REPORT

Vie de Parvis Project's Impact Evaluation
on Saint-Roch District's Homeless People or Those at Risk of Becoming Homeless

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Summary:

Problematic: The revitalization of a neighborhood like Saint-Roch can transform its social composition. Many citizens condemn the judicialization of homeless people because many behaviors that are related to it may create an important insecurity feeling. Therefore, the proximity intervention may encourage homeless people to speak, to get involved in a project that they own, to reduce their loneliness and to develop relationships based on mutual recognition. [1]

Goal: The main goal of this evaluation is to document the impact of Vie de Parvis project's intervention methods on cohabitation and inclusion of homeless people and to assess their effects on homeless people in a significant social mix context.

The second goal is to identify the Vie de Parvis project's key success factors in achieving positive ripple effects in the community.

Method: Eight observation periods, 15 individual interviews and one focus-group were conducted and analyzed for this evaluation.

Results: The results show many ripple effects created by Vie de Parvis. The participants describe the project's distinct intervention approach, its positive impact on the tension level and the insecurity feeling among the citizens of the neighborhood, the central part played by the citizens and the cohesiveness that the project created.

The participants also explain the many conditions in which Vie de Parvis has evolved, describing the internal elements used to implement it and the contextual aspects of the project.

Discussion: In this discussion, a parallel can be made between the Vie de Parvis project and the homelessness situation in Saint-Roch. The project may create positive social interactions in the lives of homeless people or those at risk of becoming homeless and encourage their social engagement. It may also reinforce their relationships and their sense of belonging to a community. Furthermore, Vie de Parvis may assert their right to exist in the neighborhood.

The obtained results bring reflections on many aspects. In fact, it is possible to observe that Saint-Roch has multiple characteristics that facilitated the implementation of the project. The process chosen to develop and implement Vie de Parvis played a major role in the project's impact in the neighborhood.

Issues: To ensure the project's sustainability, it is important to pay attention to the existing issues, such as the scope and the diversity of the project's activities, and the many implications of the social mix agent's turnover.

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1. To abridge the summary, the references are not mentioned. They are in the "problematic" section of the report.

Contents

1. Introduction

This report presents the approach and the results of the Vie de Parvis project's evaluation. This evaluation was partially funded by the Government of Canada within the "SPLI-Solutions innovantes à l'itinérance" program (Homelessness innovative solutions). Vie de Parvis allows the implementation of innovative social actions aiming for better social cohabitation and inclusion as means to prevent and to reduce homelessness. This project started in 2012 with the coordinated efforts of many actors of Saint-Roch community. In 2005, the first evaluation of Vie de Parvis took place in 2015 and resulted in many relevant findings about the project's impact on the community. The current report is distinct from the previous one because it focuses on the homelessness reality in the neighborhood and Vie de Parvis's impact in this context. The current evaluation also paid particular attention to the factors that contributed to the project's implementation to enable its replication in other communities. First, the evaluation report first presents a general portrait of Saint-Roch's social mix context and the help resources available. We subsequently describe the analytical framework and the data gathering method used in the project. Finally, the results and a discussion about the relevant findings are exposed.

2. Background

The following section describes the revitalization and social mix concepts and explains the associated approaches usually used and their consequences on the population. These elements are particularly relevant for this evaluation because many authors have linked these urbanistic measures to insecurities regarding homeless people or those at risk of becoming homeless (Margier, Bellot, & Morin, 2014).

2.1 Social Contexts and Intervention Approaches

The term "revitalization" of a neighborhood refers to the development of the economic activity and of projects improving the neighborhood's physical environment and image (Vigneau, Doucet-Simard, Fortin, Lizotte, & Bédard, 2009). These transformations can attract the economic investment of the upper-middle class (Bonard & Thomann, 2009). In fact, the new "attractive" branding of the revitalized neighborhood changes its identity, so it appears as a profitable investment venture because of the potential economic value of the real property holdings (Bonard & Thomann, 2009). Such transformations can change the social composition of a neighborhood over time (Bélanger, Mercier, Carrier, Lachapelle, & Paulhiac, 2014).

An article about the revitalization of the Faubourg Saint-Laurent district in Montreal describes how the social mix is enacted in its public spaces with the presence of people from all social classes, without interactions between them (Bélanger et al., 2014). The increase in rent prices can bring the less fortunate households to leave and move in a more affordable neighborhood. When a local population is replaced by a more fortunate population, cohabitation between different social classes is inevitable (Bélanger et al., 2014). Such a context brings an insecurity climate for the local population and creates business opportunities for new residents (Parazelli, Bellot, Gagné, Morin, & Gagnon, 2013).

Sometimes, the need to protect the accessibility of the revitalized neighborhood arises. To do so, people implement measures for a "quantitative mix," which consists of creating minimum quotas for low-rent apartments (Bonard & Thomann, 2009). These types of measures are not sufficient to prevent social division because they do not influence the insecurities and the individual segregation strategies (Bonard & Thomann, 2009). For Parazelli et al. (2013), multiple tensions can arise from this transformation. Some people will see marginalized people's presence in public spaces as an "obstacle to the economic and residential development" (p. 24), which will fuel the social pressure to make them invisible (Parazelli et al., 2013). The gentrification phenomenon described as "the massive arrival of a new social class of residents performing high-level activities and earning a comfortable income" by Benali (2005, p. 3), can expand when the neighborhood's new branding is established.

From the perspective of social justice and equity, such "social cleansing" as observed in many Canadian cities is problematic. Many authors blow the whistle regarding the differential treatment of homeless people, shown by the judicialization of their way of life (Bouclin,

2016; Kennelly, 2015; Larose-Hébert et al., 2016). In fact, it is proven that changes in municipal regulations and the increased number of arrests for minor infractions, such as sleeping or drinking outside, are all part of the coercive strategies to enhance a city's reputation. These behaviors are often seen as disturbing and can cause important insecurity feeling among the population (Margier et al., 2014). Larose-Hébert et al. (2016) reply by asserting that homeless people, without a private space for themselves, are "forced to display their disruptive visibility" (p. 186), which makes them experience repression and marginalization.

The social problem of homelessness leads to two questions: how to control the behaviors that cause the insecurity feeling among the population and how to help homeless people in their housing integration process (Margier et al., 2014). However, other intervention approaches can be used since "there is no particular administrative category, specific intervention form or standardized approach regarding homelessness" (Carle, 2014, p. 18). A multitude of proximity intervention projects took place in Quebec municipalities to help homeless and socially excluded people. The literature says that these interventions can encourage homeless people to speak up, to get involved in a project, to reduce their loneliness and to develop relationships based on mutual recognition (Baillergeau, 2008; Fontaine & Wagner, 2017; La-rose-Hébert et al., 2016). Proximity interventions can help to reach disaffiliated people and create relationships with them (Baillergeau, 2008; Larose-Hébert et al., 2016). The presence of a support worker and the mediation work between people from different social origins can impact the rise of insecurity feelings, often observed in areas experiencing a strong social mix (Baillergeau, 2008; Fontaine & Wagner, 2017).

2.2. Homelessness situation in Saint-Roch

Saint-Roch district is well known for its historical characteristics and for its dynamism and density. It was part of many urban planning and revitalization projects over the years (Freedman, 2009; Vigneau et al., 2009). Nonetheless, it is still one of the most economically disadvantaged neighborhoods of Quebec City and hosts a little less than 100 non-profit organizations (Table de quartier l'EnGrEnAgE de Saint-Roch, 2015).

