How Do We Learn Now? Pluralising Urban Pedagogies in the COVID-19 Pandemic

Urbanisation
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Abstract

Since 2020, pedagogues and learners in the field of urban planning and practice have rapidly responded to new demands and realities posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. These have included shifting the modes and sites of learning from classrooms to screens, developing new programmes to build urgently required local capacities, fostering partnerships and platforms that sustain remote ways of learning together, and facilitating multi-sensorial and inclusive learning practices. This plurality of pedagogic adaptation and innovation suggests complex and nuanced relations with urban (in)equality, going beyond the dominant narrative of the digital divide and distributive inequalities in higher education. This article reflects on three experiences of critical pedagogies undertaken by researchers and activists, social movements and organised civil society from India, Brazil and Argentina. As the impacts of the pandemic on the nexus between urban practice and pedagogy unfold, we argue that these reflexions-in-action on decisions made, along with their underlying principles, are important stimuli for pluralising questions of what, where, with whom and how we learn to respond to urban inequalities. Moreover, they open nuanced discussions to strategically reimagine future hybrid learning trajectories to support pathways to urban equality.

Keywords

Critical pedagogy, urban equality, COVID-19, social movements, activism

A Call for Rethinking Pedagogies During COVID-19

Pandemic responses and their impacts have undoubtedly put into the spotlight and exacerbated urban inequalities, be it in regard to housing and stay-at-home policies (Fenley, 2020; Nivette et al., 2021;

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Obasi & Anierobi, 2021), the marginalisation of clinically vulnerable populations (Martins-Filho et al., 2020), the exploitation of essential workforces and changing livelihoods (Raju et al., 2021), or the drastic increase in gender-based violence (Sri et al., 2021), among many others. At the same time, collective urban practices have emerged, which activate and expand our imaginaries of more just and equal urban futures in four dimensions: 'equitable distribution of goods and services', including health infrastructure and sanitation; 'reciprocal recognition' of differential identities and their intersections (e.g., the roles of women and migrants as essential workers); 'parity of political participation' in formal and informal decision-making spaces; and networks of 'solidarity and mutual care'. Strengthening equality across these four dimensions is fundamental to cope with the immediate impacts of the pandemic and build long-term collective strategies to address their root causes and consequences (Acuto, 2020; Osuteye et al., 2021; Wilkinson, 2020).

The challenge of simultaneously diagnosing and tackling inequalities across these four dimensions demands learning processes that sustain and expand individual and collective knowledges and practices (Kamalipour & Peimani, 2021; Simon et al., 2021). Within the context of community learning and intersecting vulnerabilities, Dutta et al. (2020) call for 'permanent work that prepares communities for crises, simultaneously building anchors for imagining radically transformative futures' (p. 12). Nurturing pedagogies for change of and with urban practitioners, such as government officials, organised civil society, academics and ordinary citizens, is considered a key lever to strategically activate and build pathways to urban equality while navigating rapidly changing and uncertain contexts (Florida et al., 2021).

Over the course of the intersecting crises emerging throughout the pandemic, diverse in-person modes of learning have adapted to what is variously called online learning, remote teaching, emergency remote teaching and, more recently, hybrid pedagogies. Galvanised by institutional interests, online learning platforms and investments in digital infrastructure, pedagogues have shifted the modes and sites of learning from classrooms to screens, developed new programmes to build urgently required local capacities, fostered partnerships to sustain remote ways of learning together and facilitated multi-sensorial and inclusive learning practices (Wesely & Allen, 2020; Wesely & Lipietz, 2021). In these shifts, emerging publications have diagnosed a renewed focus on pedagogies of care (Ba, 2021; Corbera et al., 2020) and how the concerns of uncertainty, disruption and crisis during the pandemic have shaped formal education relations, motivations and pedagogic choices (Chow et al., 2020; Lepp et al., 2021; Sapon-Shevin & SooHoo, 2020). Moreover, Álvarez-Arregui et al. (2021) stress the role of pedagogic leadership, reflection and humanised decision-making processes that enable creative and adaptive learning environments in times of crises. However, several authors caution that these learning experiences also have to be seen in the context of inequalities in education, exacerbated by differential access to digital devices, hardware, internet connectivity, reliable electricity supply, digital literacies, software, quiet spaces in which to learn and systemic support for expanded or adaptive pedagogical repertoires (Ba, 2021; Lepp et al., 2021; Oyedotun, 2020; Pokhrel & Chhetri, 2020; Smith & Hornsby, 2020).

