

# Rapat Tetangga:

Compact Neighbourhoods  
for Jakarta's Low Income  
Communities





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Supported by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung  
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Rame Rame Jakarta  
Jalan Tebet Timur Dalam Raya No.6a  
South - Jakarta, Indonesia

[www.rameramejakarta.org](http://www.rameramejakarta.org)  
Printed in Indonesia

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## RAPAT TETANGGA

Rapat Tetangga has a multiplicity of definitions. 'Tetangga' means 'Neighbours' in Bahasa Indonesia, while 'Rapat' can either refer to a meeting, a dialogue between residents, or to the idea of compactness with regards to density and the availability of key amenities. RT is also the abbreviation for 'Rukun Tetangga,' the smallest administrative division in Indonesia, around which most local communities are based. In this sense, the title refers to the ongoing process of creating more livable neighbourhoods in Jakarta by citizens, government institutions, and NGOs.

The Rapat Tetangga research project initiates a deep investigation into the relationship between residents and their neighbourhood, the characteristics which affect their interaction with local spaces, and the ways in which they envision a truly compact, self-sufficient and resilient residential environment.

## A Compact Neighbourhood for a Sprawling Megacity

What makes a neighbourhood? A simple matter of proximity or administrative demarcation? Exactly where does one neighbourhood end and another begin? How does the concept relate to socioeconomic stratification and the production or erasure of collective identity?

At its core, a neighbourhood is a place where people live, encompassing therefore the rich diversity of experiences and activities which make up each individual's life. The ideal neighborhood is necessarily 'compact,' in that it provides as much as possible for the needs and aspirations of its residents, functioning as a self-contained but well-integrated unit within the wider urban landscape. The idea of a 'compact neighbourhood' is necessarily highly contextual, as varied as the social, cultural and economic considerations of its residents, and unlike the post-industrial cities of the global North, where critical approaches to urban design, social engineering and equitable redistribution have shaped urban policy for more than a century, the 'neighborhood' remains poorly studied across much of the rapidly urbanising global South (Nagendra et al., 2018).

In Jakarta, the global South's largest metropolis (Demographia, 2021), conceptions of neighbourhood vary dramatically, mirroring the enormous socioeconomic and political disparities which have defined the city's rapid growth (Rukmana, 2021). To accommodate the burgeoning population, towering clusters of apartment blocks have erupted from the urban sprawl, while centrally planned residential developments multiply at the fringes of the city, catering for upwardly-mobile middle classes desperate to get on the property ladder. Gated communities of luxury housing stand just metres from dense, highly informal *kampung* settlements. Within such a patchwork of divergent private and public interests, preferences, needs and challenges, how should we conceive of the 'compact neighbourhood?'

It begins with people, with identifying their diverse needs and aspirations for the spaces in which they live. Metropolitan Jakarta has long suffered from chronic urban dislocation, with millions of citizens commuting many hours each day across the city for work and leisure, contributing to the city's perennial traffic congestion and poor air quality. The segmentation of urban spaces into monofunctional planning blocks, property speculation, weak regulation and urban sprawl have produced a city dominated by private vehicles, where excessive distances and wasted time are the norm.

To date, little research has been conducted into the priorities and preferences of Jakartans towards their local neighbourhood, particularly for the millions of low income residents who are regularly excluded from the planning and policy decisions which affect their lives. Private development projects have popularised terms like 'premium lifestyle' or 'smart living' as a one-way dialogue through which potential middle-class residents are reduced to passive recipients of a developer-driven conceptualisations of the ideal neighbourhood. For low income residents, the neighbourhood is typically negotiated informally between local community members, or dictated wholesale according to the specifications of government-mandated public housing projects.

For these under-empowered residents, many of whom lack the economic means which facilitate genuine choices regarding their neighbourhood, the issue of 'compactness' is no less vital. Low incomes are exponentially more depleted by the costs associated with a lack of locally accessible infrastructure, and therefore more vulnerable to long-term deprivation and dislocation as a result. The provision of public housing ostensibly aims to address many of these issues by centralising public resources and key facilities, in stark contrast with the diffuse and highly localised approach typical of informal *kampung* settlements. This research initiates the vital process of understanding exactly how Jakarta's low income communities relate to these two divergent modalities of 'neighbourhood,' and what role each might play in the long term socioeconomic mobility of its residents.