A research carried out by Vigneau et al. (2009) describes an important social mix in the neighborhood. They shaped a statistic portrait of Saint-Roch citizens, which appear to be divided into two population types. The predominant group of residents, those over 65 years old, represents 14% of the population, followed by residents between 25 and 29 years old, representing 13% of the population. It is possible to find two different educational levels in the population: those with a university degree and those without a diploma. According to the authors, a significant part of the population has an annual income of less than $20 000. *The Territorial Deprivation Portrait* carried out by the *Centre de la santé et des services sociaux de la Vieille-Capitale (CSSS-VC)* also got the same results, adding that almost half of the citizens don't have an official job and that a quarter of the population has an annual income under $10 000 (Bouchard & Lavoie, 2011).

In the 1980s, Saint-Roch was perceived as a dangerous, shabby and poor neighborhood. Ten years later, many transformations changed its image: the Saint-Roch's Garden, the arrival of many new businesses and the demolition of Saint-Roch's shopping mall (Vigneau et al.,

2009). A research carried out by Freedman (2009) with Saint-Roch citizens coming from different socioeconomic groups documents the ripple effects of these transformations. Many said they don't think they are still the target population of these shops and noted an increased police presence in the area (Freedman, 2009). Those situations fuel their feeling of being pushed away from Saint-Roch and give the impression that new residents want to impose their value system. Even though homeless people only disturb a small part of the newcomers, the author explains that they experience a strong judicialization of their presence. The same phenomenon is also experienced with more disputed subjects such as prostitution and illegal substances sale and use. Could it be that homeless people bring an image of poverty and low dynamism to the neighborhood (Freedman, 2009)? The research also explains the existing contradiction between the will to keep a socially diversified population and the progressive disappearance of low-cost shops (Freedman, 2009).

There is a specific social mix context in Saint-Roch, with two distinct groups coexisting without interacting (Freedman, 2009; Vigneau et al., 2009). According to the authors, it would be more accurate to use the term cohabitation because they share public space without having a common identity. Freedman (2009) illustrates it by the image of someone crossing the street to avoid a homeless person. In this situation, what can we do? Many of the participants speak about the importance of Saint-Roch citizens getting together and developing communication to reduce tensions by creating long-lasting social ties between citizens from different backgrounds (Freedman, 2009; Vigneau et al., 2009). This idea would help develop a shared vision of Saint-Roch's social environment and a positive image of socially excluded people as active participants in neighborhood life.

Because homelessness is part of Saint-Roch's reality (Table de quartier l'EnGrEnAgE de Saint-Roch, 2015), inaction could cause an increase in the repressive acts against homeless people. Some authors studied the management of this social phenomenon in the district. They reported that the only presence of a homeless person in the public space can be seen as a threat to the public peace because of the insecurity feeling it creates (Chesnay, Bellot, & Sylvestre, 2014). The perceived threat could be strengthened by the simple vision of homeless people, which could explain the "public space contraction" (p. 4) in the years before by various control means (Chesnay et al., 2014), such as infraction tickets. Chesnay et al. (2014) point out the high judicialization of homelessness in La Cité-Limoilou area and the high number of infraction tickets issued, particularly in Saint-Roch. The authors explain that the judicialization could be linked to the revitalization of the area and to the touristic development of the city center. Therefore, the presence of homeless people is "regulated" with repressive police practices under the expectations of other citizens, thus controlling the neighborhood's attractive image (Chesnay et al., 2014).

This repression causes negative consequences on the targeted social group. Couillard and Laforce-Lafontaine (2016) mention that the current regulations of Quebec City specifically penalize those who have no private space. In fact, they can receive an infraction ticket for unavoidable behaviors such as sleeping, or other behaviors linked to personal problems such as public drunkenness or being in crisis. The authors condemn the significant leeway given to the authorities, which can increase social profiling. For example, regulations do not define what should be considered or not as "loitering" in a public space. Quebec City recently signified its intention to "eliminate social inequalities and avoid the discrimination experienced

by socially excluded people" (Quebec City, 2018). Thus, prison sentences will not be used for people with many tickets related to the infractions listed hereinbefore (Quebec City, 2018). In such a context, it seems relevant to find other intervention methods to act on the insecurity feeling directed towards homeless people (Table de quartier l'EnGrEnAgE de Saint-Roch, 2015; Vallée & Lagrange, 2015).

Numerous intervention methods are used to act on the complex social problem of homelessness. A proximity intervention approach is generally effective with socially excluded people (Larose-Hébert et al., 2016). In Saint-Roch area, many nonprofits use a proximity intervention approach with homeless people or those at risk of becoming homeless. The nonprofit *SQUAT Basse-Ville* works with teenagers and young adults of the neighborhood. Its goal is to "accommodate and support the youth living homelessness situations" by creating an adequate social safety net (SQUAT Basse-Ville, 2016). The *Projet Intervention Prostitution Québec* (PIPQ) uses a similar approach to reach sex workers. With a street work approach, this organization wants to develop alternative concrete ways that fit sex workers' needs and reality and to raise community awareness about these (PIPQ, 2016). The nonprofit organization *Point de repères* works to help marginalized or homeless drug users. The nonprofit draws attention to discrimination, stigmatization, and loneliness these people can experience. Its goal is to develop trust with them, at their own pace, with a welcoming attitude fostering trust and responsibility (Point de repères, 2018).

With the existence of all these organizations, how can we improve even more the interventions regarding homelessness? Because of the social mix context of Saint-Roch and of the literature quoted, it is possible that creating a dialogue between the different social groups of the neighborhood could reduce the insecurity feeling regarding homeless people. Many initiatives already exist in the neighborhood. To create a different and complementary approach, many partners supported the creation of a new proximity function in 2012: the social mix agent. Vie de Parvis being an "observation, mediation, intervention and public spaces animation" project in Saint-Roch (Table de quartier l'EnGrEnAgE de Saint-Roch, 2015, p. 11), the social mix agent fits in its mission. The social mix agent's role is to facilitate the communication between all social groups; thus, it is different from other proximity intervention agents. The social mix agent doesn't target a specific problem: his goal is to be an intermediary where many social realities meet and create a dialogue (Table de quartier l'EnGrEnAgE de Saint-Roch, 2015). The relationships generated between the neighborhood inhabitants facilitate the cohabitation and reduce tensions and insecurity feelings (Table de quartier l'EnGrEnAgE de Saint-Roch, 2015). As described before, this idea seems even more relevant because of the complexity of interventions regarding homelessness and of the insecurity feeling that arises.

Vallée and Lagrange (2015) explain the project's impact on the dangerousness perception regarding homeless people in a first formal evaluation. They found a decrease in the prejudices and the dangerousness perception regarding Saint-Roch, the Saint-Roch church's parvis and the homeless and marginalized people that use it daily (Vallée & Lagrange, 2015). The social mix agent's practices of popular education and raising awareness might cause this transformation. Both authors reveal the public space appropriation encouraged by the social mix agent and by the Vie de Parvis' supported initiatives: the public piano and the parvis' urban designs allow its users to mobilize and develop a sense of solidarity (Vallée & Lagrange, 2015). However, they report that the sense of belonging is stronger among the less fortunate social

groups and those who get help from local non-profit organizations. The interviewed people also say that the social mix agent helps making the information circulate among the citizens, for example regarding a public consultation about a new project (Vallée & Lagrange, 2015).

