

MANIFESTO

FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS AND THEIR ADAPTATION TO HEAT

Reflections and proposals for municipal policy makers from the
perspective of energy poverty



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Introduction

This policy brief is a significant outcome of the COOLTORISE project, serving as a manifesto that reflects the perspectives and insights of the citizens. By working closely with citizens, the project has gained a deeper understanding of the difficulties faced by those experiencing energy poverty during the warmer months. Through this community engagement, the project aims to develop and implement thoughtful strategies and policies to help manage the high cooling demands of vulnerable populations. The insights and recommendations presented in this report, shaped by our collaborative efforts, are intended to assist municipal policymakers in creating fair and effective solutions to alleviate summer energy poverty.

Objective of the present policy brief

The objective of this document is to serve as a comprehensive resource for adapting neighbourhoods to summer heat, with the goal of informing municipal policymakers and guiding interventions aimed at reducing summer energy poverty. This repository draws on insights gained from three years of the COOLTORISE project and incorporates valuable strategies and experiences shared by the citizens.

To identify potential improvements for neighbourhoods, a collaborative dialogue was facilitated with citizens around the question: **“How could your neighborhood adapt better to the heat?”** This process has resulted in a carefully curated list of measures and strategies, organized into five key areas, to effectively address and mitigate summer energy poverty.

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How could our neighbourhood adapt better to the heat?

Adaptation proposals and experiences from working with households in energy poverty

Through a range of activities, events, and workshops, a collaborative relationship has been built with the community throughout the project, leading to the creation of this manifesto.



Image 1. Conducting the heat culture workshop.



Image 2. Presentation by the attendees of the ideas shared during the event that gave rise to the manifesto.

Manifesto for the improvement of our neighbourhoods and their adaptation to heat

With this document, we urge local authorities and relevant organizations to consider the following key actions from five perspectives to improve the quality of life in our neighborhoods and prepare them adequately for summer.

Incorporation of vegetation and green spaces

- 1 Increase and protect existing trees in public spaces near the neighborhood:
 - Plant vegetation on sidewalks, courtyards, squares, and parks around homes to create cool and healthy spaces.
 - Replant trees in empty tree pits.
 - Avoid unnecessary tree felling at all costs.
 - Ensure proper maintenance and pruning for each species.
 - Incorporate trees in parking lots or alternatively transform them completely into green, tree-filled areas.
 - Focus on areas with high levels of air and noise pollution, such as major highways.
- 2 Install pergolas with deciduous vegetation around the neighborhood to create cool areas and corridors in summer that also allow sunlight in winter.
- 3 Promote native and drought-resistant species in public and private spaces.
- 4 Increase the presence of trees and green areas in playgrounds and schoolyards to promote safe and stimulating outdoor activities for children.
- 5 Replace impermeable pavements with vegetated areas, natural soils, and permeable surfaces.
- 6 Encourage the incorporation of vegetation on facades and roofs of public and private buildings.
- 7 Empower citizens through training, activities, and neighborhood meetings to educate the population about the environmental, microclimatic, and health benefits of vegetation in our surroundings.

Humidification and presence of water

1

Promote proper water management:

- Collect rainwater to maintain vegetation and promote sustainability.
- Implement efficient irrigation systems in courtyards, parks, and gardens in the neighborhood.

2

Use permeable pavements to facilitate water infiltration and retention in the ground or be captured and stored in subsurface layers for later reuse or drainage. Additionally, contribute to surface cooling due to the presence and evaporation of water.

