services. It is zoned as a housing area for low-income families, and mainly just for housing. Lindora is two km from the main road, which means that one must travel out of the neighbourhood to work, school and services.

Many of the residents do their productive activities outside the neighbourhood, and often in other zones of the city. Households with cars use it mainly for the man's travel to and from work. Women who have productive work outside of the neighbourhood more often use public transport.

Reproductive activities at city level are linked to social infrastructure, the school, health care and social services. Part of women's reproductive tasks is the different kinds of care. Since Lindora is almost exclusively a residential area, there is little social infrastructure and commercial services. Women's responsibilities include everyday consumption. Zoning according to function means that women must travel to access social infrastructure and commercial services. Many of women's trips are made by bus, either to do errands on their way to and from work, or to go out again after work.

### ***Differences in Use of Space***

Differences in the use of public space at city level are related to women and men's areas of responsibility and the division of labour.

Women are responsible for reproductive activities such as shopping and escorting family members and children to health clinics and school. The lack of services in the area, both commercial and social infrastructure costs women a lot of time since it requires using public transport. There is a difference in the travel patterns of women and men. Women take the bus to work and to do their errands, while more men use cars. Women have the main responsibility for buying everyday food and supplies, although there are some men who shop on their way home from work outside the neighbourhood.

Lindora's somewhat isolated location also affects perceptions of security in the area. Men think it is relatively safe, since one can walk on the streets when one wants, while women talk about problems with break-ins, teenage gangs and harassment at the bus stop in the evening. Lindora's location also means less activity and visibility, which give the sense of insecurity that women mention. Women have developed strategies to keep an eye on each others houses and watch the streets if any stranger passes.

## **Physical Surroundings – Proposals for Spaces**

The division of labour results in women and men performing their everyday activities in different private and public spaces. The resi-

dents say there is still a lack of space in Lindora for some activities. The proposals about what spaces are missing or what could be improved refers to different productive and reproductive activities depending on the situation of the individual. Proposals and suggestions are mainly in two groups: finishing already ongoing projects and adding new spaces for different activities.

There are ideas to finish green areas and parks by small improvements such as putting out benches, improving green areas so it is possible to use them, continue tree planting and maintaining both the green areas and parks. There is enough land for green areas, but they need care; space is not the problem but getting people to make it nice and maintain it (*see quote Doña Miriam*).

There are ideas and suggestions related to care and welfare, mainly for children since there is already a well-functioning project for the elderly, run by volunteers, mainly women. There is need for a nursery school with trained staff to take care of children who have to be left home alone, and also for some children who do not get enough food during the day. Younger school children need some supervision in the afternoons when they come from school. There are ideas about different recreation possibilities and types of leisure activities for youth to keep them occupied and away from drugs. There are also suggestions for economic activities and training that would give youth a better chance to get a job.

These ideas are expressed physically in proposals for new buildings and facilities, such as a community centre that can be used for several different activities, improved green areas, a chapel for church activities, a sports field, a nursery school, a canteen for children, a room for economic activities and training, and a place for the elderly to meet.

## Space for Reproductive Activities

### **Rooms: Community Centre, Chapel and Church**

There is still no place in Lindora where the residents can meet to hold meetings or similar gatherings. A community hall, Salon Comunal, has been discussed, but there is not enough money and there is still no permission to construct a building. A suitable plot has been discussed and there is a proposal to put it in the west, beyond the school, but his location would make it difficult for the residents to guard it against a break-in (*see quote Doña Mari Carmen*).

There are different church groups in the community who meet in private homes or in the little “chapel”. A church or chapel is needed for religious activities (*see quote Doña Nina*).

### **Children: Playground, Nursery School and Canteen**

After the playground was vandalized, there is nowhere for the children to go and play. Children in the area need space to play, and children come to Lindora from surrounding areas (*see quote Doña Julia*).

Some childcare is found in the area through women who take care of children in their homes during the day, but a nursery school is wanted, where trained staff can take care of the children (*see*

*quote Don Manuel, Doña Julia*). There are some children who do not get enough to eat. The church arranges some food distribution to children in need, but schools do not provide food. A canteen or some kind of school cafeteria is needed for these children.

### **Youth: Sports and Activities against Drugs**

The most serious problem for youth and other children is seen as drugs and lack of things to do. There is concern about the situation of youth, and proposals especially for sports to keep them busy so that they do not end up with drug problems (*see quote Doña María, Don Fernando*). In the initial plan for Lindora, a space to the north was planned to be a sports field for various recreational activities. There is no financing at the moment, but some efforts have been made to clear the grounds so that it could be used for playing football (*see quote Don Julio*).

## Space for Productive Activities

### **A Workshop**

Except for the economic activities that take place in people's houses there is no other work place in Lindora; the only public space used for economic activities is the street. There is a need for some sort of workshop that could be used by the inhabitants for their economic activities and for support to start income-generating activities (*see quote Doña Miriam, Doña María*). Youth especially need support with training and work so that they do not end up unemployed, but it is difficult to find a suitable plot since it is forbidden to construct in green areas.

## Who Proposes What?

If the use of space in everyday life is linked to practical gender needs, the proposals made by the residents are related to their socially accepted roles. In Lindora this means that women who are responsible for reproduction also suggest activities and spaces that are related to their areas of responsibility: better space for children with playgrounds, nursery school, canteen, place for teenagers with recreational zones, a meeting place for the elderly, a church and somewhere for productive activities. They want help for women who are victims of domestic violence, help for poor children, support to develop economic activities that can lead to better incomes, especially for women.