All the activity reports documenting the project's evolution shed light on the social mix agent's role. The social mix agents wrote these reports working in collaboration with Table de quartier l'EnGrEnAgE de Saint-Roch, a fiduciary of the Vie de Parvis project and a member of the monitoring committee. They explain the many actions carried out by the social mix agent. It explains the collaborations with many people and organizations and the documentation process of the strengths and the problems related to the population's quality of life and to the social mix (Vallée Dore, 2015; Wright, 2017). The agent's networking role can be divided into many branches: start a collective reflection on cohabitation in the neighborhood, get involved in committees congruent with the evolving needs of the community and facilitate the dialogue between different social groups (Vallée Dore & Wright, 2016; Wright, 2017). The agent supports people in a way that is complementary with the many other non-profit organizations (Vallée Dore, 2015). The intervention statistics showed that active listening and prevention were the most frequent interventions by the agent (Vallée Dore, 2015; Vallée Dore & Wright, 2016; Wright, 2017). In the debrief meeting of 2017, it was said that the social mix agent is mostly there before a crisis happen. It was also said that the cohabitation needs are migrating and drifting out of the church parvis; the social mix difficulties are no longer concentrated there.

3. Analytical Framework ———————————

The evaluation practitioner wrote section 3 (*analytical framework*) and section 4 (*method*) based on the evaluation committee discussions. The committee members met many times between fall 2017 and winter 2018. The members are: Annie Fontaine (teacher at the Social Work and Criminology School of Université Laval), Isabel Bernier (community organizer at Centre intégré universitaire de santé et de services sociaux de la Capitale-Nationale), Boromir Vallée Dore (social mix agent 2014–2016), Jean-Sébastien Wright (social mix agent since 2016), Émile Piché and Marine Sériès (Table de quartier l'EnGrEnAgE de Saint-Roch).

3.1. Homelessness Definition

Further than the many words associated to living on the street (e.g. hobo, tramp, beggar, street youth), homelessness is still perceived as a marginalized way of life outside the social norm (Margier et al., 2014). Theoretically, this phenomenon doesn't have a clear definition (Regroupement pour l'aide aux itinérants et itinérantes de Québec (RAIIQ) et al., 2008). The SPLI program draws distinctions between chronic and occasional homelessness (duration) and between absolute, hidden or relative homelessness (living unit type) (Canadian Government, 2016). For this evaluation, *Quebec's National Policy Against Homelessness* (2014) definition of homelessness has been chosen, because it offers a more complete array of the dimensions of the homelessness phenomenon. The policy describes this social phenomenon as follows:

> A social disaffiliation process and a social rupture situation that manifest themselves as a person's difficulty to get a stable, safe, appropriate and clean place of residence because of a lack in housing or because of a person's inability to stay there, and, also, a person's difficulty to maintain functional, stable and safe social bonds in the community. Homelessness can be defined by a combination of social and individual factors happening in a man or a woman's life course. (Quebec Government, 2014, p. 30)

This vision of the social phenomenon of homelessness guided the development of data collection tools and data analysis.

3.2. Social Bonds Analytical Framework

An analytical framework was used to help interpret the many field data collected. The supervising committee chose Paugam's social bonds theory (2014) because it can embed the homelessness issue in a larger perspective that considers the importance of social bonds between people. Paugam (2014) describes the complexity of the many social ties in organizing our social life and the role they play in meeting the needs of human beings to be protected and recognized in society. Paugam's (2014) theory thus helps explore the many aspects of socially marginalized people's experience and how these ruptures of social bonds affect their social integration.

The author names four bond types that, potentially, can all be broken. This rupture brings specific consequences based on the relationship type that is altered. The first category is the **lineal bond**. It is defined by the relationship a person has with his parents, his children, and his whole family. The second category is the **elective participation bond**. This category is defined by a self-construction of a social network because it implies socialization outside the family, such as friendships. The third category is the **organic participation bond**, which is defined by learning or playing a role as established by an institution. This includes working, studying, or volunteering. The last category is the **citizenship bond**, defined by Paugam as the belongingness to a nation that recognizes individual rights and responsibilities.

These four bond types complement one another and shape the social fabric surrounding all human beings. Depending on the social bonds' configuration, that can either impair or support people, a unique social integration will result. This integration is dynamic and fluid: it is a process evolving over time or, in other words, a trajectory towards social integration.

Depending on his social bonds configuration, a person can fit in any of the social integration paths described by Paugam (2014). He explains how social integration **succeeds** when all social bonds are strong, stable and interweaved: in that case, the person accesses a status and social support that guarantee a relatively complete fulfillment of his social needs. Even if he is exposed to risks of social bonds ruptures, such as a divorce or a demotion, he has the resources to anticipate and overcome them. Social integration becomes **weakened** when one or many social bonds are uncertain or undermined. Frustration, apathy, and discouragement can arise from this situation. For example, non-self-reliant elderly people can suffer from loneliness even if their family visits them. Social integration is **compensated** when a social bonds type is ruptured and, in a form of resistance, people over-invest their remaining social bonds to stay socially integrated. It can be illustrated by young adults who, after living many social bonds ruptures, such as dropping out of school or having family problems, join a group in which they practice illegal activities. Finally, social integration becomes **marginalized** when a person experiences cumulative social bonds ruptures. This is linked with the survival experience that can even be compared to a "social death". Such a phenomenon appears with homeless and jobless people who have no contact with their family and have unstable and periodic friendships.

The last section exposed the many issues facing homeless people in a neighborhood revitalization context. The feeling of being pushed out of their own neighborhood, the thought of being perceived as a threat to the public peace and the reduction of their access to the public spaces were all mentioned (Chesnay et al., 2014; Freedman, 2009). In this context, orienting this evaluation on the reinforcement of the social bonds and the improvement of the social integration of marginalized people makes sense.

4. Methods

4.1. Evaluation Objectives

This process will evaluate Vie de Parvis project's influence, through its practices facilitating cohabitation and social inclusion of people, on the homelessness realities in Saint-Roch neighborhood. The specific objectives are:

- Document Vie de Parvis initiatives' influence on the cohabitation and the social integration of marginalized people and the ripple effects that resulted in homeless people's lives (or those at risk of becoming homeless) in a strong social mix context.

- Identify the favorable conditions needed to create positive ripple effects with Vie de Parvis in the community.

4.2. Homelessness Operational Definition

The committee judged it relevant to develop an operational definition of homelessness. This definition would facilitate the data collection because it would help everybody understand the concept and allow the inclusion of people at risk of losing their home. So, when describing the evaluation project to interviewees, the evaluator explained the phenomenon as follows:

> In the life course of a person, some situations can make him feel increasingly isolated, increasingly "far" from other people (family, friends, neighbors, colleagues, support workers, etc.).
>
> Sometimes, this process can cause the loss of one's home or of a stable home. This can be slowed or limited by encounters or events that make a person feel more included in society.
>
> We would like to know if you think the Vie de Parvis project influences the life course of people who experienced difficult situations.

The committee developed this operational definition based on the *National Policy Against Homelessness* definition (Quebec Government, 2014) and the social bonds analytical framework (Paugam, 2014) presented before.