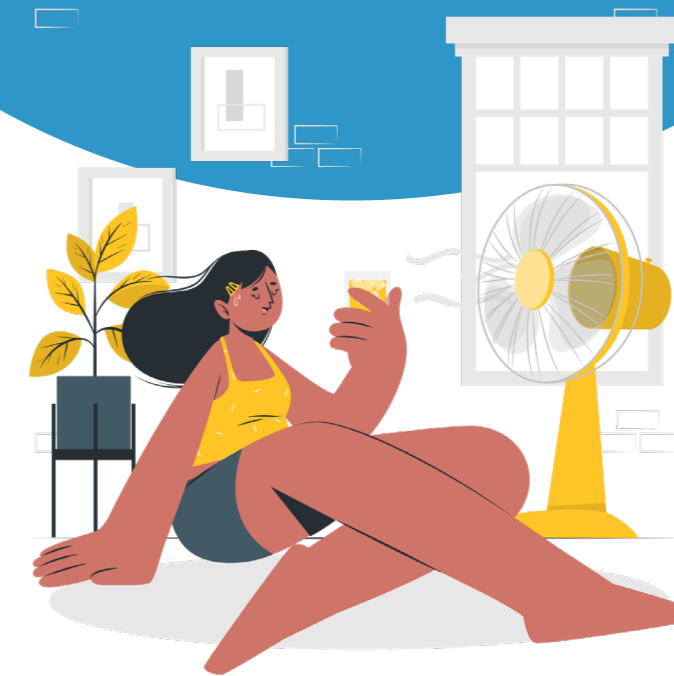
3

Presence of water in the neighborhood:

- Use misting systems in courtyards and plazas to increase air humidity.
- Provide potable and chilled water points along pedestrian routes, plazas, and parks.
- Use fountains and ponds as decorative and refreshing elements.
- Create water play areas for children to cool off during hot days.

4

Promote responsible use and conservation of water among residents through educational programs.



Shading and ventilation improvements

1

Identify critical areas most exposed to solar radiation that require more shading.

2

Incorporate pergolas, awnings, and shading structures in places like courtyards, squares, and parks within or near the neighborhood, inviting social interaction and permanence along with urban furniture.

3

Increase the ventilation capacity of homes by:

- Improving the microclimate of the neighborhood and its surroundings to enable cooling of the home through nighttime ventilation.
- Enhancing safety and solving odor and pollution problems near the neighborhood.
- Improving air quality through more vegetation and shaded pedestrian walkways adjacent to the neighborhood.
- Incorporating bike lanes to encourage alternatives to private vehicle use.
- Promoting the use of sustainable transportation to reduce pollutant emissions.



Enhanced routes and walkways

1

Awareness program about appropriate times to leave home:

- Inform the public about appropriate times to leave home based on the day's temperature, avoiding the central hours of the day and exposure to health risks.
- Incorporate early warning systems for extreme weather conditions to inform the public (mobile messages, etc.).
- Promote sustainable public transport to reduce walking during the hottest hours of the day.

2

Promote good habits that enhance well-being when going out:

- Balanced and light diet.
- Constant hydration.
- Light clothing and sandals.
- Use of a fan, water spray, hat, and sunglasses.
- Use of sunscreen.

3

Design streets to prevent overheating:

- Presence of benches with appropriate materials and ergonomic design under shade (preferably vegetative) to ensure rest and social interaction.
- Sidewalks with trees and vegetation to help keep routes connecting different areas of the neighborhood and the city cool.
- Replace impermeable pavements with permeable and natural soils.
- Use refreshing surface materials to help reduce surface temperature and the urban heat island effect.

4

Public management: Free access to safe places to stay cool during periods of high temperatures.

Community activities in spaces that serve as climate shelters

1

Designate and adapt spaces such as libraries, museums, senior centers, cultural centers, health centers, and social centers as free-access climate shelters, adjusting their hours to promote their use by the public.

2

Provide sitting areas in shopping centers, not linked to consumption, equipped to relieve visitors from the heat.

3

Adapt parks and pools to the needs and preferences of children and the elderly by creating safe and accessible play areas, varied sports facilities, and activity programs that promote inclusion and enjoyment for different age groups.

4

Designate areas in the neighborhood to create community urban gardens with rest areas and/or fruit zones, sheltered from the heat, to foster interaction among neighbors in a cool and pleasant environment, thus promoting social cohesion and shared enjoyment of green spaces.

5

Allow unrestricted access to parks, especially during periods of high temperatures.

6

Promote local knowledge, resources, and practices on heat adaptation in educational centers and community programs to enhance the capacity of communities to manage heat effectively, sustainably, and safely.

We encourage the authorities and relevant organizations to seriously consider these proposals to improve the adaptability and quality of life in our neighborhood during summer. This manifesto represents the citizens' commitment to raising awareness about summer energy poverty and actively seeking solutions.