



The Use of Landscape as a Method of Integrating Informal Settlements in Tirana

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Abstract

The development of informal buildings has been a widespread phenomenon in the Albania during the last 30 years. Tirana, the capital of the country, has been the most affected one. This new type of development is spread all over the perimeter of the capital filling different territories by changing their land use from natural, agricultural, industrial, recreational, etc., to residential. It does have a powerful impact on the city due to its spontaneity and also carries on many problems related mostly to the lack of infrastructure, services, public spaces, and therefore lack of social cohesion and quality of life in these areas. There have been some developments during the last years, a Perimetral Park is proposed to be implemented defining the city limits which happens to be between nature and informal settlements. Considering this and the potentials of the natural and semi-natural environment have, this paper aims to develop further a sustainable approach that of regeneration and integration of the informal settlements, through the use of landscape. After the study and evaluation of all the databases, embracing landscape theories, a set of indicators and steps to follow for possible intervention will get developed. A theoretical methodology generated from this research could contribute to further studies on the issue for having an elevated attention from local authorities on the edge of the city by integrating the informality to the consolidated urban fabric, thus contributing toward sustainable development of Tirana.

Keywords

Informal settlements • Land use • Perimetral Park • Landscape • Sustainability

1 Introduction

Informality is a widespread phenomenon all over the world, especially in developing countries. It is a process that involves many sectors, but that of territorial development as well, and it is mostly known as informal settlement phenomena. According to UN-Habitat, nowadays, 1.6 billion people live in inadequate housing globally, of which 1 (one) billion in slums and informal settlements. It means that about one in four people in cities lives in conditions that harm their health, safety, prosperity, and opportunities. Lack of access to basics services is a common constraint in informal settlements and slums (UN-HABITAT; For a Better Urban Future, 2018).

Defined a developing country, Albania as well has produced its informal settlement models in the territory, especially during the change of the political systems and all the transitory periods corresponding to the last 25–30 years. This particular phenomenon is evident in all the significant cities and more dominant in Tirana, the capital, as it represents the socio-economic pole in the country with many dynamic developments. Characterized by extended informal interventions also a high dynamic in the transformation of its territory, informal areas of Tirana are our object of study. The city of Tirana, nowadays, is still characterized by continuous urban growth. The developments of these last three decades, especially the informal areas, carry many problems that are related to the ecological, social, and economic aspects.

On a global scale, since 2015, the United Nations have outlined the sustainable development goals (SDG), which represent 17 urgent calls for action that need to be taken by 2030. These include health and education improvements, inequalities reduction, economic growth encouragement, and all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our ecosystem (UN, 2015). At the national and local levels, strategies as per the sustainable territorial development have also been proposed. However, there is no clear strategy for

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the informal areas, which represents more than 40% of the city footprint. In such a background, the future of the informal settlements in Tirana needs to be firstly understood and developed after. As will be later illustrated, this is a necessary intervention. Some of the objectives of this paper are to evaluate the informal areas and understand what planned. The main goal of this study is the introduction of a theoretical model of regeneration and integration of the informal settlements by the use of landscape. The explanation of this new model of intervention would lay on three main dimensions that of ecological, social, and economic aspects as representants of the “magic triangle,” the sustainability model often established in practice (Bott et al., 2017).

2 Background and Case Study

2.1 History and Facts

During the socialist regime in Albania,¹ 70% of its citizens were living in rural areas all over the country. People were working and building their economy on agriculture and livestock activities, as per the natural character of the territory. The system failure in the late '80s and the economy deficits created turned to a total lack of opportunities, especially in the rural areas. The whole picture created was the cause of the elevated migration process of the population from these areas toward other countries, but also toward the important cities which offered more economic opportunities. This process was characterized mainly by movements from remote rural areas from the east side toward the western part, especially the central-western area, which is better identified by the *Tiranë—Durrës* linear development (Fig. 1).

The direct impact of this intense demographic movement was dualistic territorial development. On one side, it caused the shrinking effect of more peripheral cities and abandonment of rural areas. On the other hand, it caused rapid urbanization in most of the remarkable areas of the Albanian territory.

There was too much demographic pressure during the period in which this development got introduced. Lack of appropriate laws on land property, lack of experience of managing the territory, weakness of existing institutions, and sometimes lack of institutions were the main reasons for the territorial informality to develop causing also, the “urban sprawl” effect. The pattern of the chaotic development of

¹The Socialist Regime in Albania was a mono-party economic and political system that ruled from 1946 to 1990. A system characterized by common ownership and every sector of the economy relying on government. During this period, everything was lead by the Party of Labor of Albania and the supreme leader, dictator E. Hoxha.

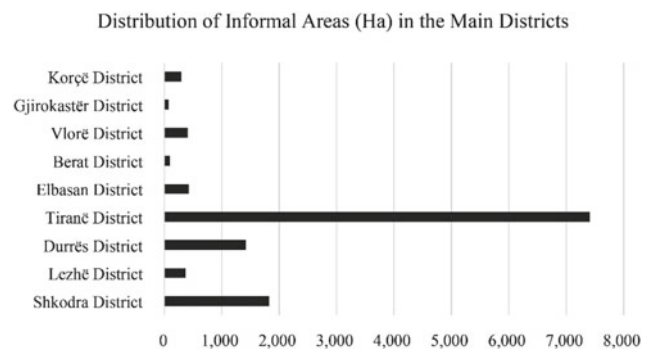


Fig. 1 Geographical distribution of informal areas. *Source* State Cadastre Agency (2018); *Elaborated:* Author

Tirana during the early '90s is the best indication of a difficult political, economic, and social transition from a centralized economy to a free-market society (Aliaj et al., 2003).