Figure 1. Evening market in intermediary area between the targeted neighbourhoods



## Youth Compactness & Social Mobility

Children are among the most highly-localised demographics in any population. Their lack of autonomy, access to private transport and purchasing power means that they are far less likely to venture beyond their local neighbourhood than people of working age, and are therefore more sensitive to the specificities of what is and is not available to them within a relatively limited geographical area. Particularly following the imposition of large-scale social distancing restrictions during the global COVID-19 pandemic, which included the closing of schools for face-to-face learning, the initiation of work-from-home policies and significant mass unemployment, millions of children found themselves essentially confined to their local neighbourhood for months on end.

Despite their obvious dependence on the local, children are essentially excluded from the various processes by which their neighbourhood is produced. Without political suffrage, economic power and technical understanding, they are wholly dependent on the degree to which other stakeholders are able to recognise and willing to accommodate their specific needs. Given the rapid pace at which the social and technological landscape is now being transformed, it is unclear how far existing approaches to 'child-friendliness' can meaningfully translate into genuine 'youth compactness' for generations of children growing up in Jakarta.

So how can we define 'compact' neighbourhoods for Jakarta's lower-income youth? The fundamental differences between highly irregular *kampung* and standardised social housing blocks is immediately obvious, differentiated by status, scale and form. Each conceptualisation of 'neighbourhood' manifests entirely different solutions to the challenges of compactness in contemporary Jakarta, making it hard to draw meaningful comparisons or assess which more adequately provides for the myriad needs of its residents, particularly children. The local provision of key facilities like education, healthcare and safe recreation spaces are obviously essential, as is the availability of sustainable household livelihood opportunities. There are also broader issues of sociological and psychological wellbeing to be considered, given the potential impact of mental health outcomes on a child's long-term development and prospects for upward social mobility. Rapat Tetangga explores these multidimensional intersectionalities to provide preliminary insights for the development of a truly compact neighbourhood.

## Study Site - Pesakih

In order to facilitate adequate comparisons between these two different neighbourhood typologies, study site selection was determined by the presence of both typologies within a relatively small geographic radius, 1.5 km from the nearest commuter rail station at Rawa Buaya, fulfilling a basic component of urban integration or 'Transport Orientated Development.' Furthermore, in order to better ascertain the influence of the 'local,' a secondary consideration informing site selection was significant distance from the metropolitan core, where a high concentration of commercial areas and infrastructure hubs were identified as being unrepresentative.

Pesakih is a socioeconomically diverse area encompassing parts of Semanan and Duri Kosambi sub-districts in West Jakarta, near the border with the satellite city of Tangerang in the neighbouring province of Banten. The study radius, centred on the commuter rail station of Rawa Buaya, also includes a wide range of municipal services and other key public facilities identified by the TOD Standard 3.0 (ITDP, 2017) as vital components of urban life in accordance with the '15-minute city' principle.

Figure (2) shows a satellite image of the study site, with the main study site outlined in orange and the wider Pesakih area in yellow. Each of the two target neighbourhood typologies exist in close proximity yet spatially distinct from one another, with relatively expansive open spaces between them surrounding the large Hasyim Asy'ari Mosque. Site A represents the archetypal urban *kampung* neighbourhood; an irregular settlement of high density, with narrow streets separating vernacular, individually constructed homes of variable size. Though familiar in the context of Indonesian cities, the term *kampung* itself is nebulous and prone to politicisation. In the context of this research it serves as a comparison for Site B, the archetypal *rusun* neighbourhood; standardised blocks of social housing units constructed and managed by the state. The research will explore how far, and in what ways, each typology succeeds in providing for the diverse needs of its youth population.



Figure 2. Satellite Image of Study Site

## Participants

Participants in the Rapat Tetangga research were identified as full-time residents of each neighbourhood typology between the ages of 10-15 years. The age bracket was set in order to engage highly-localised participants less likely to travel large distances independently, while facilitating a level of articulation in response to survey questions and other methods of data collection which could be difficult for younger children to participate in. In order to comply with health and safety protocols following the COVID-19 pandemic, a limit of 10 roughly gender-balanced participants from each typology was set, and all research activities were conducted with strict adherence to social distancing, mask-wearing and disinfection procedures. In order to explore and compare the diverse needs of different demographics within a single urban space, additional data collection was conducted with the parents of children participating in the study.



Figure 3. Children From *Rusunawa Tambora*

## Methodology

The Rapat Tetangga research aims to determine a degree of youth compactness for each typology by combining both quantitative and qualitative assessments, based on the collection of primary data through a variety of means, in particular the recording of images and video from the study site at a range of scales, mapping, workshops and interviews.