4.3. Evaluation Method

The data were collected from March to July 2018. To collect a diverse enough data, three methods were used: observation, individual interviews and group interviews. They all helped evaluate both sides of Vie de Parvis: the social mix agent's work and the projects (public piano, public fridge, and the parvis' urban furniture).

Eight observation periods took place between March and July 2018. They showed how the citizens interacted with the social mix agent and the projects located on the Saint-Roch church's parvis. To better understand the internal operation of Vie de Parvis, an observation period of the supervising committee was also part of the data collection. The observation plan is in Annex 1 of this document.

Fifteen individual interviews took place from March to May 2018. All interviews lasted between 30 minutes and one hour. The purpose was to document the experience and the understanding of people regarding Vie de Parvis project, in conjunction with the neighborhood's realities such as homelessness. The interviewed people were eight non-profit organization or institution representatives, three merchants and four socially engaged citizens. The individual interview plan is in Annex 2 of this document.

Finally, a group interview between three non-profit organization or institution representatives took place in May 2018 and lasted an hour and a half. This group interview's purpose was to talk about the evaluation findings and to reflect further about the ripple effects the project had on homeless people and the conditions that contributed to achieving Vie de Parvis' objectives. Because of the difference between how the group interview went and what was planned, for instance, because of the group composition and size, the meeting focused mostly on the project's conditions of success. The group interview plan is in Annex 3 of this document.

The data analysis was divided into several steps, developed in collaboration with Annie Fontaine, an evaluation committee member. First, to facilitate the analysis, the 16 interview audiotapes were transcribed and summarized into highlights. Second, a skim reading of each interview verbatim and an observation report allowed the evaluator to find analysis elements. Third, each interview or observation report was "vertically" codified, which means they were all separately analyzed to create descriptive content codes. Fourth, the descriptive codes were aggregated to create analysis categories and to allow a global reading of the content. This was the "horizontal" codification step. The third and fourth steps were done with the *QDA Miner Lite software,* a qualitative data analysis software. Finally, many links between the elements were pointed out: the categories reached, the reflection approaches, the analytical framework, and the conceptual definitions.

5. Results

The following section describes the results obtained from the observation periods and the interviews conducted with three different groups from Saint-Roch neighborhood: citizens, nonprofit or institution representatives and merchants. The section is divided into two parts: Vie de Parvis impacts and the conditions in which the project has evolved.

5.1. Findings

This section on the project's impact was divided into four categories that stood out during the analysis of the interviews and the observation periods.

5.1.1. Distinct Intervention Approaches

The data collected for this evaluation proved that Vie de Parvis is different in many aspects from other initiatives in the area. First, it is possible to name its relationship to the neighborhood's social dynamics, which are connected to the proximity of the multiple social realities in the area. The participants described several action guidelines chosen by the social mix agent.

We can see that the social mix agent puts the cohabitation dynamics in the heart of the conversations. A non-profit organization representative approves:

> I think there is a huge cultural relationship: someone must be there to create a link. It's not natural for us to create a relationship with a culture or image that's different from ours.

She goes on about how the social mix agent works:

> [He creates] social mix opportunities to better understand this subject. A social mix agent also has access to that zone of "that, we don't see in our everyday life".
>
> Personally, I don't have access to more fortunate people's reality, so I can sometimes trivialize it. The social mix agent is in-between both realities: his role is to bring it back, that "zone".

Sometimes, the agent must intervene on cohabitation dynamics, says an institution representative. In this case, he had to intervene when high-end condominium owners complained about the presence of people with a marginalized look near their home:

> We held a meeting between the police, the municipality, the condominium's board of management and [the social mix agent] for him to bring his vision of the realities of the neighborhood. He asked the owners: "When you see such people in the park, why don't you go talk to them?"

The social mix agent's presence made him a resource equivalent to none other in the neighborhood, and many people don't hesitate to call him when needed. Access to this resource is well seen in the neighborhood. From this perspective, a neighborhood institution representative added another city center issue met by local organizations:

> Because this is the problem with non-profit organizations: they can help you with older people, youth, injecting drug users...
>
> Within all these problems, the social mix agent is the first reference we go to when we have an undetermined problem that has consequences on our [organization's] life.

His precise knowledge of the neighborhood is an essential tool to inform, raise awareness and teach citizens about Saint-Roch's realities. This idea was brought by many participants during the evaluation. One person working for a neighborhood institution explains the concrete difference the agent can make:

> The small gains in understanding with people about differences and tolerance, only that... Definitely, those people influence other people afterward.

A Saint-Roch citizen participant also thinks the same way about his implication in the community and his knowledge about the emerging problems:

> With social mix agents in the district, they see it. They are more concerned, more interested in what's related to the neighborhood. They don't do it only for the money, that's for sure, it really comes from their heart

The interviewed people also highlight the projects' ripple effects on social dynamics. A lot of them think the projects' presence on the Saint-Roch church's parvis had a positive impact on the neighborhood atmosphere. These projects bear a strong symbolic meaning because they mean that multiple social realities are acknowledged and welcome. An interviewed citizen explains the impact they can have on the experience of a person experiencing precariousness:

> There is a lot of: this is our place, we take it, we do things for ourselves, that's the way it is. Maybe it makes themselves proud, a pride they that'd be taken away if it weren't there.

According to a shop owner, the projects also send a message to citizens that don't live in the neighborhood:

> When a tourist sees the fridge, he will tell himself: "Yes, we are in a city center, and there's homelessness." It sure is obvious that there is homelessness here, you know.
>
> But... It exists. I don't see why... Some people would like to hide them under a rug. As a community, we have to think about what we can do to help them.

More specifically, the fridge is an essential tool to raise awareness about food waste and food insecurity experienced by some people in the neighborhood. One of Saint-Roch's institution representatives states that:

> The fridge's goal is clear: people get to eat a little better. And it helps people and restaurants share.

For many participants, the fridge is essential to help those in need. One of the interviewed merchants points out that when he puts food donations in the fridge, the fridge is emptied in less than five minutes. An interviewed citizen also explains the importance the fridge has in the area:

> The fridge is an answer to an urgent need. They must eat, those people, and they are not the ones who will go look for vegetables in a food bank and make vegetable soup! The food problematic for those people is more related to social disorganization than to the services. [...] You know, if you are hungry, there is something in the fridge and you don't have to go somewhere and fill out paperwork. You can be anonymous. Some of them no longer want to go to an office and fill out paperwork.

5.1.2. Tension and (In)security

Many participants said they saw conflicts between citizens and note the precariousness of some Saint-Roch citizens' lives. Even if the participants were not unanimous about it, some raised how this situation was sometimes causing a disturbance. One merchant relates an altercation he had with a person with a marginal look in his shop:

> *He was too intoxicated, he didn't know what he was doing, he was shouting and spoke to himself in [the shop]... I can't let people do that in my [shop]. A shouting person is a little weird. So I said forget it [calling a support worker]. We will call the police to make him go away.*

After an observation period in which the evaluator accompanied the social mix agent to visit the neighborhood shops, she noted that most of the merchants were not disturbed by the presence of homeless people or people experiencing hardships. Because they see them daily, they realize that they are not dangerous. They are more concerned about their impact on the neighborhood's image.