As the pandemic has shifted what and where we learn, who learns and how we learn to build capacities for urban equality in its four dimensions, this article seeks to unpack the pedagogic decisions that occurred in these shifts. Arguing for a focus on principles and practices to guide pedagogical shifts, Smith and Hornsby (2020) remind us that a 'pandemic pedagogy is also about how we frame teaching and learning in our public discourses.… The values that inform how we approach face-to-face teaching, also inform our strategies as we pivot to online learning' (p. 2). We draw on Giroux (2004) and Freire (1970) to examine crucial principles and practices of critical pedagogy as an umbrella to bring together reflections of shifts in content, learners and methods, and articulate them towards learning for, and in, situated and reflexive practice towards urban equality. Giroux (2004) highlights how critical pedagogy

speaks to 'bridging the gap between learning and everyday life, understanding the connection between power and knowledge, and extending democratic rights and identities by using the resources of history' (p. 34). Indeed, the field of critical pedagogy has a long history of engaging with learning for change, enunciating the politicality of pedagogies and the pedagogies of political struggles (Allen et al., in press).

While critical pedagogies are widely and diversely practiced, they share common principles. They forefront dialogic and horizontal learning in an iterative process of reflection and action, theory and practice, where 'no one teaches another, nor is anyone self-taught. People teach each other, mediated by the world, by the cognizable objects which in banking, top-down education are "owned" by the teacher' (Freire, 1970, p. 80). Further, higher education institutions, and formal institutions in general, are only seen as one among many sites of learning, with strong consideration given to pedagogic experiences in civil society, social movements and other urban practices (Anand et al., 2021). Critical pedagogy further reminds us of the importance of context and the recognition of the pluralistic and complex histories that underline contemporary struggles of urban inequalities. As such, it challenges us to resist the temporal linearity suggested in terms like pre-pandemic, pandemic and post-pandemic pedagogies and brings nuance to the spatial binaries encapsulated in the notions of 'on-site' and 'remote' teaching and learning.

As the impacts of the pandemic on the nexus between (in)equality in urban practice and pedagogy continue to unfold, we propose reflexions-in-action on decisions made, along with their underlying principles, as important stimuli for pluralising questions of how we learn now, including who learns what, where, and with what consequences. Specifically, we seek to contribute to a better understanding of shifts in pedagogies beyond higher education, as well as to bring the four-dimensional reflections on urban equality into the analysis, to go beyond limited discourses of inequalities in pedagogic discussions related to the digital divide in the schooling and university system.

Reflexions-in-Action from Urban Pedagogues

This article analyses the reflexions-in-action of three pedagogic experiences that have been adapted and/or implemented since March 2020, and which explicitly or implicitly aim to activate and strengthen the agency of urban practitioners to address inequalities. These experiences work beyond higher education and comprise: (a) Programa de Formación en Derechos para Referentes de Barrios Populares [Formative Programme on Rights for Community Leaders], developed by Asociación Civil por la Igualdad y la Justicia [Civil Association for Equality and Rights, ACIJ] in Argentina; (b) co-learning workshops with housing rights activists anchored by the Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS) in India and (c) Escola da Cidadania [Citizenship School], led by Pólis Institute in Brazil. The selection of these three cases was motivated, on the one hand, by the authors' research and contribution to these experiences as part of the Knowledge in Action for Urban Equality (KNOW) programme. On the other hand, through selecting experiences from different geographies and institutional backgrounds, we aimed to learn by comparing the diverse approaches and shifts in responding to the pandemic.