Video and photo were used to capture the full spectrum of myriad urban social and economic phenomena in occurrence at the study site, which can then be quantified or assessed using a variety of methods. Recorded materials can be analysed repeatedly using a broad range of metrics and software tools, facilitating the multidimensional analysis necessary to understand the complex nature of compactness in a contemporary city.

In addition to the recording of visual data, further insights were gathered through a series of participatory workshops and interview sessions, where study participants were invited to share their insights regarding their local neighbourhood through a range of media, and with several different thematic approaches. The intention was to facilitate the articulation and production of meaningful data from a youth population through a method which is both engaging and straightforward.

Mapping activities included the collection of GPS and route-marking data pertaining to the daily activities of study participants, as well as the identification of aforementioned key infrastructures and facilities within the study radius by the research team. Further subjective mapping exercises were conducted during workshops with participants, during which they were invited to identify key facilities, landmarks and activity spaces within a simplified map of the study site. Emotional mapping involved the placing of 3 key emotion markers by participants at locations of choice across the study site, and included an explanation of the location and events which occurred.

In-depth interviews were conducted with a limited selection of participants from each neighbourhood typology, in order to identify preliminary themes and contribute richer qualitative data to assist in framing the results of spatial and quantitative data collection methods. These interviews used a modified version of Dave Gray et al's empathy map (2010), developed to better align with local cultural and economic considerations.

## Neighbourhood Profiles

Preliminary observations regarding the physical, social and economic conditions of each neighbourhood typology are outlined below in order to contextualise the subsequent assessments of youth compactness. Observations were made by the Rapat Tetangga field team over a two-month period of field work at the study site, and include secondary data from discussions with local community members and study participants outside the specific scope of data collection activities and workshops.

### SITE A - *Kampung Duri Kosambi (RT04)*

As an archetypal *kampung* neighbourhood, *Kampung Duri Kosambi* (as it is known by residents) is a densely populated, highly irregular urban settlement characterised by a high degree of informal economic and social activity. Developing organically over a period of decades, it is also characterised by a significant number of communal/collective spaces in which a range of semi-public activities are undertaken by residents.

Specific examples include a shared kitchen, washing and hygiene facilities, and social-cultural-political spaces, concentrated around the 'teras' or terrace directly in front of the local Rukun Tetangga (neighbourhood unit) head's residence. Given the overall settlement density and general narrowness of streets, such spaces are negotiated largely on the basis of the collective benefits which they provide, including for activities which would be impractical or otherwise obtrusive within the home, such as those requiring the use of power tools or involving more than one or two people. Many of these activities support the economic interests of local residents, such as repairing motorbikes or handcarts and preparing ingredients for sale. The codes and conventions governing the appropriate use of these spaces are largely developed informally and by consensus, reflecting the diverse and variable needs of the community at any given time. In particular, the 'teras' comprises the administrative and decision-making hub of the local community, where key formal and informal discussions take place, and where people gather in preparation for collective activities, even when the activities themselves may take place elsewhere.



Figure 4. Aerial View of Site A Kampung Duri Kosambi



Figure 5. Shared Terrace of Kampung Duri Kosambi



Figure 6. Aerial View of Rusunawa Tambora



Figure 7. Child from Rusunawa Tambora playing with a kite



Given the close proximity of individual residential units and the reliance on shared spaces for so many important aspects of daily life, it is perhaps unsurprising that a high level of inter-household involvement was observed between community members across all demographics. Collaboration in daily activities was commonly observed, particularly within shared spaces, and a general awareness of local goings-on was prevalent. This collaboration extends to a regular local 'ronda' or neighbourhood watch, as well as to certain specific challenges experienced by the community, including cooperative responses to significant seasonal flooding events, identified as one of the most disadvantageous and disruptive phenomena for the community as a whole.

Shortcomings in infrastructure and public service provision typify much of the neighbourhood space, with a lack of adequate drainage and permeable surfaces largely responsible for periodic flooding. Vehicle access is limited to small motorcycles due to the narrow network of streets, and paved surfaces are interrupted by patches of gravel or otherwise degraded materials. Cellphone, television and internet reception is also reported as patchy, perhaps due to the adjacent unfinished multi-storey development distorting signal broadcasting. The area is largely inaccessible to fire or ambulance services, and has no local health facilities of its own. Residents rely instead on the facilities provided at the nearby social housing complex for access to checkups, vaccinations and other health-related services. Similarly, access to formally-organised cultural and extracurricular activities for children prior to the 2019 COVID-19 pandemic were also conducted in the area around the social housing complex.