This idea brings a question regarding Vie de Parvis project: what is the social mix agent's role concerning the people's insecurity feeling related to behaviors perceived as disturbing and to intolerance? Many participants pointed out this issue during the interviews. Several of them identified access to the social mix agent as a factor increasing the security feeling about differences generating concern. An institution representative explains why:

> *It is part of their role to talk with the merchants, explaining, acting sometimes when a merchant is not feeling comfortable or feels threatened by some people's presence. We had a lot of testimonies saying that there was clear progress in the merchant's perception.*

During an observation period with the social mix agent, the evaluator witnessed the explanations given to the merchants on the circumstances that could lead to calling him. For example, the social mix agent can act when a problematic situation persists, because the intervention can be done over a longer period. In cases of physical violence or hazard, he instead recommends that the merchants call the police.

The participants also described the social mix agent's positive impact on the insecurity feeling associated with homelessness and marginality, because he represents an alternative to coercive measures. He is associated with an authority form that inspires respect rather than repression. A participant explained this idea by talking about people experiencing homelessness in the neighborhood:

> *In my opinion, it's comforting for them. It means they have a bond, so, I guess, they must feel heard, feel like they have human contact with someone. Not only with policemen that tell them to leave or who forbid them to drink on the parvis. I think it creates a more civil, human relationship.*

The development of dialogue and the decrease of tensions between the social groups present in the neighborhood define part of the social mix agent's role. This was told by many participants during the evaluation. One of them said:

> He is not putting out fires, but he sees the problems, and he tries to talk with everybody to find the best solution. I think that's also his role: facilitate the communication between groups that wouldn't communicate and also… take action to make sure that the situation doesn't occur again and find a sustainable solution.

Everybody thinks the social mix agent must be in contact with all the neighborhood social groups. However, the participants are not unanimous regarding the agent's neutrality: should he be unbiased? Some think he should:

> It must go both ways: we can't be thinking the social mix agent only works for homeless or low-income people sitting on a bench all day long. He should also work for the merchants, the citizens, and the workers.

When the evaluator asked him if he thinks the agent should be neutral, the participant answered:

> Yes. Because sometimes people think: "he works for the EnGrEnAgE, so he works only for less fortunate people in the area." He has to be there for everybody.

Other participants don't think the same: they think of him as a spokesman for the citizens, asserting for the less fortunate:

> It's clear that the [social mix agent] focuses on cohabitation, but if he started working more with the merchants, something would be wrong. The target is still the stigmatized people living in Saint-Roch.

Regardless of this question's outcome, the in-between role of the agent is central to the project, considering that most participants spoke about this aspect during the interview.

Furthermore, the projects realized on the parvis impacted the social tensions in the neighborhood. The fridge and the public piano on the parvis change people's perception towards the diversity of the social realities they meet; these objects also alleviate the atmosphere in this public space. A participant illustrates the public piano's effect:

> It's not because you see a drunk guy outside that it's the end of the world. I think social problems become less dramatic. […] This helped moderate several discourses. There is less judgment, right away. It pauses the judgment and opens the mind to understanding others.
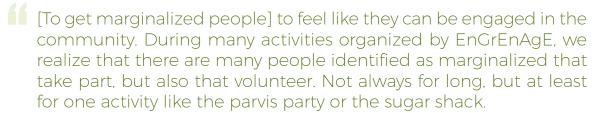
5.1.3. Actions, Implications, and Independence

The unique approach used in Vie de Parvis gives the citizen a central role in the development of their neighborhood. Thus, they don't have to be only spectators of the changes in their area; they are empowered to act. This is enacted by a conscious effort of the agent at trying to get people to care about certain issues or actions:

> When he's on the parvis, he can hear the people's grievances for [the] September 3rd [Committee], the piano, the fridge and all that's missing [like seats and toilets]. He's there to explain the situation, and to tell them they can speak up and act…

When a project idea is born, Vie de Parvis supports the engagement of people in the project, as told by a participant when asked to explain the social mix agent's role:

> [To get marginalized people] to feel like they can be engaged in the community. During many activities organized by EnGrEnAgE, we realize that there are many people identified as marginalized that take part, but also that volunteer. Not always for long, but at least for one activity like the parvis party or the sugar shack.
>
> So, at least for a moment, it sends the message that they are part of the community and that they can help as they can. I think it's part of EnGrEnAgE's mission, but the social mix agent is at the forefront in this.

The difference with other approaches is that the social mix agent never takes charge: he supports without initiating the actions, always in a perspective to make the community more autonomous. One participant explained the social mix agent's position in this context:

> He's the project's transmission belt: he helps, but when the action begins, he leaves! Just like for the piano: he creates the committee and, in a perfect world, it becomes totally independent.

This aspect, combined with the lack of agreement regarding the agent's impartiality, can become challenging in his support of more militant causes. According to the participants, this was particularly experienced on the September 3rd Committee. This committee was a citizen initiative created after the death of a citizen hit by a police car in 2014. One participant explained:

> Sometimes we did an official vote, but [the social mix agents] took a step back, saying they are not real members. It's perfectly clear that in EnGrEnAgE's context and its role in the neighborhood, a social mix agent is stuck between the police and the committee where views are quite strong.

In addition, the parvis' projects also stand out in the community's autonomy: citizen responsibility has major importance. An institution representative illustrates why:

> The projects make them achieve something, decide, have responsibilities, be a part of neighborhood life. Still, their commitment level can vary and they are always supported.

For the participant, this engagement type is especially appropriate for people experiencing difficulties but wanting to make a difference in their neighborhood.

5.1.4. Cohesion and Interrelations

The relational aspect was a big part of the Vie de Parvis project. Almost every participant talked about the importance of the positive interactions they had with the social mix agent in the last years. These interactions take diverse forms. Some talk about a more formal role played by the agent. A participant explained:

> I surely have a direct relationship with him. If there is a problem regarding the food I give, for example, if it wasn't delivered to the fridge, because that happened, I can talk about it with [the social mix agent].

In other cases, the human aspect is more important: the participants talked about the relationship they developed with him. A participant illustrated how important it is for her to know that the agent is in the neighborhood:

> I think it's comforting to know they're there. Even if we see them around once a week or once every two weeks, just seeing them walking in the neighborhood is comforting, even if we don't need them, we know they're always there. We know the neighborhood is resourceful; we know that there's someone to help us somewhere.

Other than the direct relationship people can develop with him, his presence and actions foster neighborhood cohesion by reinforcing Saint-Roch social bonds fabric between people. This ripple effect is noticeable through relationships that are developed because of one aspect of the Vie de Parvis project. A merchant explains:

> It also creates contacts. When they come to the shop [as volunteers for the fridge], they meet employees. After, they go back outside and meet users.
>
> You never know when there will be contact between two people that allows mutual help. Or someone saying: "I'm not alone in this."

> Because there are homelessness problems, but there are also problems with people who aren't homeless but are lonely. "

The people's attachment to their neighborhood illustrates this effect. Many interviewed people said a sense of belonging was developed:

> " The more you create relationships with people, the more you feel at home. That's the secret: the more the [social mix agent] creates relationships with many people, the more these people develop a sense of belonging. It's natural. The dialogue creates a sense of belonging, and that's what the social mix is there for. "

The fridge, the piano, and the urban furniture also help people feel "at home". Many participants described the self-regulation channeled through these free access objects. The evaluator saw it during a summer observation period on the parvis during which volunteers were putting a lot of food in the fridge. She observed that a group of people gathered around the fridge while the volunteers were unloading the truck. They asked the people to wait until they were finished before taking the food. Then, she noticed that a waiting line was created naturally. People waiting in line tell newcomers to wait their turn and to wait in line too. At a certain point, 15 people were waiting to access the fridge. When the volunteers were finished, the first person in line took something out of the fridge. Everybody got three to five products. The evaluator noticed that the distribution was calm even if nobody officially led the operations.

