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Co-prosperity of youth and neighbourhood: sustainable renewal practice of Changbai neighbourhood 228

Region	Asia and the Pacific
Award Scheme	Shanghai Manual
Themes	Planning & Design Regeneration
Sustainable Development Goals	Goal 11 - Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Summary

Changbai neighbourhood 228 (CBN 228), located in the industrial area of northeast Shanghai, was once a vibrant workers' housing complex built in the 1950s. However, due to aging infrastructure, poor environmental conditions, and a lack of community identity, the area had been in decline.

Background and Objective

CBN 228 is located on a 3.47-hectare site in Shanghai's industrial zone and was originally built as a workers' housing complex under the "20,000-household" initiative. Over the years, the community suffered from overcrowding, deteriorating infrastructure, and inadequate public services, leading to a diminished sense of community. With a large transient population and aging residents, the area struggled to maintain its vibrancy and attract younger generations. By 2015, Shanghai had transitioned from rapid urban expansion to a phase focused on regeneration and quality of life improvements. This shift in urban development priorities led to CBN 228 being included in the city's pilot urban renewal projects. The main objective was to revitalize the neighbourhood by improving housing conditions, increasing green spaces, creating job opportunities, and fostering a strong community identity, all while maintaining the area's historical significance.

Actions and Implementation

Since the project's inception in 2019, a series of strategic actions were undertaken to breathe new life into CBN 228. The renovation preserved the historical architecture while introducing modern amenities, creating an integrated community with diverse businesses, public spaces, and housing options. A new high-rise apartment building with 450 units was constructed, providing affordable housing for approximately 600 young professionals. Green and sustainable technologies, such as sponge city systems for water management, were implemented to address environmental concerns. The development also focused on building a youth-friendly environment by providing affordable rental housing, flexible lease



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terms, and spaces for social interactions. Youth participation was key throughout the project, from planning to construction, and the community actively engaged in the creation of cultural and employment platforms. The collaboration between government, enterprises, and local residents fostered a sense of ownership and empowerment, especially among the younger population, which was instrumental in the success of the renewal.

Outcomes and Impacts

The results of the CBN 228 renewal project were profound. Over 1,600 people from 360 families benefited from improved living conditions in renovated apartments. The project also provided additional housing for 815 households in the 1980s-built apartment blocks and created a more vibrant urban environment for 80,000 to 100,000 residents. Young people were directly engaged as beneficiaries and active participants, gaining access to affordable housing, career development platforms, and a community that supported their social integration. The project led to the creation of approximately 300 youth-oriented jobs in areas such as business, creative sectors, and community services. Additionally, CBN 228 became a model for sustainable urban renewal, blending historical preservation with modern, green solutions to improve resilience and liveability. Through its emphasis on youth participation, the project successfully rejuvenated the neighbourhood, enhancing both its social and physical infrastructure.

Sustainability and Scalability

The sustainability of the CBN 228 project is rooted in its integration of green technologies, community-driven initiatives, and long-term planning. By adopting low-carbon measures such as sponge city techniques, modular construction, and waste sorting, the project promotes environmental sustainability. The affordable rental apartments provide flexible housing options for young people, ensuring the continued growth of the community. The incorporation of cultural heritage, alongside modern facilities, fosters both a sense of belonging and resilience. The success of CBN 228 has set a precedent for urban renewal projects in other densely populated urban areas, offering a scalable model for integrating sustainability, community participation, and youth engagement into urban development.

Gender and Social Inclusivity

CBN 228 placed a strong emphasis on inclusivity, particularly in addressing the needs of young people and ensuring equal opportunities for all residents. Special attention was given to creating housing options that catered to diverse social groups, such as floors designated exclusively for female tenants and those for pet owners. The project also promoted gender equality through community events and social activities, allowing all residents, regardless of gender, to engage in neighbourhood life. Furthermore, the youth-driven employment platforms provided equal access to career opportunities, while the community's



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cultural initiatives encouraged active participation from both young men and women. The inclusive approach fostered an environment where social cohesion and diversity were celebrated, contributing to the long-term success of the renewal.

Innovative Initiative

One of the most innovative aspects of the CBN 228 project was its focus on youth participation at every stage of the urban renewal process. Young professionals were not only beneficiaries of the new development but also integral to its design and implementation. From the planning phase to the operational management of community services, young people played a crucial role in shaping the neighbourhood. The establishment of platforms like the YOUNG Alliance and the "Far-reaching Benefits of Intelligence" WeChat Mini Programme enabled youth to actively contribute to community governance and volunteerism. Moreover, the integration of green lifestyle initiatives, such as waste sorting and low-carbon commuting, highlighted the innovative approach to creating an environmentally conscious, youth-led community. This focus on innovation not only revitalized CBN 228 but also set a precedent for future urban renewal projects.

Resources devoted to delivery

The successful delivery of the CBN 228 project involved substantial investment from both the public and private sectors. The local government, enterprises, and community members worked collaboratively to ensure that resources were effectively allocated. The Shanghai Yangpu Technology & Innovation Group, as the project developer, was instrumental in implementing the renovation plans and integrating green and sustainable technologies. Furthermore, the involvement of various stakeholders, including planners, architects, and young professionals, ensured that the project met the diverse needs of the community. In total, the development created affordable housing, improved public services, and generated employment opportunities, all of which required significant financial and human resources.

Conclusion

The revitalization of CBN 228 serves as a model for sustainable, inclusive urban renewal that focuses on youth empowerment, historical preservation, and environmental sustainability. Through a collaborative approach involving government, enterprises, and residents, the project successfully transformed a declining neighbourhood into a vibrant, youth-friendly community. The integration of green technologies, affordable housing, and career development platforms ensured that the needs of young people were met while promoting social and environmental sustainability. As a result, CBN 228 not only improved the living standards of its residents but also set a new standard for urban renewal projects globally. By prioritizing youth engagement and fostering a sense of community, the project has demonstrated the power of inclusive, sustainable development in creating resilient urban spaces for future generations.