## SITE B - *Rusunawa Tambora* (Block G & F)

Typical of social housing complexes elsewhere, the *Rusunawa Tambora* (or *Rusunawa Pesakih* as it is referred to by residents), is a standardised, centrally planned, multi-storey residential complex provided by the state, with a majority of the population having been previously evicted from *kampung* settlements along Jakarta's watercourses. The complex is divided into 8 blocks, each with their own neighbourhood unit (Rukun Tetangga) head, and further subdivided into individual units housing individual families distributed across the 6 floors. Lower cost apartments are located on the upper floors, given the physical exertion required to ascend the stairs and lack of lift provided, with communal spaces provided on the ground floor.

In addition to social spaces, a large portion of the ground floor communal spaces have been converted by residents for small-scale industry or other informal business ventures to provide income for the residents, with some upper storey units also functioning as kiosks for vending foodstuffs and basic household items. In many ways this would appear to replicate the typical economic condition of an urban *kampung* from which most residents originate, and mitigate some of the economic deprivations associated with relocating to a less strategic part of the city. Similarly, the limited green spaces have largely been given over to small-scale agriculture, aquaculture and animal husbandry, presumably to provide additional income, although this may also serve a recreational function. Many wage-earners continued working in the same jobs as prior to their eviction, some commuting long distances in order to do so.

Perhaps unsurprisingly given the relatively short time which residents have lived in the public housing complex, the fact that they originally came from different areas, and the clearly demarcated nature of standardised one-family units, less social integration was observed in the *rusun* compared to the *kampung* neighbourhood. Interactions between residents tended to be more bureaucratic, and residents reported fewer close relationships with neighbours and other members of the local community. There was generally less awareness of goings-on beyond the environment in the immediate vicinity of each unit, which extended to difficulties monitoring the whereabouts and activities of children, although monitoring from upper storeys is possible. The physical environment encourages less direct social interaction, particularly by residents of upper floors, and also reduces the vital role of communal spaces in which collective activities might otherwise spontaneously occur.

A wider range of services and facilities are provided for residents of the *rusun* complex, including spaces for conducting children's classes and other socio-cultural activities, although since the COVID-19 pandemic these activities have been limited to checkups and other healthcare services. Access to additional healthcare services is provided through the local government-mandated community health clinic (*puskesmas*) to residents of the *rusun* as well as those from surrounding neighbourhoods. There is a local bank branch, and local transportation is provided in the form of a subsidized shuttle service between the complex and nearest station for the wider metropolitan bus network, as well as dedicated school buses for local children. Access to the complex is monitored by security guards provided by the building management. Residents reported general satisfaction with the facilities provided at the complex, particularly the reduced risk of flooding and overall cleanliness of the area.

# Participant Perspectives on the Local Neighbourhood

## General Overview

Regardless of age, gender or neighbourhood typology, a majority of participants in the Rapat Tetangga research reported generally positive feelings towards their local neighbourhood. Nevertheless, certain recurrent themes differentiate the specific ways in which each demographic and typology relate to their neighbourhood, and are outlined below.

## Site A - *Kampung*

For *kampung* residents, positive feelings towards their neighbourhood were dominated by the sense of community solidarity and trust which pervades many aspects of daily life. With little oversight from external parties, decisions are typically taken on the basis of local consensus and communal activities are commonplace. Compactness is more often the result of this communal space utilization and the sharing of resources rather than direct access to external facilities and services. There is a high level of interaction between different households, with almost universal reporting of at least daily social contact with neighbours and other members of the community. Women in particular regularly cook, clean, and perform other daily activities together in communal spaces, while other group activities include prayer sessions, neighbourhood watches, community meetings and other bureaucratic or administrative tasks.

This sense of trust extends to a shared responsibility for the safety and security of children in the community. Participants reported feeling comfortable allowing their children to move freely and play anywhere within the neighbourhood because they could be confident that an adult would always be somewhere nearby to keep an eye on things, or even intervene if necessary. This includes being able to 'report' via word of mouth on what the local children had been doing, which was identified as helping reduce the chances of dangerous or otherwise 'bad' behaviours.