Men propose football fields and training for youth to keep them away from drug abuse, activities and spaces that are mainly related to teenage boys. There are more teenage boys than girls in the area, and the boys are more likely to get involved in drugs. Men and boys use public space more than girls and women for their leisure activities, such as kicking a ball, and for their income-generation activities such as trade. Men's proposals are a development of activities that already exist, sports and income-generation that are part of how men use public space. There are also men who suggest activities

addressed toward childcare and support for single women with financial difficulties.

Both women and men propose some kind of community hall for meetings and social activities. There is no public building or community centre for activities and many of the programmes and activities are carried out in people's homes.

Women have several different proposals for activities and spaces for activities, which might be because their gender roles are more bound to everyday life in the area, which gives them greater knowledge of the situation and the needs of different people.

## Public and Private Spaces

All the proposals are related to the socially accepted roles for women and men, but they are also linked to public and private space.

Men's proposed activities take place in public spaces, which they already use more than women. They relate to sports and income generation, building upon existing practice.

Women's activities are strongly linked to private space and to reproductive activities that are performed indoors, inside buildings. Standing on the street is not an alternative.

## Space, Activities and Gender

At city and neighbourhood levels, and at different levels in the household, there is a coding of space that derives from the division of labour and gender organization. In everyday use of space at different levels, space is shaped to reflect and reinforce a traditional gender organization with the woman as the housewife and the man as the breadwinner, but there is a use of space that crosses the same gender defined borders. The division of everyday life into private/woman and public/men is not completely static. People constantly go over the borders and use what space is available for their activities, and not all activities are gender related. A woman might cycle down the main street and shout out to someone she knows; there are men who take care of children and grandchildren, who cook for their old mother, who cook the beans while the wife works.

Despite this, there is a division of labour that link reproduction to private space and production to public space. The individuals who cross the borders between these spaces are the women, "zone zappers" in the sense that they move between the zones in a city. It is women who must support themselves, and also have to take care of others, who take the bus into San José with their child to do hair-dressing on the street, or women who take their clients into their homes into a space designated as a hair salon. The division of the city into functional zones mean women must spend a lot of time travelling to access commercial and social services, since this is their area of responsibility and since they must travel with public transport.

Some women have changed private space in their home to better suit their everyday lives with many simultaneous activities. It is not

possible to do the same with public space. Use of public space is also closely tied to what is considered appropriate behaviour for women and men.

The urban plan of Lindora included only single family houses, with no space for community activities. The physical plan rationalized away women's work in reproduction and production instead of supporting it, and can be seen to have weakened women's position in society by reducing their chances to combine their domestic responsibilities, childcare and income generating work.



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# Outline of a Tool for Analysis

## Space for Practical Gender Needs

The proposals for programmes, activities and spaces for activities can be seen as practical gender needs, needs that are related to inadequacies in living conditions that are based in the socially accepted roles that women and men hold in the community.

There is a general understanding that women were the driving power in this project for access to acceptable, legal housing. Housing is important for women, not only in Lindora but for many women in the Costa Rican society. One of the staff at the Ministry of Housing said in an interview:

*Here, there are two situations; one is that women have the emotional motivation for housing; women have the need, the experience of everyday life with the family. Men are more economic, more in terms of wanting things, if the game doesn't end to their advantage men will not get involved. This is like the concept, if there is no economic profit in the process, I'm not interested. On the contrary, women don't see it that way, but see it more like a concept of protection for the family, like a concept of integration.*

That housing is so important for women is related to the gender organization and division of labour, which makes women responsible for reproduction, and which is linked to femininity and private space. The house is important to pull together the different parts of life. The house is the location for care, of children, parents and other relatives, and also for productive work.

The neighbourhood level can be seen as an extension of women's reproductive role and community managing work.

Practical gender needs in human settlements and housing relate to how space is planned and used by women and men depending on the current roles that they have. When architects and planners are involved in re/designing human settlements, it is of importance to start with an analysis of how and by whom space is used, in order to propose improvements or changes that are aimed at satisfying the need of space for both women's and men's activities. Work with gender and space use needs a tool that includes the dimensions space, time, the relative power position of the activity and the social status of individuals.

## Creating a Tool for Analysis

The case study shows that public and private spaces are used differently by women and men. Because of the division of labour, a larger part of women's activities are related to reproduction and are carried out in private space. Men carry out more productive activities and use public space for their economic and social activities.

The private space of the houses is used by both women and men for reproductive and productive activities, even if there is a difference in the division of labour that leads to different use of space as the case study shows.

## Public Space of the Neighbourhood

The public space of the neighbourhood is used to a less extent by women than by men, even though women carry the main responsibility for community managing work and would need a place or a building where their activities could be carried out.

The use of space is related to the gender organisation of society and to power relations between women and men, of what activities that are considered "natural" for men and women and what kind of behaviour in public space that is acceptable in relation to women and men, boys and girls. Understanding how different activities are valued and positioned in relation to each other, and thereby having different positions in relation to the possibility of taking place, i.e. taking physical form, can be a starting point for analyzing gender needs related to the built environment. Taking sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's concept of field as a starting point a map of activities can be created, positioning men's and women's activities in relation to each other.