The social bonds that tie Saint-Roch's people are also illustrated by the spirit of solidarity created around the "self-service" fridge, as told by a nonprofit representative:

> " People go to see it, those who put a lot of things in the fridge, and a sense of recognition arises: "Thank you, what you do is helping me" or "What you put last week was so good." I think merchants, when they receive comments like this, it helps reduce prejudice, to see the human side more. "

The piano has a different but significant impact on social cohesion in the area. Several participants pointed out the gatherings that music creates, allowing a great diversity of people to meet:

> " I live in this neighborhood, and sometimes I smile when I walk by the piano because I recognize a marginalized person who's playing and many people are there to listen to him, tourists, children, etc. It must be really gratifying for him. "

It's interesting to note the Vie de Parvis project's wide impact on the community. The project's structure and its environment will be described in the following section.

5.2. Conditions in Which the Project has Evolved

This section precisely describes the internal and external aspects of Vie de Parvis that helped shape the project as it is today.

5.2.1. Vie de Parvis Project: Internal Development

The internal aspects of the project's implementation were also pointed out by the evaluation. One of the most important aspects of the project is its anchorage in the community. The interviewed people identified this anchorage as one of the greatest strengths of Vie de Parvis. This surely has to do with the centrality given to citizen engagement and accountability in the project's development. Therefore, it is possible to answer the community's concerns and to be, in a way, led by the community itself. A group interview participant explained why:

> That's the project's basis: the social mix agent doesn't belong to a specific organization; he belongs to the community. Because he's not affiliated with any mission or any unique target, he can play whatever role we need him to have.

Another participant continues:

> He can adapt himself to the needs because he is a generalist. He can evolve more over time.

The alliance created with Table de quartier l'EnGrEnAgE eased the project's development and still supports its internal management. The non-profit organization is the project's fiduciary since 2013, which means it is responsible for all the administrative tasks (budget, funding, etc.). Being a member of the evaluation committee and considering the EnGrEnAgE team's presence in the social mix agent's daily work, it is possible to say that the organization is also part of the reflection regarding the agent's interventions and the parvis projects' development (Vallée Dore and Wright, 2016). The institutions and nonprofits' representatives particularly emphasized this relationship between the agent and EnGrEnAgE. One of them mentioned:

> For sure, if I add Vie de Parvis to the EnGrEnAgE organization, it creates even more interesting opportunities. The social mix agent can start something, then it will be transferred to someone else in the team that will do the follow-up, a more official activity, support a specific citizen, etc. [...]
>
> It's difficult to separate the social mix agent and EnGrEnAgE because they have a close relationship. EnGrEnAgE and the agent have mostly the same mission: social mixing.

Even though this partnership has many advantages, such as facilitating funding and providing daily professional support, there is still a certain mix-up regarding each entity's responsibilities. Looking confused, the participants asked the assessor what the difference between EnGrEnAgE and the social mix agent was. We can suppose that this confusion also exists among

the population of the neighborhood, with most people not being able to tell the difference between EnGrEnAgE and Vie de Parvis.

Some issues were pointed out during the interviews. The discussions also illustrate a certain mix-up about the social mix agent's role in some situations. The expectations differ a lot among the participants. Several institution representatives speak about their expectations regarding the social mix agent: some wish they had more regular contact with him, others pointed out the aspects they considered being the most important in his role. This was directly mentioned during one interview: *We feel like nobody* has the same vision on what his role is, and that has an impact on the tasks we ask him to do.

Some people also worry about the potential exhaustion of the social mix agent: they think his assignment is vast, which can place a great burden on only one person and that its appropriation is long and difficult. The evaluator observed this issue during a monitoring committee meeting. The members and the agent talked about the difficulties related to the vast duty. This problem could contribute to a greater turnover of the agent which has a lot of consequences. A participant explained:

> I already said it in an evaluation committee, but I think we must be careful with the human resource we have. Every time the agent changes, we must reconstruct everything, which is difficult.
>
> This is about the bond of trust built in the neighborhood with people who are often socially ruptured. We must never underestimate the importance of the trust to build with the merchants, the citizens, and the institutions' actors. [...]
>
> We have a beautiful idea, but it's unrealistic to do it with a lack of resources. If we really wished to fulfill this vision, we would need a significant investment in the project.

Only one full time working human resource is not enough considering the work there is to accomplish. The evaluation revealed this concern was shared because citizens and institution representatives' participants mentioned it. Many of them insisted on the relevance of the social mix agent's role and on the large impact the Vie de Parvis project could have if it had more human resources.

5.2.2. Neighborhood—External Context

As explained by a participant during his interview, Saint-Roch stands out from Quebec City. The local context in which Vie de Parvis was developed and evolved certainly influenced the project's structure. The need to establish an intervention approach about the social mix in the neighborhood results from the occasionally difficult confluence of different social realities. The interviewed people often mentioned this characteristic. A merchant pointed it out during his interview:

> Most of the [complaints] came from the merchants, the new residents or the people that the revitalization of the neighborhood brought. It creates a big clash; it's not a secret.

The interviewed people came from different backgrounds and had several roles in the neighborhood. Not everybody had the same attitude regarding the many social realities existing in the district. Some of them seemed frustrated over the fact that they had to deal with situations they were not used to dealing with and that they thought were not welcome:

> I have a business to run, and homeless people are not the clients I'm looking for. It's not good for a reputation. You know, they don't smell good, and they make other people leave, and others look at them weirdly, and somebody who buys [a cheap product] is not profitable for me, they are not the clients I'm looking for.

Others thought the opposite. They seemed to have adapted well to the neighborhood they are doing business in:

> Normally, the comments I get about our place from marginalized people are positive. You know, we welcome them. Our philosophy really is: we welcome everyone. I always say: "What we have to judge are the behaviors." So, do they respect our rules of conduct? But never to say: "With his look, he seems problematic."

An institution representative thinks the same way, speaking about the decisions that affect the organization:

> We shouldn't kick them out or set up installations that have an adverse effect on the social mix. We must think about the context we're in. For me, it's really important.

The evaluator found similar ideas when she observed the social mix agent talk with the merchants. Many of them have harmonious relationships with marginalized people. Others, without fearing for their security, are concerned about the negative image those people can project to potential clients and tourists: will they leave the neighborhood?

Many interviewed citizens or institution representatives mentioned that Saint-Roch' inhabitants stand out from other neighborhood citizens because they are really united. Someone pointed it out:

> It is a fragile environment, but it has great strengths. In Saint-Roch, when a member of the community dies, you can feel it, it has an impact. It's a tightly connected community.

This dynamic can feel like a challenge for someone moving to the neighborhood; a social mix agent change requires a long observation time and acclimatization to the area. A participant explained:

> That's another issue: even if we want to go farther, to other places, it takes a lot of time. It took six years on the parvis... We must focus on what we can, and even if there are needs elsewhere, if we can't answer them correctly, we don't do it. It's touchy.
>
> Every social mix agent was liked on the parvis. Every one of them. But they were all tested. Still, they all managed to make their space in the community. We must be patient.

