



The Indlovu Playground

Buildings Team for the Cape Town 2009
Interactive Qualifying Project

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The team had hoped to leave a tangible structure in Monwabisi Park. By walking around the settlement and spending time at the Indlovu Project, the team noticed that there was a lack of safe areas designed specifically for children to play. The goal was to leave a sustainable, eco-friendly playground for the children of Monwabisi Park.



The team toured playgrounds at Monwabisi Park and Harare, a separate community nearby. All of these playgrounds were recently built near community centres and crèches. Through these visits, the team gained inspiration for designs and layouts as well as watched children play and observed which elements were used most. At Harare, there were approximately 10 children playing on the merry-go round and none on the climbing wall or monkey bars. At the three playgrounds in Monwabisi Park, children enjoyed the tire swings and slides and rarely used the monkey bars or other climbing elements. The team was able to determine that children play on merry-go-rounds, swings, and slides significantly more than static climbing features. The team also observed what materials were used to build the playgrounds. The playgrounds at Monwabisi Park were built from tires, chain and wood. Tires are a cheap and abundant resource in this area.



During our visits to playgrounds in Monwabisi Park, the team spoke with various crèche workers. By speaking with community members who worked at the crèches, the team was able to learn what play elements children like, when they played, how often, and what changes they would make if they could rebuild the playground again. This information was influential in developing the plan for our playground. All of the crèche workers mentioned that because of the sun's heat, the children are only allowed to play during the morning and for brief intervals during the day. Two of the crèche workers agreed that if the playground was covered, the children would be able to play outside more often. For this reason, our team suggested that some type of canopy be worked into the design. This canopy would provide shade from the sun for the children. If the canopy was made from a permeable tarp like the image shown, it would provide shade without significantly hindering water runoff. Many residents of Monwabisi Park have similar informal canopies built onto one side of their shack.



The next step was determining a location for our playground. Based on our visits to other playgrounds, the team noticed the obvious benefit of building playgrounds near community centres, youth centres, and crèches. Through conversations with Buyiswa Tonono, a community leader at the Indlovu Project Centre, the team learned that there is a need for a playground near the newly rebuilt

Indlovu Project Centre in Section C. In determining if this was a good location, it was important for the team to analyze a existing conditions. It is important that playgrounds are built near where children already play and in an area that is easily visible. It is also important that the location promotes supervision. During our visits to the park, there were almost always children playing outside the Section C community centre. Often children played marbles, games with each other, or with trash such as old umbrellas and paint rollers. Furthermore, there is a crèche and a youth centre at the Indlovu Project Centre. The crèche and youth centre would provide the needed supervision for this playground. The team concluded that the Indlovu Project Centre in Section C is a viable location for a playground.



The next step was to determine where and exactly how much space was available for the playground. Through conversations with Buyiswa and working closely with this year's WPI Planning Team and Water and Sanitation Team, a specific location was chosen across from the crèche. Once this spaced has been cleared, there will be approximately 49 m² available for the playground.



After taking the spatial restrictions into considerations, the team began working on a design for the playground. The team proposed a merry-go-round, a slide and a tire climbing feature. Although the children enjoyed swings more, a tire climbing feature would be significantly cheaper and easier to build.

Funds and cost need to be analyzed for the playground. The merry-go-round will be one of the most expensive elements, but it was also used most at other playgrounds and heavily recommended by several crèche workers. All other elements such as the slide and jungle gym can be made from wood and tires. If built properly, upkeep should not be a significant concern. The proposed plan for this playground is shown below.