According to Bourdieu a field exists when a limited group of people compete over something they have in common. A field is a system of relations between positions held by specialized agents and institutions competing over mutual interests. Within every field there is conflict and you have to try to find its specific forms – between the newcomer who is trying to enter the field and the dominant position that tries to keep the monopoly and shut out any competition. A field is defined by determining what gains the competition concerns and what specific interests there are. In order to make the field work, there have to be people who are ready to play the game of the field, gifted with the habitus – the system of dispositions that is the result of social experiences, collective memories, ways of moving inscribed in people's bodies – and senses that presupposes knowledge of and acknowledgement of the intrinsic laws and investments of the game. The structure of a field is a condition of positions of power between actors or institutions engaged in the competition. The structure of a field can also be defined by the distribution of the specific capital, assets or resources of social and/or economic character, that govern future strategies. The structure itself is always at stake, the competition within the field relates to who will have the monopoly of the legitimate violence, the specific authority, that is characteristic for the field in study. The conflict is about preserving or

changing the way in which the specific capital is distributed within the field. The field concept is used for exploration, as a searchlight aimed at systems of relations between positions (Bourdieu, 1995; Bourdieu, 1992; Broady, 1991).

## A Map of Activities

Relating this to the activities of women and men in public space in Lindora a map can be established that positions the activities in relation to each other. The struggle concerns what activities should be given space to be carried out. Men's activities have a traditionally stronger position in public space, where men have used the street to carry out their social and economic activities. Women carry out a lot of community managing work, that also contains social and economic activities, and are struggling to acquire public space for those activities. Within the map of activities in public space, men's activities have a stronger power position, a higher consecration to the field, than women's activities, which would mean a lower consecration. The activities are also positioned in relation to the autonomous principle of the field, the own logic of the field, in this case the reproduction of everyday life activities of the community that needs to be carried out and the heteronomous principle, meaning the influence of other fields, in this case the gender organisation of society and the low-income housing market related to productive activities. Positioning a few of the activities described in the case-study, shows the power relations between different activities.

Positions to the left of the map indicate reproductive activities that are of high relevance to the every day life of the community but that are not given any physical space to be carried out in. In the middle of the map reproductive activities are positioned that are carried out within the existing public space, and to the right productive activities are positioned. Women's and men's necessary activities of strolling and shopping are positioned in the centre of the map; this activity is carried out by as many women as men, it is seen as normal behaviour and is carried out in the existing space. Men's street vending activities are positioned in the upper right part of the map; these activities are productive activities, they are carried out in the streets and are acceptable behaviour for men, the same activity is not acceptable for women's behaviour and therefore has a position further down in the map. Activities such as child care and caring for the elderly is positioned to the left of the map; these are reproductive activities that are not provided with any public space, but women's activities are positioned higher than men's since there is a higher acceptance for women to carry out such activities. Consider children playing football, which is a reproductive activity carried out within the existing space, mainly in the street, it is done by far more boys than girls which would put boy's football playing activities in a higher position.

Establishing this map of activities gives a picture of how different activities are valued in general. Even though the structure of the map positions different activities in a specific way, individual women and men still have different possibilities to take part in these activities re-

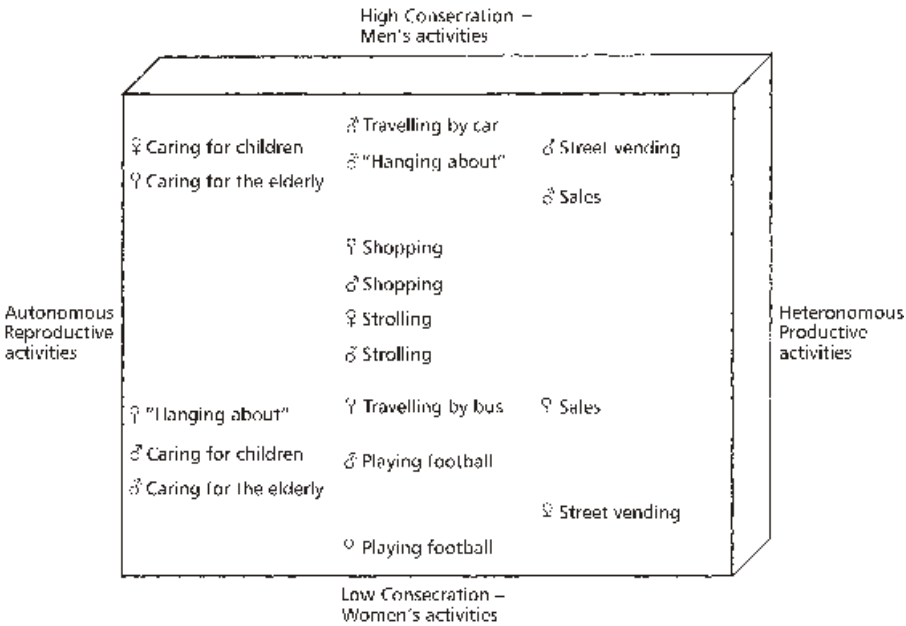


Fig.6.1 Map of activities in public space in Lindora.

lated to their individual capital and habitus. This means that individual women and men have different social positions, and thus different capacity to operate in public space. When Doña Silvia drives up in her new car to collect the clothes Doña Luísa has altered, she has a higher status in space than a poor male street seller.

