

Understanding wellbeing

Using mixed methods to understand the wellbeing of residents in low- and middle-income country cities

As part of SEI's City Health and Wellbeing Initiative (CHeW), we have used a suite of methods to understand the wellbeing of residents in our target cities of Nakuru, Kenya and Udon Thani, Thailand. Our aims have been to understand **how wellbeing differs** between neighbourhoods and demographic groups within these cities, and to identify **key drivers of wellbeing** to inform better **urban planning solutions**.

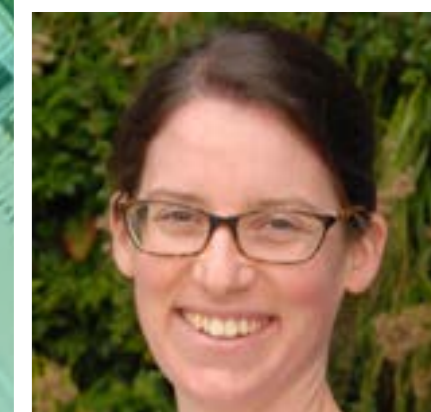
Surveys revealed that levels of **wellbeing and stress** differ between neighbourhoods and gender. Wellbeing is lower and stress is higher among people living in poorer neighbourhoods compared to more affluent neighbourhoods. Meanwhile women had lower wellbeing and higher stress than men. These differences were linked to factors such as levels of crime, employment, pollution and access to basic services (e.g. water, sanitation or electricity).

Participatory mapping activities and **heart rate monitors** revealed the importance of public spaces for supporting the wellbeing of residents by providing places to socialise, exercise and relax. People living in greener neighbourhoods or those who spent more time in public greenspace, had higher levels of wellbeing even if they lived in poorer neighbourhoods. Green spaces also provided places with lower levels of exposure to noise, heat and air pollution.

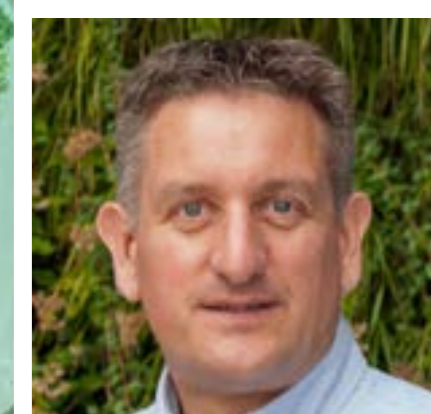
A key finding of this work is the importance of the **provision of safe, accessible greenspaces throughout cities for multiple environmental, health and wellbeing benefits**.



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