- ACIJ's legal empowerment programme for community leaders shifted to virtual encounters supported by a widened alliance of pedagogues, while retaining and innovating elements of embodied learning.
- IIHS's co-learning engagement foregrounded the development of livelihood modules, starting with income generation, putting on hold further roll out of existing workshops with activists on housing and urban planning. Some of the authors were actively involved in co-designing and anchoring these workshops at IIHS.

- Pólis Institute's Citizenship School experimented with a radically different way of learning through social media, which has expanded its 'gravitational field' to more diverse learners in terms of their geographic locations in Brazil as well as their social identities.

Reflections of these pedagogic experiences are based on in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 10 urban pedagogues,[2] conducted between August and October 2021, as well as extensive written documentation of each experience and ongoing conversations until February 2022. The interviews aimed to elicit the key pedagogic decisions that were made at different stages of the pedagogic experience during the pandemic. They focused on the principles and practices these decisions were based upon and the surprises and unexpected considerations and outcomes they produced.

Situating the three learning experiences in their pre-COVID-19 contexts, the following analysis focuses on the pedagogic shifts that occurred along three interrelated parameters: learners, curriculum design and content, and modes of delivery.

Re-situating Rights-Based Learning with Community Leaders in Argentina

The pedagogies of ACIJ in Argentina are built on principles of critical popular education, that is, building on learners' and pedagogues' knowledges and experiences to nurture and expand the room for engagement in political and legal processes. Specifically, ACIJ challenges the hegemonic idea of the 'university-educated legal professional' as the only actor qualified to undertake rights-based urban practices. In 2019, ACIJ's course to empower community leaders from popular neighbourhoods aimed to build capacities and skills to claim their right to the city. It was partly held at the Faculty of Law, University of Buenos Aires, a counter-hegemonic pedagogic decision which was even more pronounced considering that many community leaders set foot for the first time in the faculty building despite it overlooking, and being adjacent to, their neighbourhood.

> In that sense, it was interesting to think about the entry of representatives from popular neighbourhoods to that materiality, to that space, to produce knowledge in a dialogic way. How to democratise knowledge in relation to law in its interaction with the territory and with the urban space? (R. Fassina, interview, 21 September 2021; authors' translation from Spanish)

At the beginning of the pandemic, ACIJ responded rapidly to the change in learners' needs, a shift in content towards building the capacities of community leaders to claim their right to access health and related basic services. As ACIJ had not previously worked on these themes, they began collaborating with Fundación Huésped and Techo Argentina to rapidly expand their pedagogic portfolio. A collaboration with the former was considered strategic as this organisation was part of the health advisory committee to the government during the pandemic.

> Generating these types of synergies and alliances allowed us to expand the repertoire of issues we could talk about. And that for me is a lesson learned that will remain within our repertoire of action: to not get intimidated and stick [in our courses] only to the tools that we already handle and that we can transfer to the community; instead, to see which allies we can communicate with so that they can take their tools to the neighbourhood. Allies, who do not usually work in informal neighbourhoods [*villas*], such as Fundación Huésped, whose work has previously not engaged with popular neighbourhoods. (F. Mesel, interview, 21 September 2021; authors' translation from Spanish)

While the alliance gave flexibility to the content and architecture of the course, ACIJ aimed to retain its pedagogic approach to embodied learning, that is, the ability to make the neighbourhood and the territory the site of learning for change. The shift from interactive, in-person workshops as the main sites of learning, towards audiovisual, two-dimensional, virtual encounters completely blanked out the adoption of pedagogies that rely on all senses, as well as radically altered the overall sense of self and surroundings of participants and pedagogues. It provoked the question of how and to what extent pedagogues could replicate the emotionality of learning that is central to situated and embedded pedagogies.

ACIJ explicitly targeted this loss of bodily dimensions with a range of pedagogic innovations. Noting the difficulties that learners had with interrupted connectivity, shorter attention spans and multiple obligations in the household during the session, ACIJ decided to pluralise the site of learning. Hence, rather than shifting from in-person workshops to online workshops as the only mode of encounter, pedagogues diversified the means through which learners could engage with discussions. Deciding to use only WhatsApp rather than online learning platforms, which require downloads or particular technical capacities, their programme developed a multi-sensorial virtual toolbox (*caja de herramientas*) to nurture the pedagogic process. This toolbox was shared weekly via a WhatsApp group and contained a summary and video of their synchronous encounters, as well as something to read, something to watch, and something to see, to stimulate emotional and sensorial learning.