The cities of *Tirana*, *Durrës*, and the area in between have been developed and changed throughout the years. By development, phenomena such as change of the population, change of build, and natural environment have also occurred. Figure 2a–d illustrates the footprints of the urban areas through four periods starting from the Italian occupation to nowadays. The footprint enlargement and the transformation to build the environment of what previously was a natural and semi-natural environment is evident. Most of them have come as a result of informal development. According to the data collected from Institute of Statistics (INSTAT, 2019), during these last 30 years, just the city of Tirana itself results twice as big in terms of territory and four times as large in population.

Nowadays, the trend of migration and population movement toward the capital is continuing, but the informality development has almost stopped as a territory development process. However, there is a large number of areas covered with informal buildings, as previously mentioned, carry many problems that are related to the social, ecological, and economic aspects.

2.2 Definition of Informal Settlements

According to UN-Habitat, the definition of informal settlements is:

Residential areas where (1) Inhabitants have no security of tenure vis-à-vis the land or dwellings they inhabit, with modalities ranging from squatting to informal rental housing, (2) The neighborhoods usually lack, or are cut off from, basic services and city infrastructure and (3) the housing may not comply with current planning and building regulations, situated in geographically and environmentally hazardous areas and may lack a municipal permit.

Also, informal settlements can be a form of real estate speculation for all income levels of urban residents, affluent,

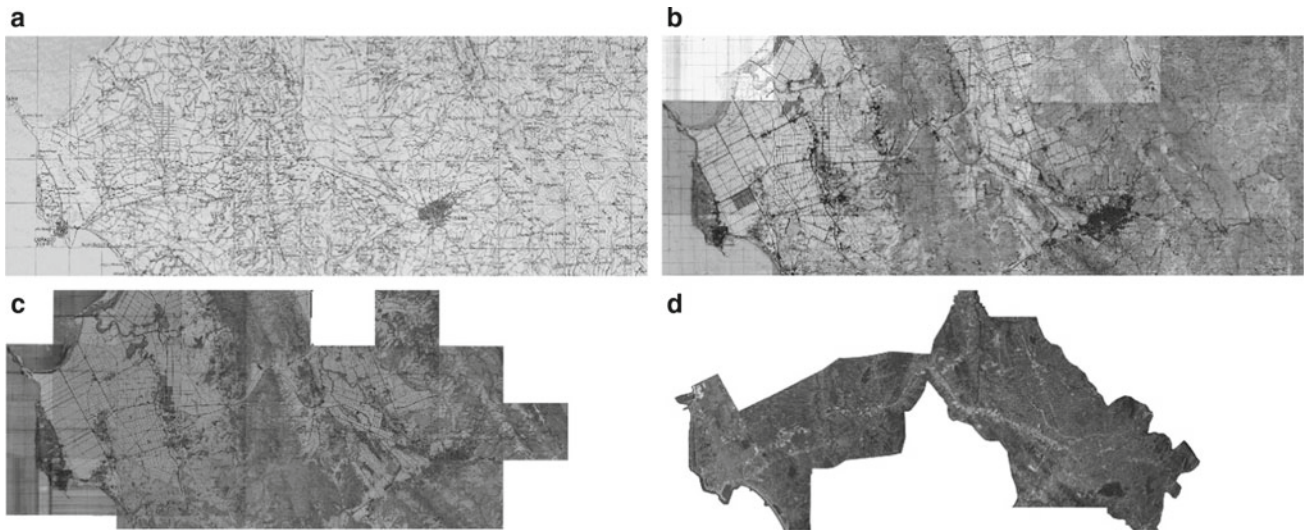


Fig. 2 **a** Map of Tirana-Durrës region during the Italian occupation period; **b** Map of Tirana-Durrës region during socialist period in the late '50s; **c** Map of Tirana-Durrës region during socialist period in the late

'80s; **d** Map of Tirana-Durrës region in 2018. *Source* ASIG State Authority for the Information (2019)

and poor. Among them, slums are the poorest and most dilapidated form of informal settlements.

Thus, informality should not be understood as an income-based denomination that stigmatizes the poor. Rather, informal settlement estimates should be based on technical compliance relevant to all income levels related to the above criteria.

For example, a valid municipal permit could be a reliable indication of formality (UN-HABITAT; For a Better Urban Future, 2018).

In the Albanian context, informal settlements partially correspond to this definition. They do not have the characteristics of a slum, but those of a building with permanent materials, and we could easily define them as individual self-organized developments. In general, in the areas, there is not too much flexibility in terms of investments made and material used since most of them came as reinforced concrete structures with brick walls. The buildings vary from 1 floor to 3–4 floors and often are investments supported by the immigration income.

2.3 Today Legal Situation

It is important to emphasize that the informality areas in the Albanian context happened due to lack of planning instruments and often the occupation of private or public land. These areas have evolved as urban forms over the years. The first tendency was that of filling the territory.

After, the settlements have undergone continuous changes and transformations, which most of the time corresponded with having additional floors. Nowadays, it seems like they have reached a stable form.

It is since 2006 that many laws and legal instruments passed, allow the legalization of the informal buildings by their owners. Sometimes the developers owned the land, many times they had occupied it. In these last cases, the legal landowners are being compensated first by economic value and after would be expropriated. The legalization process is still ongoing.

This process somehow confirmed the acceptance of the informality existence and has legally made them a legal part of the city. In Fig. 3a, b) progresses of this process is shown. Here could be noticed the completed number of legalized constructions for each district for the 2006–2018 period of time.

It is important to emphasize that the term informal settlements used through this study, do not illustrate their legal status nowadays, rather than their origin. It helps to identify them from the rest of the city, due to their previous legal status and particularities.