### Relating Activities to Spaces and Buildings

Once the positions of different activities have been established, these activities can be related to spaces. In the case study of Lindora, different spaces for productive and reproductive activities were proposed by the inhabitants. In the same way as with the activities, a map of spaces can be established, where the positions of different spaces are related to each other, a map of spaces related to the every-day life activities. The map would in this case be defined by the relevance to the field of low-income housing, the autonomous principle of necessary activities and the heteronomous principle of the market of the building sector.

When theses maps have been established, a political decision could be made of which activities and spaces that should be supported. Connecting spaces to buildings would be the final step where in the example of Lindora, one building could hold many spaces for different activities, or several buildings could provide spaces for activities; such as building one community centre where the association of the Adulto Mayor could meet in the morning, day care for children could be organized in the afternoon, rooms could be used for economic activities. Dividing activities in different buildings could mean that one building close to the existing school could be used for day-care for young children in the morning, provide lunch for poor children at school and be a place for children's activi-

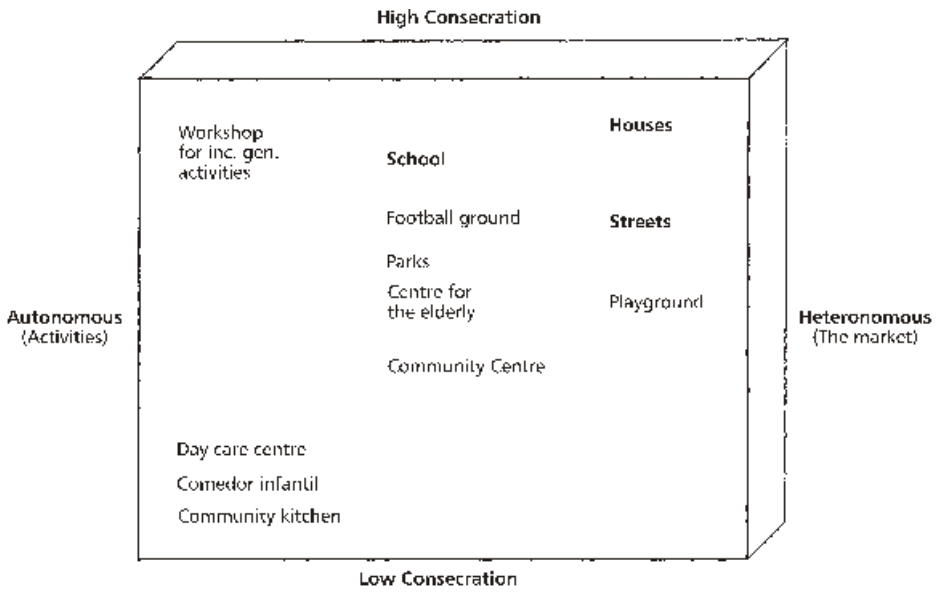


Fig. 6.2 Map of Positioning of spaces for activities.

ties in the afternoon. Another building for productive activities could be located to one of the commercial zones.

## Using the Map of Activities

Establishing a map of activities can be a starting point for working with gender needs and design of space. The analysis requires good knowledge of the activities that occur in a given space and even the activities that do not occur, all of which is collected in interviews and observations. The analysis can be done as a map of activities in a given space at a given time. If there are changes in the space, the analysis is done again to see if the changes in the space affect the activities conducted.

# Concluding Remarks

## Guidelines

It is difficult to generalize about women and men. Not all women are poor or have children; not all men are rich and do not have children; not all men have a strong social position. At the same time there are differences between women as a group and men as a group which imply different access to position, influence, economic independence, education level and access to good housing.

The case study shows that gender organization and the division of labour have an effect on women and men's use of space in Lindora, but that use of space and the activities conducted are also related to the household structure and income. Both women and men need an income; women in this case study need social infrastructure because of their responsibilities for care; communication is needed to travel to work, school, social and commercial services. Some conclusions can be drawn for physical planning to make everyday activities easier, which lead to the following guidelines.

- Work places and housing close to each other
- Well functioning public communication
- Subsidized childcare, schooling and care for the elderly
- Technical infrastructure, water, sewerage and electricity
- Healthy near environment with recreation opportunities for all ages
- Mixed forms of tenancy.

Such guidelines are about building a good city for all citizens, even the poor, and covers broad issues about welfare systems and how to design the physical environment. To implement such guidelines requires financial resources and political will at national level.

## Map of Activities

Connecting activities to spaces and finally buildings/places is suggested as one way of working with gender and the built environment.

The map of activities refers to an analysis of a specific space, a place, a square or a centre where people conduct different activities. The model is conceived as a tool for analysis and change, where the aim of the change is to reach more equitable distribution of the space used for women and men's activities.

Such an analysis cannot be done on a whole city or whole society, because the units are too complex. In a limited and defined space, however, it is possible to analyse the relationships between different activities and the spaces in which they are done.

## Empowerment in Space – Strategic Gender Needs

Women's strategic gender needs are related to needs women identify in relation to their subordinate position to men in society. Meeting strategic gender needs aims at changing the existing gender organization to achieve gender equity. In relation to human settlements, the issues that are important are the division of labour, control over finance and legal rights.

The question is then, does space matter?