The decision to approach emotional learning through this toolbox was based on a combination of previously held experiences and principles: It drew on their experience with WhatsApp groups, which had been created by learners in pre-pandemic programmes, as a means to collectivise and expand discussions beyond the workshop sessions, as well as to share important information with peers. The pedagogues had the sensibility to design and implement the course on the basis of existing learning practices; a sensibility that is closely tied to ACIJ's commonly held principles of practising critical and popular pedagogy grounded in the learner's knowledges, experiences and needs. Moreover, pedagogues were highly conscious of how life in the neighbourhood demanded a capacity for resilience and opportunities for engagement, which translated into the confidence to count on the high capacity of learners to adapt to any kind of new and challenging situation. As expressed by one of the pedagogues:

> I believe there is a neighbourhood resilience to adapt to the challenges that are being imposed; because, in general, the neighbours have to be able to speak about their problems, be it in person, virtually, by phone or via TV cameras; because they always have problems, because they always face barriers to expressing their needs. Hence, luckily, they adapted really well to that dynamic of being able to know at what moment to bring up an issue of the neighbourhood in virtual spaces. (R. Fassina, interview, 21 September 2021; authors' translation from Spanish)

Continuing Dialogue with Housing Rights Activists in India

IIHS has been working with land and housing rights activists from different parts of India since 2015, primarily through workshops, to strengthen, expand and diversify their capacities in urban planning. Over the years, the co-design and implementation of these workshops have become spaces of co-learning for activists, IIHS staff and students (Anand et al., 2021). In December 2019 and February 2020, workshops were conducted in Indore with a focus on master planning and housing tenure. Simultaneously, the design of livelihood modules and workshops was being explored in response to the demands expressed by the activists and their community partners.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 brought all engagements of co-learning to a standstill, while the first lockdown also highlighted severe inequalities and the differential impact of the pandemic on people's lives and livelihoods, as illustrated by one of the activists:

> If we compare the situation before and during the pandemic, it has completely turned on its head. Before the pandemic, people were somewhat settled [workwise] and we could speak to them about other issues [of housing and master planning]. But in the last year, new issues have come to the fore, ranging from livelihoods to education to mental health. These are the immediate problems, so it is difficult to discuss other things, whether about the *basti* [settlement] or anything else, they take a back seat. Now we have nothing to eat at home. Our households are falling apart. Our children cannot study. How are we supposed to deal with that? With no income and no work, families are struggling to stay afloat at the moment. (A. Anand, interview, 30 August 2021; authors' translation from Hindi)

The lockdowns and loss of livelihoods meant that putting food on the table became top priority, while a critical engagement with larger urban planning processes seemed far-fetched, making the existing portfolio of IIHS workshops less of a priority. Driven by the dimension of mutual care and solidarity, IIHS team members and those activists working with IIHS as 'fellows of practice' (Frediani et al., 2020) continued to exchange ideas on how to best engage with local communities in the pandemic context. Through this dialogue, it emerged that there was an urgent need to support the communities in building alternative livelihoods, as the majority of them had lost work during the lockdown. As expressed by one of the IIHS team members, the workshops became an open pedagogic conversation and a 'space for discussion to think through issues or troubleshoot, as and when needed' (R. Lall, interview, 30 August 2021).

As the dialogue continued with the fellows of practice, they shared livelihood challenges that residents were experiencing across their networks of communities in Delhi, Indore and Bengaluru, and how they were approaching the issues in various ways as a result of the impact of the pandemic restrictions. The fellow of practice in Indore and their team were keen to co-develop an initiative with IIHS. Through discussions, an initial engagement plan emerged to support a group of approximately 30 women across three settlements in Indore, who had lost their livelihoods as domestic workers during the lockdown, to start home-based enterprises for income generation. Thus, rather than learning for policy advocacy and strategic action in urban planning and housing, the focus shifted to developing livelihood capacities to respond to immediate precarity and loss of means for sustenance. This shift in curricula, to respond to the immediacy of income generation, was distinct for both the IIHS team as well the activists in Indore, and yet emerged from the needs expressed by the activists embedded in the ground reality. Reflecting upon the shift, an IIHS team member shared the following:

> We began [workshops with activists] with this whole idea of agency-building in engaging with systemic processes, acts, policies, and also what is happening city-wide, so experience-sharing, supporting one another.… The conversations, as the pandemic went on, two and three months post-lockdown, around July 2020, moved to support systems for the immediate environment and that too for finding work, for finding food, for not getting evicted, to just stay put. (S. Kundu, interview, 30 August 2021)

In response to these immediate demands and shifting priorities, the team co-developed a series of modular workshops ranging from soap-making (a product that was in demand during the pandemic) to setting up and managing enterprises. Given that a fully virtual pedagogic experience was not an option due to participants' situation as well as the nature of the content, the workshops were designed as in-person training sessions facilitated by the activists, with virtual participation from the IIHS team and external resource persons, as well as extended local support after the workshops.

While on the one hand, the pandemic instilled a shared sense of urgency to learn and, act, on the other hand, pedagogic decision-making processes and their implementation were severely hindered by wider developments, which meant the workshops could not be delivered eventually. Obstructions included varying degrees of lockdowns and restrictions in Bangalore and Indore that restricted intra- and inter-city movement; activists' involvement in other political moments such as farmers' protests, which took priority; limited access to markets and raw materials for training and starting enterprises; all amid day-to-day challenges of remote work and coordination among pedagogues and negotiating changing circumstances. Although the pedagogic team accounted for uncertainty and planned for short-term intervals, the devastating second wave in India in mid-2021 threw a final spanner in the works. Nevertheless, the team felt that the experience of collaboratively adapting and readjusting the process and shift in content together provided several lessons that will lay the foundation for both the process and content of future capacity-building engagements with communities.

Reverberating: Amplifying Learning for Action Across the Citizenship School

At Pólis Institute in São Paulo, the pandemic hit just as the Citizenship School was reconstituting itself as a comprehensive pedagogic programme after years of offering more dispersed capacity-building courses. Contrary to the experiences of IIHS and ACIJ, the pedagogic shift at Pólis Institute was not primarily driven by the content demands of a specific group of learners in response to the pandemic. Rather, pedagogues sought to maintain the integrity of the Citizenship School as a formative and strategic experience to build the capacities of learners as urban and territorial citizens with rights and responsibilities.

In the efforts to relaunch the Citizenship School, the shift to online learning was initially perceived as a hindrance, as it did not allow pedagogues and invited guests to pursue their stated modes and objectives of learning. For example, one of the planned activities was to invite a drag queen to perform, discuss and sensitise participants to the relevance and meaning of the 'right to the city' for LGBTQI+ communities. As she already had a strong online presence and audience, in-person engagements added value, but her planned contribution was not realised. However, as the courses progressed, pedagogues recognised and nurtured the possibilities of online learning, specifically in regard to expanding the school's gravitational field to learners with diverse, intersectional identities. This realisation came from evaluating the first series of courses, which attracted not only a high number of learners (400–500 registered learners per course) but also a diversified group, in terms of a wider reach to more remote geographic regions in Brazil, as well as more diverse socio-economic backgrounds.

> Instead of a group composed mainly of white, middle-class intellectuals from the city of São Paulo, we expanded this field to people belonging to different groups from all over the country, which enriched our discussions by bringing other perspectives and agendas for the cities, while we strengthened the impact of discussions on urban issues by facilitating and promoting educational processes based on dialogic pedagogical bases, oriented towards social transformation. (R. Faria G Iacovini, interview, 5 October 2021)

The reciprocal recognition of existing knowledges and experiences of learners and pedagogues became fundamental for shifting the design and facilitation of the courses. For example, peer learning was elevated by juxtaposing participants' experiences from different states with varying democratic histories and ways of manifesting their rights to the city and territory. Collaborative mapping, a collaborative musical playlist on the right to the city, and photo collections from participants which showed issues of gender (in)equality in their contexts, were among the pedagogic tools used to stimulate comparative

discussions and the production of translocal knowledge. Importantly, peer learning did not stay on the screen but travelled to the learners' territorial practices. For example, a participant from North Brazil stated how he was able to resist an eviction due to the rights-based strategies he learnt in the school.