3 Importance of Study

The informal settlements due occupy a high percentage of the city footprint, and as previously mentioned, they are an adjacent part of the city by now, yet not integrated. There are many studies on informal settlements, mostly describing the specificity of development in Albania. In real terms, almost nothing has been done for regenerating and integrating. The General Local Plan, Tirana 2030 (later in this paper will be called GLP TR30) approved lately also, does not introduce a clear or detailed strategy on these particular areas (Municipality of Tirana, 2017a, 2017b, 2017c).

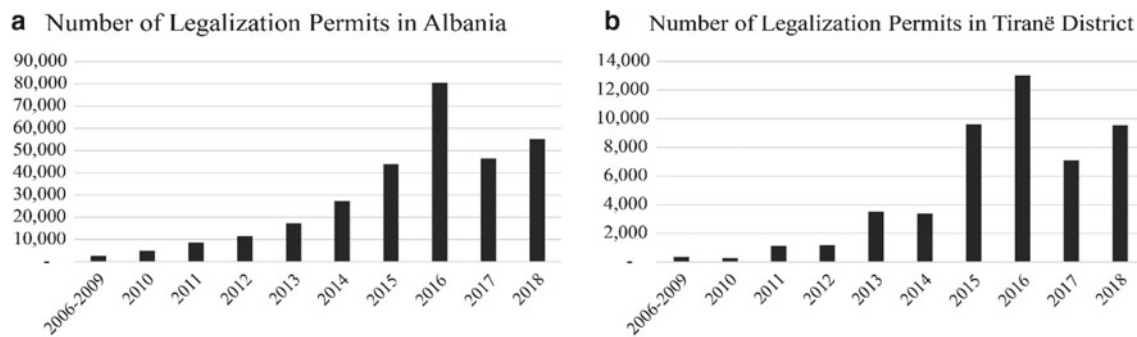


Fig. 3 a, b Number of legalization permits in Albania; Tirana. *Source* Information (State Cadastre Agency, 2018); *Elaborated*: Author

For the first time, the future-city development are introduced planning strategies regarding banning of the urban-sprawl effect. The Perimeter Park similar to a green belt would be implemented around the build environment footprint. It will not serve just as a natural and recreational area to the city, but is also supposed to achieve the desired banning effect (Municipality of Tirana, 2017a, 2017b, 2017c).

It is very obvious that the informal settlements areas have been developed concentrically along the perimeter of the planned city. As shown schematically in the figure below (Fig. 4), they are positioned in between the Perimetral Park and the planned city. Considering the Perimetral Park perimeter around 95,000 m of length, this strategy constitutes a future asset to the areas in terms of offering a qualitative space. Due to their morphology of urban form, the informal areas do construct a barrier between the city and nature. By having such position in the territory definitely, centripetal forces would not get generated between different areas.

To summarize, the importance of the study does not stop just to the regeneration and integration of informal areas, but goes far beyond. It will have additional importance in trying to create a better connection even between the planned city and the countryside, and vice-versa.

4 Introducing the Theoretical Approach—Understanding Landscape Urbanism

In the opening years of the twenty-first century, that seemingly old-fashioned term landscape has curiously come back into vogue. This reappearance of landscape in the larger cultural imagination is due, in part to the remarkable rise of environmentalism and a global ecological awareness, to the growth of tourism and the associated needs of regions to retain a sense of unique identity and to the impacts upon rural areas by massive urban growth (Corner, 2006).

In the holistic framework of environment conservation and ecology infrastructure development, urban theories have

arisen, stating the potential of landscape in rethinking the urban development of the cities (Waldheim, 2016). This is partially due to also the failure of the modern design which based its theoretical framework on the best possible spatial synthesis between function and form (Ricci, 2018). Many authors such as Edward Soja and later by Bernardo Secchi describe the nowadays city being in crisis. It is described as a crisis laid on three dimensions: environmental, social relations, particularly in terms of differences between “rich” and “poor,” and accessibility everywhere by single people or group of people, caused by high evidence of spatial injustice (Secchi, 2011).

In such framework “Landscape Urbanism” has been introduced. Charles Waldheim coined the term “Landscape Urbanism” to describe the practices of many designers for whom landscape had replaced architectural form as the primary medium of city making Waldheim saw Landscape Urbanism, like landscape architecture, as an interstitial design discipline, operating in the spaces between buildings, infrastructural systems, and natural ecologies. In these contexts, landscape urbanism became a useful lens through which to view those “unseen,” the residual *terrain vagues* ... (Shane, 2006). This approach attempts to create an environment that is not so much an object that has been “designed,” as it is an ecology of various systems and elements that set in a motion a diverse network of interaction. Landscape urbanism is here both instigator and accelerator, working across vast surfaces of potential (Corner, 2006).

The approach situates the emergence of landscape as a medium of urbanism in a variety of sites. (1) Most often the sites associated with rethinking the urban through landscape are found at the limits to a more strictly architectonic order for the shape of the city. (2) Landscape has been found relevant for sites in which a strictly architectural order of the city has been rendered obsolete or inadequate through social, technological, or environmental change. (3) Landscape has also been found useful as a way of thinking through urban form in the wake of macroeconomic transformations. This includes so-called shrinking cities as well as the countless

Fig. 4 Map of green belt proposed by GLP TR30 and informal areas 2007–2008; 2015. Source Municipality of Tirana (2017a, 2017b, 2017c), NTPA (2018); Elaborated: Author



individual sites of brownfield abandonment left in the wake of economic transformations. (4) Thus, landscape as a medium of urbanism has often been invoked to absorb and in some ways mitigate various impacts associated with social, environmental, and economic crises. (5) It has equally been found relevant for thinking through sites at the intersection of large, complex ecological, and infrastructural systems. (6) Most recently, landscape has been found relevant to questions of green infrastructure in the informal city and in response to questions of risk and resilience, adaptation and change.