The project location's choice was not randomly picked. Anybody knowing the neighborhood knows of how meaningful the parvis is for the citizens. This was discussed during the group interview:

> It started with a symbolic location in the neighborhood. If we had done it in a random park, it wouldn't have been the same, because people actually live on the parvis. It's the backyard of those who don't have a backyard or even don't have an apartment. It's the best place to be when you're a support worker.

Other elements facilitated the project's establishment. The participants acknowledged the municipal elected members' openness to the project, the local support services' expertise and the business partners' engagement.

5.2.3. Transformations Seen in Saint-Roch

The Vie de Parvis proximity intervention project was launched in 2012 as a summer pilot project. In the last six years, the neighborhood's dynamics have changed in many ways. Two aspects changed, according to the participants: the events organized in the area and the security feeling.

Several participants pointed out that some areas of the neighborhood are increasingly animated, with many projects and activities taking place. As some appreciate this new Saint-Roch, others are concerned about the impacts these events can have on marginalized people:

> A part of the people that went to the parvis in the last years doesn't go there anymore, because they feel... Because of the changes in the people there, some don't want to mix with the rest of the population. [...]
>
> There are also the ephemeral installations where our clientele doesn't go because they see families and businesspeople... They don't want to disturb or be disturbed by that.

A transformation was also noted regarding the security feeling: the neighborhood became calmer a few years ago, and it does not inspire fear like it did a few decades back:

> Even if I can't confirm it's only the project's influence, it's obvious that the parvis before and after [Vie de Parvis] are completely different worlds. Six years ago, there were fights daily on the parvis, police, important drug transactions. It was wild. Now, for many people, it's like their living room. There's still a bit of fighting, but it's nothing compared to what it was before.

These transformations changed the neighborhood's vibe. Still, it was difficult for the participants to identify a single transformation cause, but many thought Vie de Parvis contributed. These changes require a constant adjustment from the support workers to ensure that the services are always adapted to the users' needs.

6. Results Discussion

The following section highlights the obtained results and their link with the analytical framework of this evaluation.

6.1. Impact on Cohabitation and Social Integration in Saint-Roch

The results illustrate how the social mix agent's role and the homeless people's presence must be considered as a whole. The homelessness definition chosen for this report is "a social disorganization process and a social rupture situation" defined by "a person's difficulty to have functional, stable and safe social bonds in the community" and by housing difficulties (Quebec Government, 2014, p. 30).

The social mix agent acts when many social realities interact. He often must use an approach of raising awareness or mediating when tensions arise between homeless people and other social groups. It is possible to say that his approach is appropriate for socially disaffiliated people: it creates positive interactions that sometimes are rare in those people's lives and promotes an adapted social engagement. After a while, this helps homeless people reinforce the social fabric supporting them daily and their sense of belonging to a community. The participants' answers and the assessor's observations converge on the fact that the projects taking place on the parvis represent recognition and tolerance of the neighborhood's social realities because urban furniture is offered to marginalized people. This gesture is significant because it implies that those people have the right to exist even if the neighborhood is in continuous transformation. Chesnay et al. (2014) point out the threat perception associated with the visibility of homelessness, which causes a gradual decrease in spaces where homeless people are tolerated. In this context, the ripple effects previously explained can, without a doubt, make a difference.

The results show that the social mix agent's role and the general function of social bonds can be linked according to the results. As previously mentioned, social bonds allow each person to answer his protection and recognition needs and that social bonds are necessary to social existence (Paugam, 2014). The author explains how social ruptures impair social integration and how cumulative social ruptures can lead to a form of "social death". The social mix agent's presence in the neighborhood seems to minimize the social rupture risks in an area where very different social groups coexist. In fact, the social mix agent is acknowledged to highlight the area's cohabitation dynamics and to promote dialogue in a tense context. We can suppose that these actions reduce the social exclusion risk because they help enhance the security feeling in the neighborhood, they offer an alternative measure to coercive methods and they encourage citizen participation. It is the same for the parvis's projects, particularly adapted to the real needs of people, because of the central part citizens play in these projects, with them being in charge of these urbanistic or artistic expression initiatives. It is definitely an interesting way for the marginalized people to understand they actually "matter" in the community and they can "count on" certain people when they need it (Paugam, 2014).

When considering some specific aspects of the analytical framework, we can see a parallel with the social mix agent's actions. Three links stand out in the results. First, the organic participation bond, established with learning or having a specific role like volunteering or working (Paugam, 2014). Given the project's goals, it was expected that the role of citizens would be deemed important in Vie de Parvis' activities and interventions. The participants explained that this was the case: they had the opportunity to develop the neighborhood, and the emphasis was put on self-sufficiency, which makes the social mix agent's approach stand out from other approaches.

Second, many participants associated the elective participation bond, describing the social network outside of the family (Paugam, 2014), to the social mix agent: the interviewed people illustrate the relationship they have with him. For example, a citizen thinks the agent is the person one can count on when there is a problem. Other participants also mention the cohesion created with other people because of his actions, like when a person creates new relationships through his engagement in a parvis' project.

We can't neglect the citizenship bond, associated with belonging to a nation that recognizes rights and responsibilities to all human beings (Paugam, 2014), because it also appears in the results. In a direct way, the agent makes sure that the people he meets feel like real citizens: he listens to them so they know their point of view can make a difference in the neighborhood. Supporting citizens' demands reflects a recognition of their rights, as making them responsible for the projects' sustainability reflects their duties.

The chosen theoretical framework asserts that the configuration of social bonds creates a social integration different from one person to another (Paugam, 2014). The social mix agent can have a positive impact on socially excluded people, like homeless people, by creating a dialogue between the different social realities that coexist together and by reducing the insecurities. It is also possible to analyze the social integration concept with the merchants' point of view. By stimulating their interest in neighborhood life and by increasing the acceptance of marginality, we can suppose that Vie de Parvis helped them integrate the community in all its diversity.

The projects also impacted the citizen interactions' dynamics on the parvis: several people point out the self-regulation that came to settle. This dynamic was probably there before because citizens were always close in the neighborhood, but it seems clear that the free access structures encouraged it. Several interviewed people mentioned the solidarity spirit triggered by the fridge and the gatherings created by the public piano. Like Freedman (2009) and Vigneau et al. (2009) said, opportunities to meet and create dialogue are important ways to develop a positive perception towards marginalized people. They are ways to see them as socially engaged in neighborhood life. Thereby, these projects have the potential to strengthen people's social fabric by strengthening their social bonds by various means. These are interesting bases for improving the social integration of marginalized people.

Some results tell more about neighborhood life than the Vie de Parvis project. In fact, we can see a certain dichotomy. First, the participants' environment is characterized by a more important investment in the neighborhood: more animation activities and events take place, with different concepts and target publics. Some like this new effervescence, while others prefer to move away from it. The discussion induced by the evaluation also revealed many attitudes regarding social realities: the participants didn't have the same vision regarding the

precarity experienced by the citizens in Saint-Roch or their marginal look. Some of them showed open-mindedness and adaptation to differences, whereas others seemed more bothered. Nevertheless, it looks like Vie de Parvis projects, encouraging the participation of people usually less reached by other local initiatives, diminish the tensions and the insecurity feeling existing towards marginalized people. This tension reduction probably improves the social integration of marginalized or homeless people, which confirms the relevance of supporting proximity intervention projects like Vie de Parvis in Saint-Roch.