Moreover, many learners saw an opportunity to engage with the online Citizenship School through their social media accounts, reverberating from more mainstream online learning platforms (the synchronous learning sessions hosted by Pólis Institute) towards social media, with more diffuse and networked processes of discussion and knowledge exchange.[3] Learners—some with many followers and widely recognised—autonomously continued discussions on Instagram, TikTok and other platforms, thereby reflecting on, consolidating and transforming the content into even more accessible and accessed formats. While this initially happened unintentionally, these processes were increasingly nurtured by pedagogues, for example, by triggering public discussions on Twitter about what constitutes a feminist city, which in turn served as input to the curriculum design. This pedagogic approach to reverberate discussions has opened up the Citizenship School's gravitational field, that is, the reach and resonance of its pedagogic and political muscle to expand learning. Moreover, it has opened up a space for rethinking and expanding the core concepts of the school towards digital citizenship and digital social mobilisation.

Going Forward: How Do We Learn Now?

The three pedagogic experiences—ACIJ's legal empowerment programme, IIHS's co-learning engagement and Pólis Institute's Citizenship School—are rooted in the principles and practices of critical pedagogy, implicitly and explicitly addressing inequalities in education as well as in urban practices, which have been highlighted, and oftentimes exacerbated, by the pandemic. The three experiences reveal the nuances in decisions made amid navigating uncertainty and shifts during the pandemic, unsettling the predominant and simplistic narrative that pandemic pedagogies mean shifting existing curricula (in higher education institutions) online. These decisions ranged from building new alliances in order to create capacities to expand content, to finding creative and embedded methods to enable situated and embodied learning, to putting pedagogic engagements on hold to respond to more urgent priorities.

Across the cases, previously held principles have been the anchor for rapid adaptation and flexibility of pedagogic practices. For example, ACIJ's recognition of community leaders' resilience to adversities and strategic positioning of struggles on the (political) agenda has been essential in building capacities to claim their rights in a context where previously common practices of physical manifestations (such as marches and demonstrations) were prohibited. Pólis Institute's pedagogy seized opportunities presented by online learning, intentionally nurturing the increased geographic reach and diversity of participants based on the principle of horizontal learning, which recognised and elevated the situated knowledges and practices learners brought to its Citizenship School. IIHS's engagement—pressing pause on previous workshops yet continuing the dialogue with activists—drew from its principles of dialogical, incremental and learner-centric pedagogy, where the demand of what to learn itself was identified by and with the community. Solidarity and care, in conjunction with commitment to co-learning to fight epistemic injustices in urban development (Anand et al., 2021), continued to define the partnership between activists and communities in Indore and academics in Bengaluru. Holding these shared principles has given pedagogues the sensibilities to continuously reflect on and re-evaluate the knowledges and infrastructures of care (see Odendaal, 2021) required in the co-learning process. In other words, these underlying principles created certain room for manoeuvre (Safier, 2002), which was utilised and expanded as it coincided with a set of competencies of pedagogues and learners.

Beyond changes in the learning environment from in-person to online, this room for manoeuvre was expanded in regard to what is learnt, where, how, by and with whom. In the case of IIHS's engagement, decisions were made to respond to the urgent and shifting (learning) needs of income generation and sustenance, addressing the question of *what* is co-learnt and then thinking through the modalities of how to make it happen, by whom and for whom. ACIJ's pedagogic experience during the pandemic was linked to pedagogic decisions on *how* and *where* to learn. They identified ways for embodied learning in virtual environments, through diversifying the sites and moments of learning as well as creating a multi-sensorial toolbox to allow for engaging and building knowledges through something to hear, see and watch, as compensation for the sensory deprivation of online workshops. In the case of the Citizenship School, the experience of expanding the gravitational field of learners elevates the importance of considering *who* learns and *with whom*. Its online programme emphasised peer learning to create conversations among a higher number and more diverse group of learners, traversing social media and situated realities across Brazil as sites where capacities for (digital) citizenship were mobilised and strengthened. At the time of the interviews, pedagogues were in the process of reflecting and assessing if and how this expansion brought about a change in the profile of learners in terms of the identities (particularly, gender and migration) and knowledges they brought to debates around citizenship.