The cumulative effect of these sites and subjects has been to foreground the potential for landscape as a medium and model for the city as a collective spatial project. In its most ambitious formulation, this suggests the potentials for the

landscape architect as urbanist of our age. In this role, the landscape architect assumes responsibility for the shape of the city, its built form, and not simply ecological and infrastructural exceptions to its architectonic structure. Rather, landscape thinking enables a more synthetic understanding of the shape of the city, understood in relation to its performance in social, ecological, and economic terms (Waldheim, 2016).

Such urban theory emphasizes the potential of landscape in urban development especially that organized in the macro-scale or as an infrastructure in the city. With the characteristics, we could read from the informal settlements area, also findings made in the strategies foreseen in the GLP TR30, this approach is hypothesized that could be the winning one for their regeneration and integration to the rest of city.

5 Method of Study

For achieving the objectives of the study, the work is organized considering the parallelism and evaluation process of the three following main phases.

5.1 Understanding the Landscape Potential in the Planning Process

The city development is at an intersection nowadays, in terms of its future evolution and especially in terms of quality it offers. In the Albanian context, so far, quality is not

a measurable indicator. Many theoretical approaches are being introduced to professionals lately. Therefore, it is important to evaluate their adaptability in local situations and contexts.

This phase of the research is necessary for the understanding of significant landscape aspects and make practical use of them. For this reason, through the theoretical approach, simple indicators related to planning have been generated. These indicators will be after used for structuring a matrix (Fig. 5; Structure). It is important to emphasize that the indicators of the matrix are being organized according to the three main pillars of sustainability, ecological, social, and economic aspects.

Indication Matrix of Landscape Benefits

Informal Areas Evaluation Vs. GLP TR30 Analysis and Development Strategies

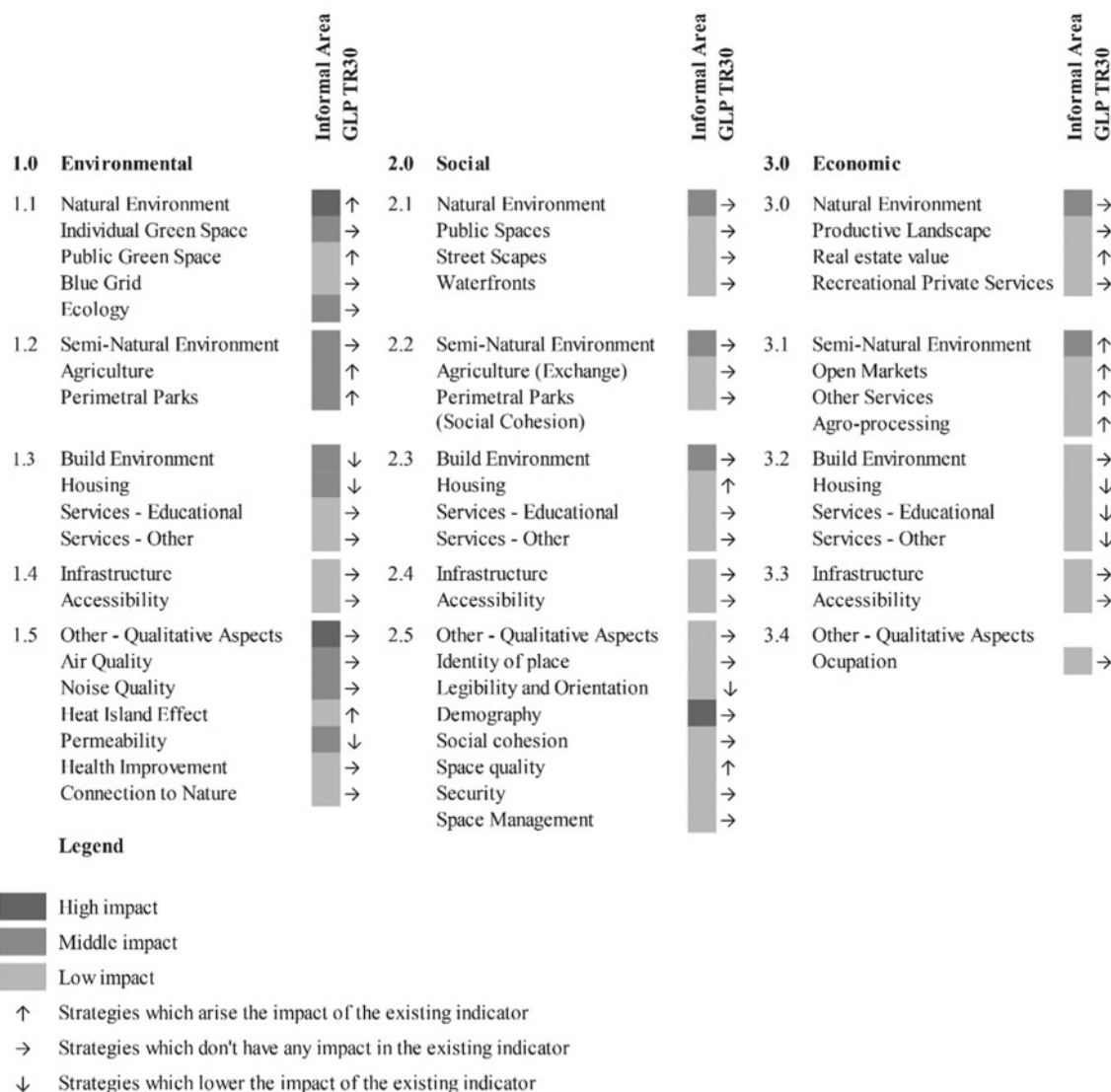


Fig. 5 Indicators matrix; evaluation of landscape potentials. Source Municipality of Tirana (2017a, 2017b, 2017c); Elaborated: Author