Situations that concern power relations between women and men are primarily social issues, but everyday life activities are carried out in physical space, and conscious planning could support activities with low positions to achieve a more equal use of public space by women and men. The division between private and public activities in production and reproduction is one aspect of how space is used differently by women and men, but there are also codes for behaviour, for what is acceptable. Women are not often seen in public space except to conduct their necessary activities. To strengthen women's activities in public space, albeit over a long time, there must be space for women to carry out activities. To have the right to use public space for one's activities is to have power, to use public space for one's activities is to be visible, it is a part in the empowerment of women and a step towards a more equitable society.





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# Appendix



# Questionnaire

## 1 Introducción

- 1.1 Nombre de la entrevistada
- 1.2 ¿Cuántos años tiene?
- 1.3 ¿Cuál es su ocupación u oficio?
- 1.4 ¿Cuál es el último año que curso en la escuela, colegio o universidad?:  
(Sin educacion; Primaria; Secundaria; Otro)
- 1.5 Nombre del jefe/jefa del hogar
- 1.6 Estado civil: (Casada; Unión Libre; Soltera; Separada)
- 1.7 SI tiene compañero, ¿Cuál es la ocupación de su compañero?
- 1.8 ¿Cuántas personas viven en su casa? TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_

## Adultos/as

### **HIJOS/AS      No. Hombres      No. Mujeres**

- Hijos/as de 0 a 12 años que viven en casa  
 Hijos/as de 12 a 17 años que viven en casa  
 Hijos/as de más de 18 años que viven en casa  
 Nietos/as que viven en casa  
 Otros niños/as no familiares que viven en casa

### **ADULTOS/AS      No. Hombres      No. Mujeres**

- Padres  
 Otros familiares  
 Otros No Familiares (huéspedes / Inquilinos)  
 ¿Tiene familiares en Lindora?  
 1.10 Si responde SI, ¿cuántos Familiares?:  
 1.11 ¿Cuánto tiempo tiene de vivir en Lindora?  
 (Desde que se construyó; 1-4 años; 4-6 años?)

## 2 Trabajo

- 2.1 ¿Trabaja fuera de la casa o realiza alguna actividad que le genera ingresos?
- 2.2 SI tiene un empleo pagado o realiza alguna actividad que le genera ingresos, ¿Dónde se ubica? (La casa; En Lindora; Cerca (menos que 20 km de Lindora), Lejos (más que 20 km de Lindora)
- 2.3 SI usted trabaja y tiene hijos/as, ¿Quién cuida a los niños? (Familiares; Otros familiares; Vecinos; Empleada; Otros)
- 2.4 ¿Cuál es el ingreso familiar promedio mensual?
- 2.5 Distribución del tiempo semanal  
(Time options horizontal: 0-5h; 5-20h; 20-40h; 40-60h; Más de 60h)

Activities: vertical column

- ¿Cuántas horas a la semana realiza usted labores que le generan ingresos?
- ¿Cuántas horas a la semana realiza usted labores de hogar?
- ¿Cuántas horas a la semana realiza labores de cuidado de niños?
- ¿Cuántas horas a la semana dedica al trabajo comunal en Lindora?
- ¿Cuántas horas a la semana le quedan para su tiempo libre?
- ¿Qué tan a menudo usa usted su casa en labores que le generan ingresos?
- ¿Qué tan a menudo usa usted su barrio en labores que le generan ingresos?

### 3 Desplazamientos

- 3.1 ¿La familia tiene carro?
- 3.2 SI tiene carro, ¿Cuál es el uso que se le da?  
(Para que el hombre vaya al trabajo; Para que la esposa vaya al trabajo; Para compras y mandados; Para pasear; Otros)
- 3.3 ¿Viaja usted en bus?
- 3.4 SI usa el bus, ¿Para qué propósitos?  
(Para que el hombre vaya al trabajo; Para que la mujer vaya al trabajo; Para compras y mandados; Para pasear; Otros)
- 3.5 ¿Está usted satisfecha con el servicio de bus?
- 3.6 ¿Por qué? (Horario; Estado de unidades; Trato; Tarifa)
- 3.7 Desplazamientos fuera del Barrio  
Horizontal options (Todos los días; Algunas veces a la semana; Algunas veces al mes; De vez en cuando (esporádicamente))

Questions (vertical list)

- ¿Qué tan a menudo sale usted del barrio debido a trabajo?
- ¿Qué tan a menudo va usted a la ciudad para realizar compras y/o mandados?
- ¿Qué tan a menudo visita amigos y familiares fuera de Lindora?
- 3.8 ¿Utiliza el servicio de taxis piratas?
- 3.9. SI usa el servicio de taxis piratas, ¿Para qué propósitos?  
(Para que el hombre vaya al trabajo; Para que la mujer vaya al trabajo; Para compras y mandados; Para pasear; Otros)

### 4 Servicios

- 4.1 ¿Encuentra usted los servicios que necesita en Lindora?
- 4.2 ¿Están todos los servicios que usted necesita a una distancia aceptable?  
De lo contrario, ¿Cuáles les hacen falta?  
(Pulperías; Panadería; Centro de salud / EBAIS; Medicina privada; Puesto de Policía de Proximidad; Salón comunal; Parques infantiles; Cancha multiuso; Guardería; Iglesia; Escuela; Colegio; Taller (lugar de trabajo en conjunto); Librería y/o Bazar; Otros)