Negative attitudes towards the *kampung* neighbourhood were largely related to shortcomings in the provision of key facilities and a perceived 'social gap' with residents of the nearby social housing complex. The feeling of preferential treatment being afforded to the social housing complex was commonly reported, and included discrepancies in terms of access, infrastructure and public services like healthcare or political representation via the local district head. A particularly salient issue were the feeder and school bus services provided to residents of the social housing complex, which did not service the *kampung* neighbourhood despite passing directly on their routes. The result of this increases the journey time for children, and the logistical burden on parents who must escort them personally to their schools, many of which are a significant distance away.

In the months since the imposition of COVID-19 related social distancing restrictions and the closure of offline schooling facilities, however, mobility for residents of the *kampung* has decreased dramatically, particularly for children. No longer attending school, local children have little reason to leave their neighbourhood, and often congregate to socialise at each





other's houses or in certain favoured communal spaces. These spaces are also the site of group religious education and cultural activities conducted largely by local residents, which often extend to those from surrounding neighbourhood units.

Compared to their counterparts in the social housing complex, children in the *kampung* also reported being more comfortable spending extended periods of time at home, and therefore spend significantly less time outside in general. A major concern of parents and other family members was the amount of time children now spend playing on phones or other gadgets, which is considered potentially problematic for their long-term development. Children in the *kampung* neighbourhood generally reported having closer relationships with their immediate family, including their parents and siblings.

**“Hopefully the kampung won’t get evicted because of the new Pesakih bridge construction.”**

Figure 8. Pesakih Bridge's construction area, nearby Site A

## Site B - *Rusun*

Residents of the *rusun* were more likely to cite physical features of their environment and the provision of facilities as the most positive aspects of their neighbourhood. General cleanliness was reported by many residents as being of a higher standard than their previous neighbourhood (prior to eviction and relocation), integration with local transport was recognised as reducing the burden for parents with children at school, and access to healthcare services via the local community healthcare center (*puskesmas*) was identified as bringing significant improvements to their overall sense of wellbeing and security.

A wide range of secondary services is provided by the informal enterprises established by residents, mostly on the ground floor of each block, and include small shops, restaurants, hairdressers, photocopying and printing services. Additional businesses have been established on upper floors to service many residents of the nearby *kampung* neighbourhood also make use of both formal and informal services at the *rusun*.

Direct access to the local district head (RW), also a resident of the complex, to petition on specific issues, helped increase residents' sense of agency and empowerment, although the necessity of administrative and bureaucratic approval for many activities was perceived less favourably, particularly in public areas or those outside the immediate vicinity of each housing block itself. The involvement of external parties in residents' daily activities was generally reported to be inconvenient, particularly those parties not immediately accessible at the site itself, and several residents reported relying on purchasing water from third parties because of a lack of progress regarding improvements to the quality of water pumped directly from a local aquifer.

The intensity of interaction between households was generally reported to be lower among *rusun* residents for a number of reasons. These include less general familiarity with neighbours and other members of the community, fewer communal spaces or activities, and the physical environment of the complex itself, in which individual family units are more clearly partitioned and spontaneous encounters with other households are less likely. Group activities were conducted for children prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, but these have since been suspended. The vertical nature of the social housing complex also reduces the intensity of inter-household relationships, with residents on upper storeys discouraged from ascending or descending frequently due to the lack of elevators unless strictly necessary.