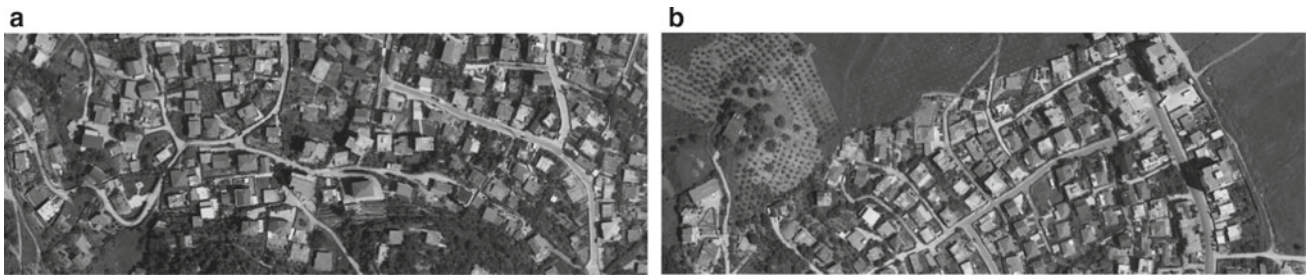


Fig. 6 a, b Orthophoto; informal areas in Tirana; single units characteristics. *Source* ASIG State Authority for the Information (2019)

5.2 Identification of Potential and Problems in the Areas

This phase includes close observation of the informal settlements and the areas they occupy in the city. During this phase of the study, the existing analysis made, existing land use maps, aerial views belonging to different periods, orthophotos, furthermore sites visits, and photos are analyzed. The understanding of issues related to the landscape, such as the space, space network, space functionalities, space qualities, lifestyle, ecology, economic activities, services, and every other aspect included in the build-in matrix, has importance for creating a physiognomy of each singular area. Parts of the study are also talkings and discussions with the local families as the inhabitant's origin was the fundamental purpose of such meetings. The evaluation of each indicator was later compiled, by determining the impact had in the informal areas (Fig. 5; Evaluation of Existing Informal Settlements).

5.3 Understanding Strategies in the GLP TR30, Foreseen for the Future-City Development

This phase includes the collection and reading of all data, existing and planned maps, reports, evidence, analyzation, and strategies foreseen at the national and local level for a better understanding of the impact the GLP TR30 strategies have on the areas of interest. The evaluation of the impact strategies, which have on the predefined indicators, is being made. In the end, the completed matrix will give a better understanding of how all GLP TR30 strategies are related to the landscape urbanism approach, what provided for the city in general, and for the informal settlements in particular. Finally, the indicators provided by the landscape theories in the first step, evaluation of the existing also of the impact of future strategies considering ecological, social, and economic dimensions, are cross-checked in one single matrix named indicators matrix (Fig. 5; Evaluation of GLP TR30 Strategies Impact).

6 Results

The results are better expressed in the indicators matrix; however, for a better understanding, the following need also be interpreted.

6.1 Findings on Informal Settlements Areas

Single Unit—The main particularities of a single unit are (1) Self-development constructions placed in previews natural or agricultural territory; (2) The building usually situated in the middle of a land parcel, therefore assuring an individual space; (3) Intimate private space due to the presence of high and non-transparent barriers; (4) Private yard with the main use of private parking and gardening. Olive-grooves, vineyards, fruit trees, vegetables, and flowers are part of every single individual yard (Figs. 6a, b and 7a–d).

Groups—The positioning of the individual units tends to create rows that differ from area to area. The documents of the GLP TR30 has analysis and classification of their typo-morphology as per their relation to the territory. As per this classification, there are four main typologies (a) One which follows the infrastructure, (b) Surface cover, (c) Rural, and (d) Mountainous. Other main particularities of these groups illustrated in Fig. 8a–d. Their description could be summarized as follows: (1) Large extension in the territory; (2) Mostly a cul-de-sac street pattern; (3) Street space gained as a result of single unit high, non-transparent walls; (4) Street space with only distributive function; (5) Lack of any other type of public space; (6) Lack of services; (7) Demography, from the GLP TR30 Analysis,² it results that the people in the informal areas create groups in the territory as per their origin (came from the same province).

²GLP TR30 “*The Technical Evaluation Report on the Analysis and Evaluation of the Territory, Metabolic Analysis of the Flows and in-depth Analysis of the Territory*—this fact also confirmed by the discussions with inhabitants.