### 5 Seguridad comunitaria

- 5.1 ¿Se siente usted segura en el barrio? SI NO

- ¿Durante el día?
- ¿Durante la tarde?
- ¿Durante la noche?
- 5.2 ¿Hay algún lugar en el que USTED se siente particularmente insegura?
- 5.3 En caso afirmativo, ¿En cuál lugar y a qué horas?  
Horizontal options (Durante el día Durante la tarde  
Durante la noche)  
Áreas verdes / Parques  
En las áreas de juegos  
En la calle  
La parada del bus  
En la calle de Santa Ana  
Otros lugares:
- 5.4 Si usted no se siente segura, ¿Por qué?  
Miedo de que la roben  
Miedo de que se metan ladrones a su casa  
El tráfico de carros es peligroso  
Mala iluminación pública (en la calle)  
Otras:

## 6 Areas comunales

- 6.1 Parques/áreas verdes
  - 6.1.1 ¿Usa los parques / áreas verdes en Lindora?
  - 6.1.2 SI usa los parques, ¿Qué hace cuando está ahí?  
(Caminar; Conversar; Descansar; Para jugar con los niños;  
Trabajos de mantenimiento; Sembrar árboles y plantas;  
Otros:)
  - 6.1.3 SI usted no usa los parques, ¿Por qué no?  
(Las áreas son solamente para verlos; No estan cerca de su casa; No encuentra nada que hacer ahí; Hay pocos lugares para sentarse; No tiene tiempo; La atmósfera no es agradable; Los lugares no están limpios; El mantenimiento es malo; Otros:)
- 6.2 Áreas de juegos
  - 6.2.1 ¿Los niños/as usan las áreas de juego?
  - 6.2.2 SI no las usan, ¿Por qué no?  
(Faltan buenos juegos; Mal mantenimiento; Están muy lejos de la casa; Percibe que es un lugar inseguro; Porque no los puede ver mientras están ahí; No les permite que vayan solos; Otros).
  - 6.2.3 SI usa las áreas de juegos, ¿Qué hace USTED cuando los niños/as están ahí?  
(Acompaña a los niños; Las áreas de juego son un punto de encuentro para socializar; Otros:)
- 6.3 Las calles  
(Si, No)  
¿Considera que el sistema vial funciona bien para el tráfico vehicular?  
¿Existen suficientes lugares para estacionar los carros?

¿Considera que el sistema vial es más apto para los carros que para la gente?

¿Considera que el sistema vial es seguro para la gente?

Si cree que no, ¿Cuál es el problema?

(Existen muy pocos caminos peatonales; El tráfico vehicular es demasiado pesado; Las intersecciones están mal demarcadas;

Los carros van muy rápido; Otros:)

#### 6.4 Uso de áreas comunales

##### 6.4.1 ¿Qué tan a menudo usa usted las siguientes áreas comunales en Lindora?

Horizontal options: (Todos los días; Algunas veces a la semana; Algunas veces al mes; De vez en cuando (esporádicamente))

Los parques

Las áreas de juego

Otros lugares de encuentro

##### 6.4.2 Si tiene compañero, ¿Qué tan a menudo usa su compañero las siguientes áreas comunales de Lindora?

Horizontal options: (Todos los días; Algunas veces a la semana; Algunas veces al mes; De vez en cuando (esporádicamente))

Los parques

Las áreas de juego

Otros lugares de encuentro

##### 6.4.3 Si tiene niños/as, ¿Que tan a menudo usan sus niños/as las siguientes áreas comunales en Lindora?

Horizontal options: (Todos los días; Algunas veces a la semana; Algunas veces al mes; De vez en cuando (esporádicamente))

Los parques

Las áreas de juego

Otros lugares de encuentro

##### 6.4.4 ¿El uso de estas áreas comunales cambia a lo largo del año?

##### 6.4.5 De ser SI, ¿Cuándo se usan más?

Más en verano; Más en invierno; En otros momentos:

##### 6.4.6 ¿El uso de estas áreas cambia a lo largo de la semana?

##### 6.4.7 De ser SI, ¿Cuándo se usan más?

Días entre semana; Fin de semana

## 7 La posibilidad de que el usuario influya en el barrio

Horizontal options: (ESTA DE ACUERDO:

Completamente Parcialmente NO)

Tengo la posibilidad de influir en cómo se usan las áreas comunales.

Tengo la posibilidad de lograr los cambios que considero importantes.

Usaría más las áreas comunales si pudiera influir en el diseño de estas áreas.

Usaría más las áreas comunales si pudiera influir en su uso.

El hombre tiene más posibilidades de influir en los cambios y mejoras de las áreas comunales.

La mujer tiene más posibilidades de influir en los cambios y mejoras de las áreas comunales.

Si usted tiene más comentarios y observaciones, por favor menciónelos.