In conclusion, it is critical to reflect upon how recognising these plural shifts and their underlying decisions helps us reimagine pedagogies for urban equality. The analysis of the three experiences presented here suggests at least three core considerations.

First, the strategic importance of thinking through all four dimensions of urban equality—equitable distribution, reciprocal recognition, parity of political participation, and solidarity and mutual care—in their complexity, relations and priorities. Recognising and working with the changing dynamics of the four dimensions during the pandemic has been essential to finding pathways to address inequalities. In the case of the IIHS workshops, for instance, the pre-pandemic focus was on reciprocal recognition through co-learning to strengthen the technical capacities of activists as well as the knowledge of everyday realities in Indian cities for IIHS team members and students. The underlying aim of these engagements was to enhance activists' knowledge and skills to advocate for equitable distribution of housing and services in urban development planning and practice through varied modes of participation. During the pandemic, however, mutual care and solidarity became the entry point, to first acknowledge the differential impacts of the pandemic, and then through continued dialogue, thinking through ways of overcoming those impacts.

Second, the linearity oftentimes suggested in notions of pre- and post-pandemic pedagogies is problematised. Looking forward, none of the interviewees proposed to reverse their pedagogic engagement to pre-pandemic practices. Instead, pedagogues from Pólis Institute, for example, intend to pivot to hybrid learning in the near future. However, this hybridity does not only refer to the combination of face-to-face and online modes of learning. Importantly, they seek to combine their roots in in-person pedagogies with the wider public debate they have created through the social media engagements of the Citizenship School, such as through debating the right to the city in public festivals, which have strong reverberations on online platforms. Similarly, to the pedagogues in the IIHS experience, it is clear that future workshops need to combine a livelihood focus with housing and planning, as well as balance the immediate survival needs of the communities with long-term planning and advocacy. This suggests that, as we look towards pedagogies to increase capacities for urban equality, designing for hybridity goes beyond the linearity of recalibrating the mode and content of online and offline learning. It requires continued reflexion-in-action on the principles and practices of different pedagogical approaches and experiences in their pandemic trajectories to strategically navigate the room for manoeuvre, to expand on the possibilities and lessons learnt.

Third, the roles, competencies and learning processes of pedagogues are reframed and reflected on. All three cases have reaffirmed that critical pedagogy is not about depositing (abstract) content on learners, but

about curating contextually responsive and situated learning encounters that give space to emancipatory learning for practice. This might be to legal rights in the case of ACIJ, livelihoods and urban planning in the case of IIHS or to generate wider reflections that trigger changes in practice, as in the case of trans-local peer learning on the right to the city through Pólis Institute's Citizenship School that led to resisting an eviction. It was possible for ACIJ's pedagogues to rapidly increase their content repertoire through engaging in alliances with Fundación Huesped, Techo Argentina as well as many invited external contributors. However, fundamental pre-existing competencies, which have been honed and sharpened during the pandemic, were the pedagogues' abilities to recognise the needs as well as capacities of community leaders in informal settlements. Curating critical pedagogies to address urban inequalities in popular neighbourhoods requires harnessing and expanding the sensibilities as much as the knowledges and practices of urban pedagogues.

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Notes

1. Reflexions-in-action refer to processes of reflecting on ongoing pedagogic experiences that are intrinsically linked to action, that are opened to question values, assumptions, and practices, amongst other aspects.
2. We use the term 'urban pedagogues' to refer to people working in urban planning and practice in academia, NGOs, governments, civil society and more, and operating in and beyond formal spaces of education.
3. By 'reverberating', we mean pedagogies that are generative, allowing travel across space and time. They resonate with learners beyond the initial learning space, for example, through discussions that are shared and amplified on social media.

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