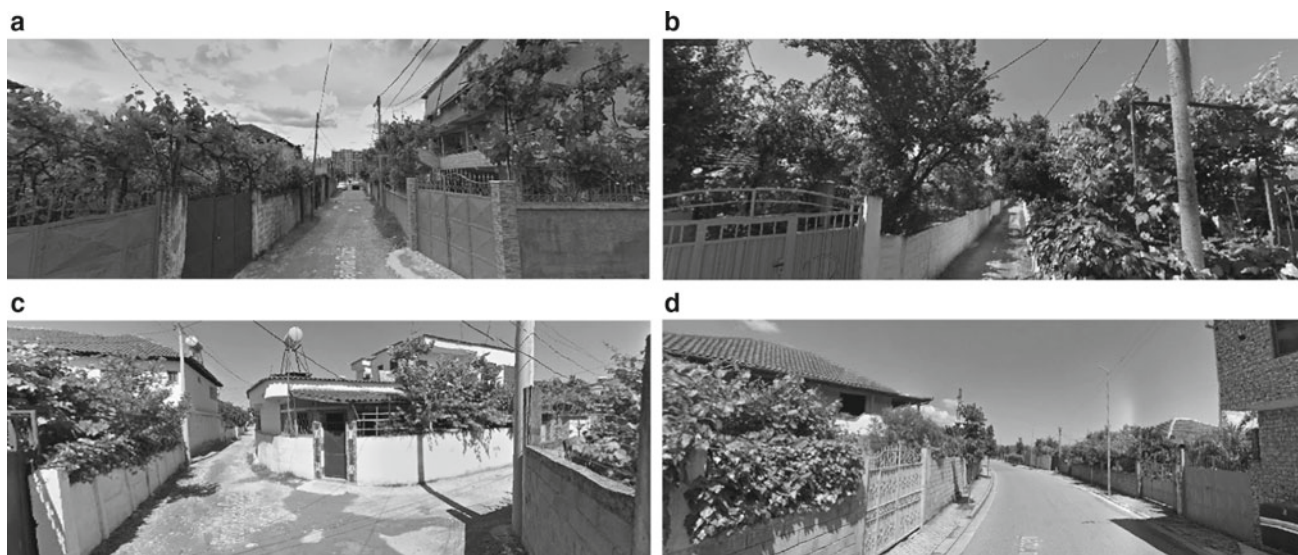


Fig. 7 a–d Streetscape photos; informal areas in Tirana. *Source* GOOGLE (2019)

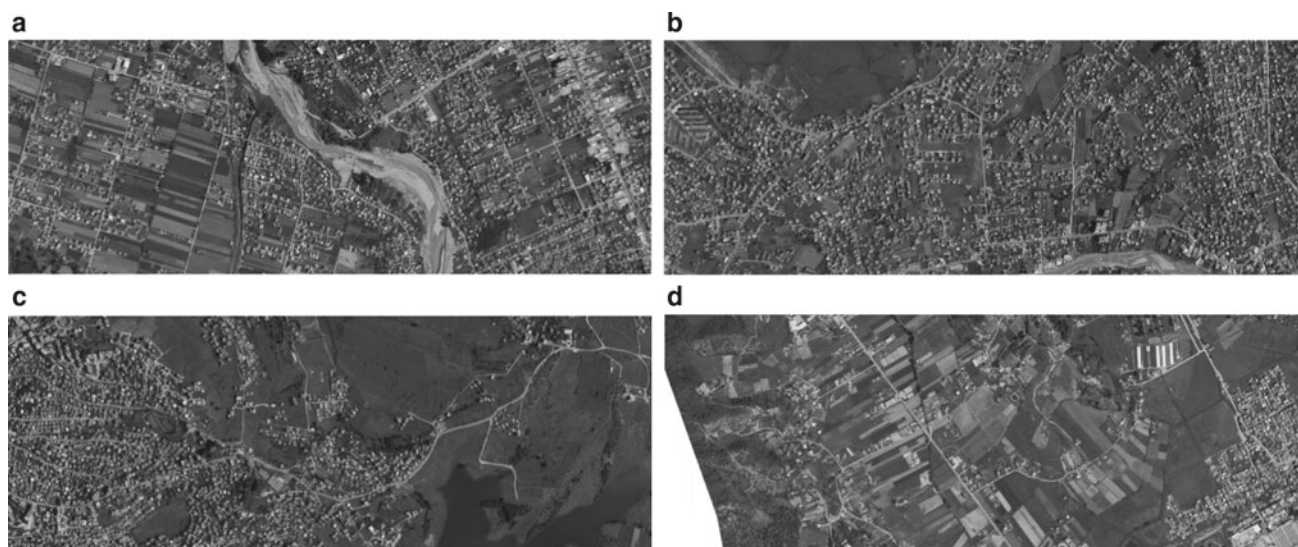


Fig. 8 a–d Orthophoto; informal areas in Tirana; groups characteristics. *Source* ASIG State Authority for the Information (2019)

Macro-scale—It could be read from the maps (1) Mostly the filling of the territory is present in flat terrain or soft slopes, this corresponding to previous agricultural or natural land (Fig. 9a, b); (2) The naturally hilly terrain has contributed to the footprint the informal areas. Due to the morphology of the territory, the informal areas are defragmented somehow naturally by green, natural wedges.

6.2 Findings on the Main Strategies Foreseen

Strategies at National Level—In terms of future developments foreseen, there is a strong focus on (1) The agricultural and livestock economic model, as it seems like one of

the most significant assets of the country and (2) Preservation of natural and semi-natural environment. The national strategy focuses on the use of resources all over the country and inhibition of internal migration for being able to have a scattered population and have a sustainable use of the national resources.

Strategies at Local Level—The attention toward the natural and semi-natural areas are a key-topics for foreseen GLP TR30 strategies as well. It is best illustrated through two decisions: (1) The declaration of the natural area surrounding Tirana, as an area of national interest, but also with (2) The implementation of the Perimetral Park as earlier explained, comes as a new approach in terms of the control of the territory and resources (Fig. 10).