6.2. Favorable Conditions and Recommendations

The following section identifies the elements that facilitated the Vie de Parvis project's implementation and effectiveness. It also points out the issues to be considered to make sure this innovative intervention approach is viable.

6.2.1. Elements Conducive to Vie de Parvis project's Implementation

This first table summarizes the questions discussed during the individual and group interviews. They explain the favorable conditions to Vie de Parvis project's implementation.

What was favorable to the implementation?	For what reasons?
A symbolic and meaningful location	In the participants' opinion, location choice is important because it helps connect with the citizens. The parvis is Saint-Roch's heart: the long-standing denizens and the summer newcomers have gathered there for a long time. Some think the parvis itself is a community.
Project's anchorage in neighborhood life	By developing a project from the district's needs, the Vie de Parvis project's partners succeeded in integrating it to the neighborhood. The answers collected during the evaluation illustrate that the efforts to connect with people from all social realities helped to make the project's evolution consistent with the people's requests and projects.
Partnership with Table de quartier l'EnGrEnAgE de Saint-Roch	During the data collection, many people mentioned that the partnership with EnGrEnAgE was essential to the project's advancement. Their similar mission and the administrative and professional support offered were one key to the project's success.
Saint-Roch's strong social fabric	Saint-Roch has a special characteristic: the citizens, gathered in a dense territory, are united with a strong sense of community. A social mix project counting on citizens' initiatives was favorably considered in such a context.

6.2.2. Targeted Issues

This second table presents the elements needed to analyze the initiative's viability. The concepts were all taken from the individual and group interviews and from the field observations

Mentioned issues	Why is it an issue?
Large mandate and varied expectations: As mentioned in the results, this finding was made during the interviews. The expectations came from nonprofits and institution representatives and were related to the many aspects of the social mix agent's task. Staying consistent to the Saint-Roch district is a central aspect of the Vie de Parvis project. Thereby, engaged people come from various environments. This can create contradictions between people regarding the project's orientations. Here are some examples: some agree that the agent should be able to share information; others don't. Also, some agree to the fact that the agent should physically go further in the territory; others think he should stay in a more limited area and focus on it.	This combination is an important challenge to address for the project to survive. It is possible to think the vast mandate could lead to the over-solicitation of the social mix agent. Some project's assets also create risks: the project's mandate is general and the partners are numerous, which leads inevitably to questionings and challenges. This can become difficult to manage when we know the social mix agent is the only permanent Vie de Parvis project employee. This evaluation shows how important is Vie de Parvis for the neighborhood. With three targeted issues, the establishment of measures to facilitate the agent's work is essential.

Over solicitation of the agent risk: The interviewed people that mentioned this risk all thought the project was relevant and that adding more employees could have a positive impact. Others mentioned that the needs were important in too large a territory for a single agent to cover.	
Long observation period for integration: The interview results show that each time the agent changes, it takes up to a year of observation and familiarization before being able to observe his positive impact again. With the answers we got in the interviews, we think this long observation period is necessary for the agent to create significant relationships with the district's citizens.	
Mix-up between the fiduciary organization and the Vie de Parvis project: Most interviewed people didn't know there was a difference between Table de quartier l'EnGrEnAgE de Saint-Roch and the Vie de Parvis project. Others knew they were distinct entities, without knowing which one had which responsibility.	This finding could only be an issue if it was important that people that are not closely working with Vie de Parvis knew the difference, but it is not the case. Thereby, information work would have to take place if the Vie de Parvis project wanted to be more independent and gain recognition.

7. Conclusion

This evaluation showed how the Vie de Parvis project is important in the neighborhood, whether it is because of the social mix agent or the parvis' free access structures (fridge, piano, etc.). The evolving context of Saint-Roch district and the fragility of the existing social bonds between homeless people and the community prove the relevance of a project like Vie de Parvis and the significance of ensuring its sustainability and development.

To do so, it is essential to speculate on the work conditions of the single permanent human resource of the project. The work conditions bring challenges that can contribute to a greater turnover of the staff. It is essential to consider the complex environment in which the project takes place, the time needed for the agent to reach people effectively, particularly homeless people, and the strong social bonds created over time between the social mix agent and the citizens. Attention must be paid to the financial resources' use to achieve the project's goals.

Also, the positive elements that contributed to the project were identified. Some of them come from the work of the partners that contributed to the development and evolution of the project. Others were linked to the context and the social environment in which Vie de Parvis took place. This makes us think the intervention project could be deployed outside of Saint-Roch, but only if it stays consistent and connected to the community in which it will be developing.

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Annex 1: Observation plan

Date and hour of the observation:

Location and context:

Observed activity:

Observations:

Approximate number of people:

Who?

Observed interactions description:

Pay particular attention to:

- Inhabitants' attitude towards the social mix agent:

- Expression of the sense of belonging and affiliation towards the neighborhood:

- Engagement in the projects and participation:

- General dynamic and vibe regarding the projects or the social mix agent:

Annex 2: Individual interview plan

N.B.: Some minor changes might have been made to the plan depending on the social group (citizens, non-profit organization or institution representatives, merchants) in which the interviewed person belonged.

Explain the homelessness concept

In a person's life, some situations can make people feel they are increasingly isolated, "far" from others (family, friends, neighbors, colleagues, support workers, etc.). Sometimes, this process leaves the person without a place of his or her own or homeless. This can be stopped or slowed by encounters or events that encourage a feeling of being included in society.

We would like to know if you think the social mix agent and Vie de Parvis' projects influence the trajectory of people that went through difficult situations.

When we say "social mix agent":

1. What do you understand?

2. Can you explain it? What do you know about his role? In which context do people get to interact with him?

3. How did the social mix agent presence influence your everyday life or that of people in your network?

4. What did you observe in the neighborhood since the social mix agent arrived? What impact did he have on social dynamics in the neighborhood? What would be different if the social mix agent weren't there?

When we say, "Vie de Parvis' projects":

1. What do you understand?

2. Can you explain it? How did you experience Vie de Parvis?

3. How did the projects influence your everyday life or that of people in your network?

4. What did you observe in the neighborhood since Vie de Parvis' projects were implemented? What impact did the projects have on social dynamics in the neighborhood?

5. What would be different if there were no projects?

Annex 3: Group interview plan

Favorable conditions to reach the Vie de Parvis project's objectives; Necessary elements for effective project implementation.

1. Please describe the internal operation elements that impacted the project's implementation.

    1.1. How did the actors working on the project's implementation influence it?

    1.2. What resources were used at each project's step?

    1.3. What were the favorable conditions to implement the project?

    1.4. What elements of the approach impacted the project's operation?

    1.5. How did the social mix agent's profile impact the project?

    1.6. How did certain aspects or activities influence the project's operations?

2. How would you describe the context, the resources, and the project's external context characteristics when it was launched?

    2.1 Are there any elements that had a negative impact on the implementation?

    2.2 What aspects of the organizational or political context facilitated the project's development and ripple effects?

    2.3 What were the barriers?

    2.4 How did the affiliation with EnGrEnAgE de Saint-Roch impact the project's implementation?

    2.5 What do you think are the environment characteristics (neighborhood, organization network) that contributed to the project's effectiveness?

3. Potential to implement the project somewhere else: What would help implement a similar project elsewhere?

    3.1 What lessons were learned about the project's implementation?

    3.2 What were the essential elements that helped the project's effective implementation and its operations since it was first created?

    3.3 If we had to do it over again, what could be done to improve the project's implementation?