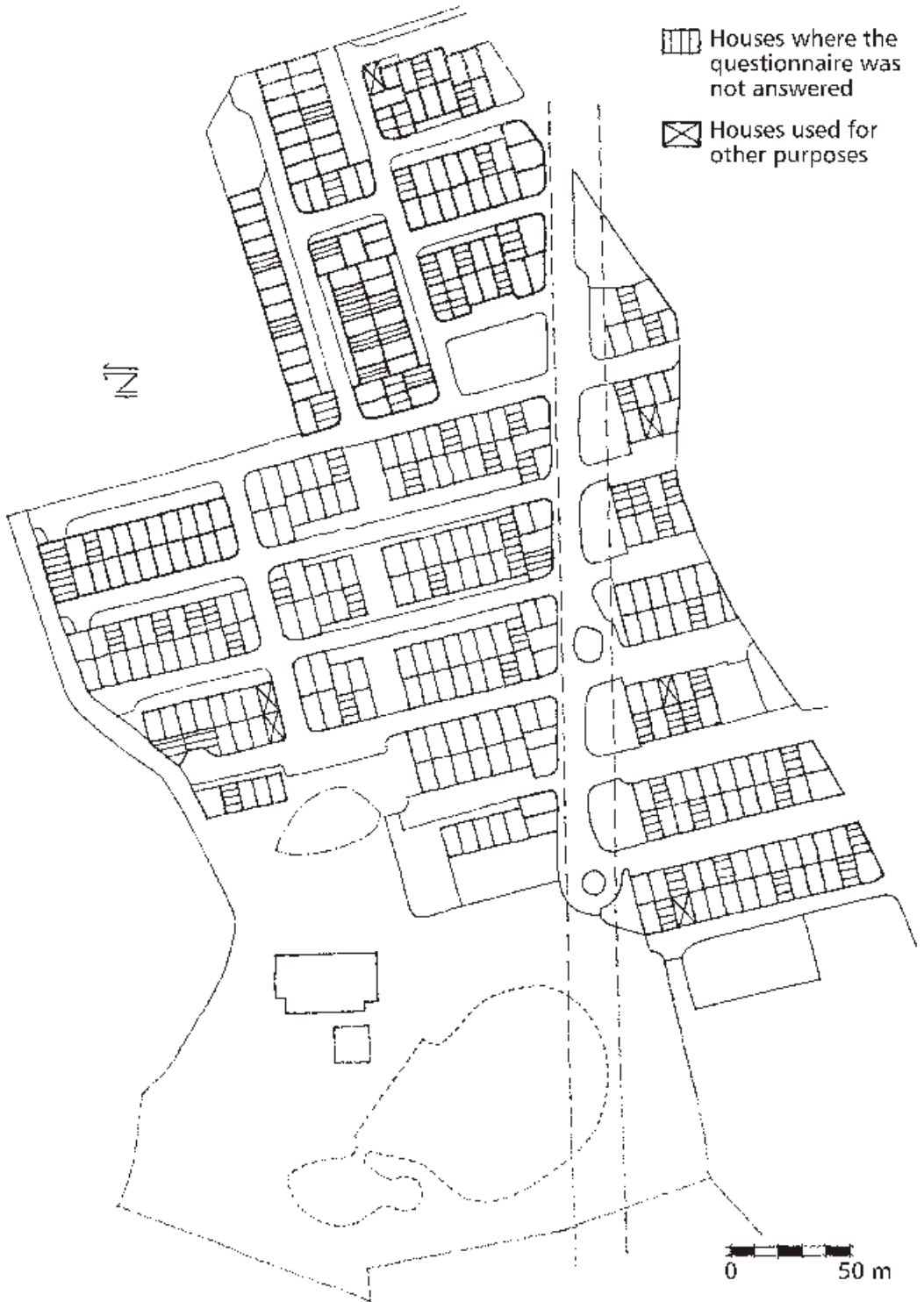
Aspectos de interés en las observaciones y comentarios.

Muchas gracias por su colaboración!