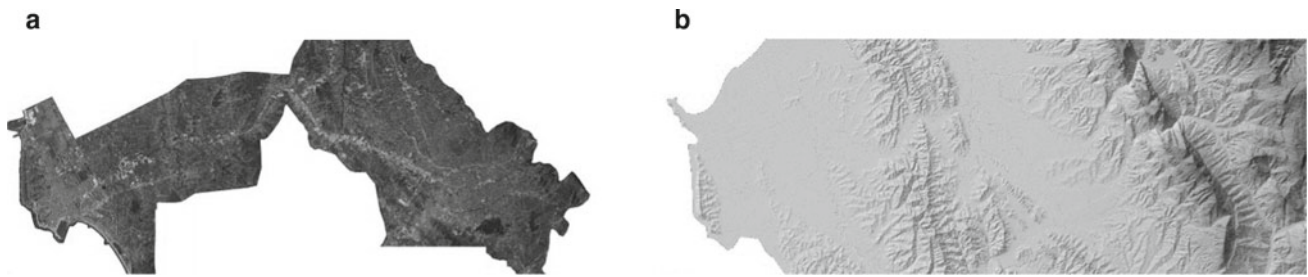


Fig. 9 a, b Orthophoto of Tirana-Durrës Area; digital model of the territory. Source ASIG State Authority for the Information (2019)

Fig. 10 Map of “Green Crown” and informal areas 2007–2008; 2015. Source Municipality of Tirana (2017a, 2017b, 2017c), NTPA (2018); Elaborated: Author



This park, with a total area of 2563.78 Ha, would serve as natural and semi-natural space for finally defining the boundaries for the city development (Municipality of Tirana, 2017a, 2017b, 2017c). According to GLP TR30, the further development of the city would be carried out by the densification of the existing fabric. Although still at the strategy level,

it comes as a temptation toward banning the “urban sprawl” effect. There are no specific findings regarding the transitory areas. It is referred here to those between the Perimetral Park and the formal city, therefore, area of our interest.

Other strategies—GLP TR30 proposes many contemporary and strategies of interest for development. We are listing just

a few, which have an impact at informal areas (1) Creation of a polycentric city—the creation of five epicenters in the city peripheries; (2) Sustainable development based on three primary pillars ecology, social, and economic development; (3) City accessible for all (Municipality of Tirana, 2017a, 2017b, 2017c).

Densification—GLP TR30 has as main strategies the bounding of “urban sprawl” and the densification of the city. Parts of informal areas due undergo such process, therefore, to that of filling the territory.

7 Discussions

7.1 Today Evaluation

It is for 30 years now that the informal settlements are present in Tirana. While the process of legalization its ongoing, some infrastructural investments have been completed, which remain at the level of sewerage systems and the asphaltting of the roads, somehow the quality of accessibility has increased, but not in a meaningful way the quality of life in these areas.

Occupying more than 40% of the territory, this part of the city should not be out of our attention. We as planners need... to give a meaning, narrative, and uses—even temporary—to spaces that already have got some given forms, and to turn them into places where living is both pleasant and affordable. This phase requires designers to adopt new points of view on the future, but also and above all present, and a new idea of projecting a physical space (Ricci, 2018).

7.2 Environmental Aspect

As schematically shown in the indicators matrix, the area does have potential in terms of the natural and semi-natural environment. These areas previously agricultural and natural are fragmented now, and most of them not efficiently used, often creating voids. In terms of productive landscapes, there is the presence of private gardens, an indicator of the inhabitant life-styles. At a local level, strategies on having additional but fragmented structured green spaces due exist. However, what it does not come clear, is how this future natural environment will co-exist and co-operate with the different parts of the city in terms of continuity, creation of an ecologic matrix, and offer fluidity. The problematic gets more complicated with the continuous densification foreseen, therefore, the urban filling process which threatens the most vulnerable parts of the territory and causes the consumption of the space in between buildings.

7.3 Social Aspect

It is evident that in these areas, there is life only beyond the walls, in the private space. The rest has only distributive character and does not serve as a gathering and shared space; consequently, there is low social cohesion. This effect is exacerbated also by the lack of public spaces and public services. As a self-constructed part of the city, the built environment contains mainly private houses. Through these individual constructions, the previous landscape is fragmented in such a way that the territory has lost their identities of place³ and also their genius-loci,⁴ the spirit of the place... The character of a place is to a high extend determined by how this standing and rising is concretized. This also holds for entire settlements, such as towns. When a town pleases us because of its distinct character, it is usually because a majority of its buildings are related to the earth and sky in the same way; they seem to express a common form of life, a common way of being on the earth. Thus, they constitute a genius-loci which allows for human identification (Norberg-Schulz, 1980).

We can denote that landscapes respond to the needs of identification and recognition, spatial anchoring, rooting, and collective values. The idea of landscape responds to the ultimate reasons of inhabiting a place and represents “an essential aspect of life situation of the population of cultures and which represents a fundamental component of Europe’s cultural and natural heritage.” For offering the quality of life in the city, the identity of the place should be replaced.

7.4 Demography

The informal areas have a diverse population, and as mentioned before, it can create a sense of neighborhood due to large groups of people originating from the same place. In all the analysis of the built environment, there is a strong sense of preserving existing natural elements and also basing the life on products of the territory.

³Place is evidently an integral part of existence. With the word “place” we mean a totality made up of concrete things having material substance, shape, texture, and color. Together these things determine an “environmental character” which is the essence of a place. A place is therefore a qualitative, “total” phenomenon, which we cannot reduce to any of its properties, such as spatial relationship, without losing its concrete nature out of sight (Norberg-Schulz, 1980).

⁴Genius-loci is a Roman concept. According to ancient Roman belief, every “independent” being has its genius, its guardian spirit. This spirit gives life to people and places, accompanies them from birth to death, and determines their character or essence (Norberg-Schulz, 1980).