## Annex 2





## Annex 3

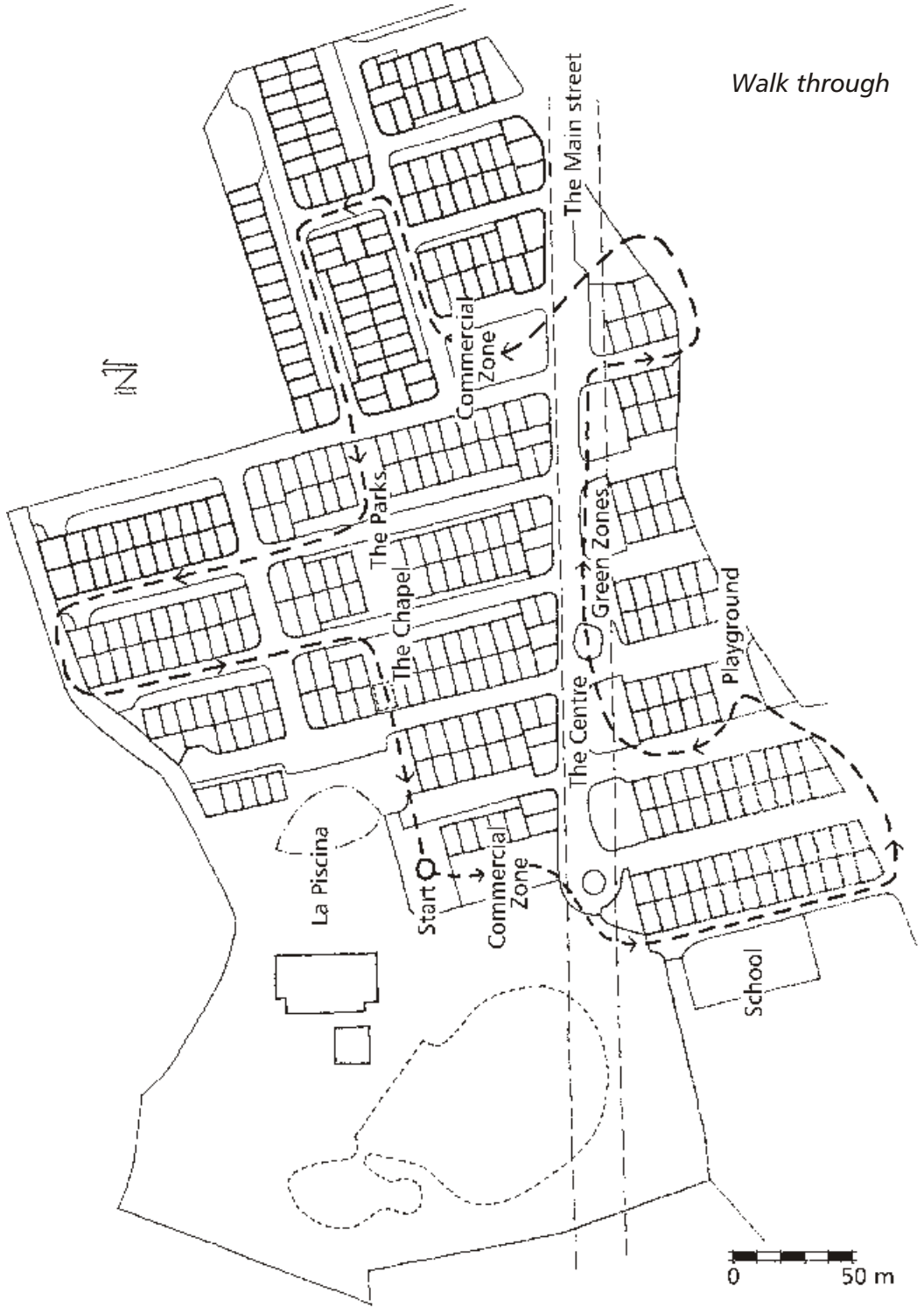
## Guía para la entrevista

- 1 Información sobre la entrevistada
  - Nombre, Edad, Ocupación, ¿Cuántos años de escuela cursó usted?
  - ¿Quiénes son las personas que viven en su hogar?
  - Si tiene pareja, ¿Cuál es la ocupación de su pareja?
- 2 Vida cotidiana y la organización de los espacios
  - ¿Me puede hablar de su casa?
  - ¿Me puede describir su barrio, Lindora?
  - ¿Me puede describir las áreas comunales de su barrio? (calles, parques, áreas verdes, etc.)
  - ¿Considera que usted tiene el derecho a usarlas?, ¿Existe algún área, en especial, en el que usted se siente a gusto y la usa frecuentemente? (apropiación del espacio)
  - ¿Considera que usted y su pareja usan estas áreas de formas diferentes?, ¿Me puede describir cómo las usan?
  - ¿Considera usted que existen suficientes, demasiadas y adecuadas áreas comunales?
  - ¿Ve usted la necesidad y la posibilidad de cambiarle el uso a algunas áreas comunales de tal manera que sean más favorables para usted?
- 3 Vida cotidiana, socialización y tiempo libre
  - ¿Me puede decir cómo socializa (relaciona) usted con sus amigos/as y vecinos/as acá en Lindora?
  - ¿Cómo socializan sus niños?
- 4 Vida cotidiana y seguridad
  - ¿Considera usted que Lindora es un barrio seguro, o existen problemas de seguridad?
  - ¿Se siente usted segura en su integridad en Lindora?
- 5 Vida cotidiana, trabajo, trabajo en casa y cuidado de niños o ancianos
  - ¿Me puede describir su situación laboral y cómo se siente al respecto?
  - ¿Me puede describir su trabajo en casa y sus compras?
  - ¿Me puede describir sus labores en el cuidado de niños?
- ¿Cuánto tiempo pasan juntos?
  - ¿Cuenta usted con un/a familiar o amigo/a que le ayude?, ¿De qué forma?
- 6 Describa un día convencional (día laboral)
  - Me puede describir un día ordinario, como por ejemplo el día de ayer? ¿Qué hizo?, ¿Con quién?, ¿En dónde estuvo a diferentes horas? (por la mañana, al almuerzo, por la tarde, a la comida, por la noche)
- 7 Describa una semana convencional (semana a semana)
  - ¿Me puede describir lo que usted hace en una semana ordinaria, tal como la semana pasada?



# Annex 4

## Walk through



Nearly half of the world's population lives in urban areas. People's everyday lives in urban areas differ because social background, class, age and gender shape experiences and determine, to some extent, which spaces in the city can be used.

This thesis deals with the everyday life of women and men in a neighbourhood planned for low-income earners on the outskirts of the capital city San José, Costa Rica. The research uses an everyday life perspective and shows how gender organization leads to a division of labour and a use of space that differentiates between women and men's activities. There are space use patterns that reflect the existing gender organization, but there is also a pattern of women crossing borders between public and private space to perform their productive and reproductive activities.

The study shows that women and men have different needs for spaces in their physical surroundings in their everyday life, needs that are interpreted as practical gender needs in human settlements. Practical gender needs are related in the study to strategic gender needs, where access to space is seen as empowerment. An outline is proposed for a tool to analyse space, activities and gender. The tool is a map showing the relative power position of women and men's activities in a specific place, where social status determines which activities each individual can carry out. The map is constructed to analyze what activities are carried out and by whom. Once the map of activities is established, a decision can be made about which activities to support with physical structures, in order to support an equitable use of space.

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## Thesis 2

### Space, Activities and Gender

Everyday life in Lindora, Costa Rica

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