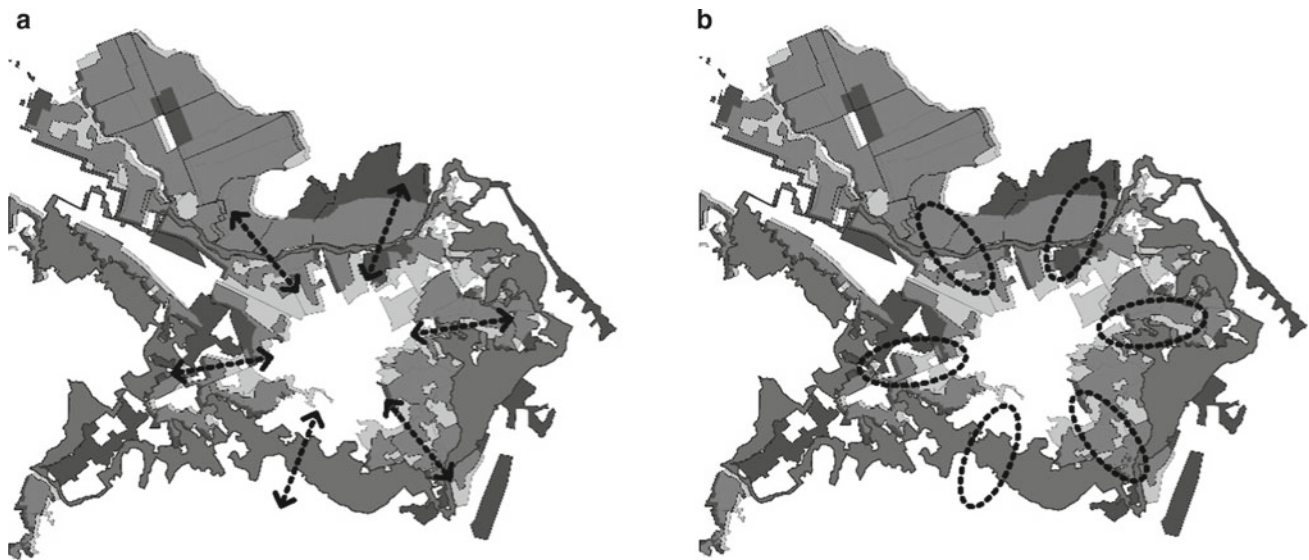


Fig. 11 a, b Maps of spatial connections and the distribution of nodes. *Source* Municipality of Tirana (2017a, 2017b, 2017c); *Elaborated:* Author

7.5 Risks or Benefits

The implementation of the planned Perimetral Park might be accompanied with an increase of the real estate value, therefore, with additional pressure from the construction industry. This could be also supported by the GLP TR30 in several areas. The risk of loss of natural territories versus build environment is high although new developments, if done correctly might bring integration and prosperity in the area.

7.6 Economic Aspect

There is not too much database on how the population of informal settlements areas due organize their living beside the fact that gardening covers a small part of the economy. These areas have extended at a distance that they sometimes have embraced the pre-existing rural areas; therefore, a part of the population is historically connected with the agriculture and agro-processing. A detailed demographic database would give a better understanding of the people, territory, its products, and how all are related to each other.

However, the GLP TR30 strategies, which support agricultural, livestock economic model, and brand creation from local products, do create a legal framework that strongly connects the area with the territory productions, contributing this way not only in the economy, but also in the sense of belongingness.

As the indicators matrix and other findings show, landscape urbanism is capable of offering ecological, social, and economic qualities through its instruments such as the implementation of (1) Productive Landscapes; (2) Natural

Landscapes; (3) Public Spaces; (4) Recreational Spaces; (5) Ecological Corridors; (6) Cultural Landscape. Through the use of landscape, it is possible to create such an infrastructure that relates to the city and the countryside but also ... collaboration between organizations of various sectors and citizens (Public, Private, People, and Partnerships) (Fig. 11a) (Garbarini, 2018). Within the landscape, we can propose and articulation of nodes that can become catalysts of regenerative processes both in the places in question and surrounding areas. Exploiting the large scale of the landscape, we can work with different surfaces, devices, and policies, creating a sort of re-alignment, in which landscape replaces urban planning and architecture (Corner, 2006) (Fig. 11b).

8 Conclusions

The main objective of this paper is the contribution in developing a theoretical model of intervention by the use of landscape as a flexible medium for the regeneration and integration of the informal settlement areas to the city. This study comes as a contribution to distract the attention of conventional planning and emphasizes the new approach of landscape urbanism to a local level.

To achieve the desired result, it was necessary to analyze at different scales the potentials of all forms of the territory, potential strategies planned from authorities, and evaluate them through the lens of landscape. In the presence of a large number of potentials, as resulted, it could be concluded that landscape urbanism can activate all the existing ecological, social, and economic resources, thus complying with the sustainable development goals.

The informal settlements area is a very complex issue in the local context, and therefore, this research is considered just a first step toward the possible interventions. For being able to have tangible results and implementation of the theoretical approach, other steps to follow are necessary.

Step 1—Creation of planning concepts by integrating rural, natural, informal, and formal city being coherent with the GLP TR30 strategies. The following further analysis is a significant part of this phase:

1. Identification of cultural geographic areas based on territorial identity;
2. Detailed demographic data;
3. Origin, lifestyle, family structure, and position in the territory;
4. Creation of a detailed database on the private and public properties;
5. Understanding the urban morphological mapping of spatial typologies.

Step 2—Communication with the population of these areas for presenting ideas and development models. Such a process is necessary for creating real development models. Throughout this phase, necessary explanations and presentations must be completed, so that bottom-up approaches could generate.

Step 3—Detailed planning process and pilot project implementation.

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