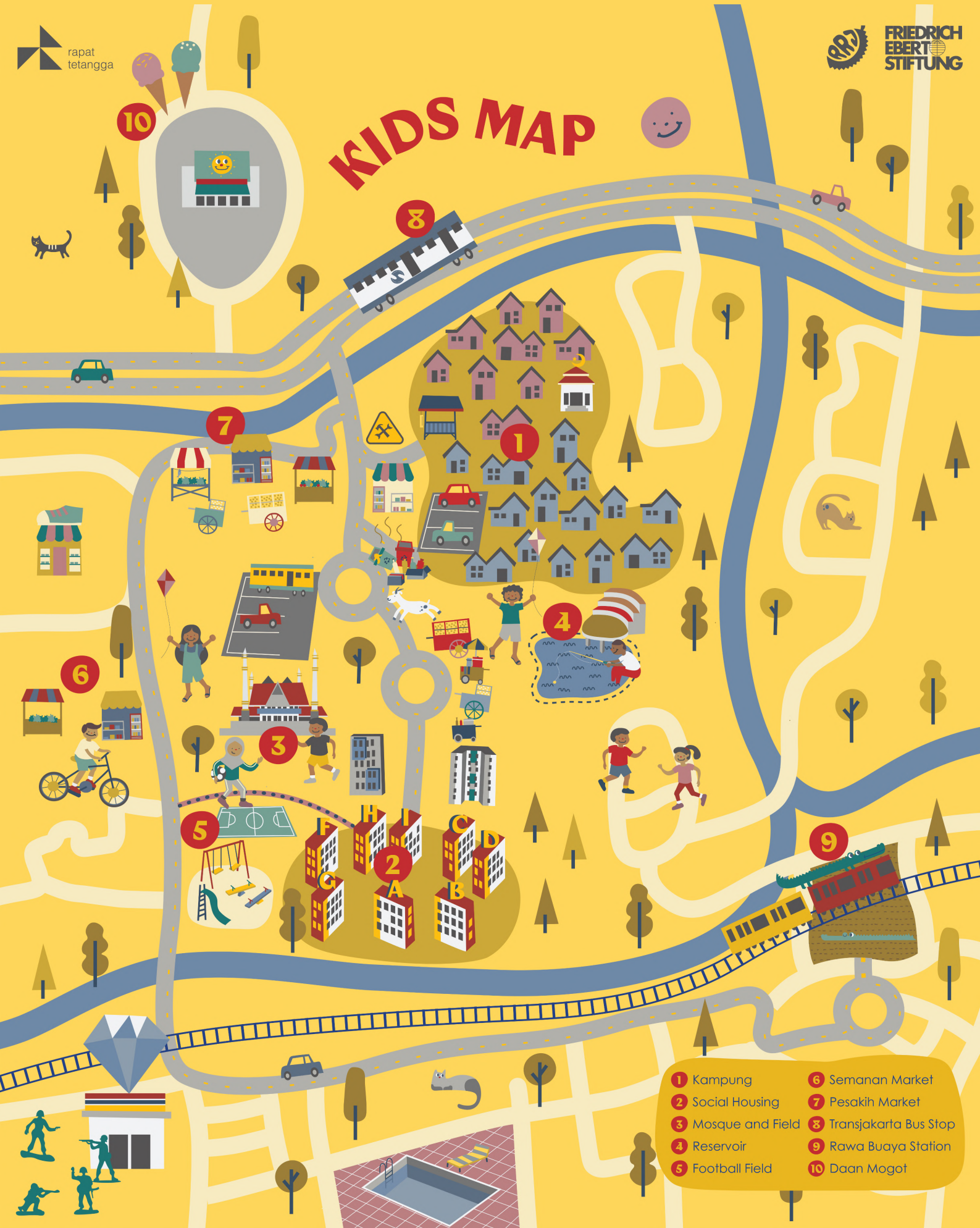


Figure 9. Kids playing in the common area on the third floor of Block F

**“Every floor in block F has wifi, we can buy it at Mas Andi’s warung. It costs 2 thousand rupiah for all day access, but the password is changed every day. If someone tries to cheat the system it will get shut down straight away.”**

The relative isolation of each household unit from the surrounding neighbourhood was one reason residents reported feeling less secure about their children playing outside, given the difficulty of monitoring their activities or even being aware of their location. Children in the *rusun* reported significantly higher mobility than their *kampung* counterparts, regularly spending extended periods of time outside of the residential unit and in public spaces outside the *rusun* neighbourhood itself. A particular focal point for their activities is a local reservoir area where many informal vendors also often gather, and a nearby field which is regularly used for football games and other sporting activities.

# KIDS MAP



- 1 Kampung
- 2 Social Housing
- 3 Mosque and Field
- 4 Reservoir
- 5 Football Field
- 6 Semanan Market
- 7 Pesakih Market
- 8 Transjakarta Bus Stop
- 9 Rawa Buaya Station
- 10 Daan Mogot

Figure 10. Illustrated Kids Map based on the Children Workshop Assessment



## Visualising Youth Compactness in Low-Income Neighbourhoods

In order to ascertain the 'compactness' of each neighbourhood typology, a relatively abstract concept for study participants, a range of metrics and approaches were applied to visualise children's (and parents) relationship with their local environment. Each of these assessments will be discussed below.

Due to the health protocols and social distancing restrictions in place as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, workshops and surveys were conducted with a small number of participants (+/- 10 children from each neighbourhood). The intention is therefore only to identify key themes and areas of interest for future research, not to draw exhaustive conclusions.

### 1. Local Landmarks and Other Salient Features

#### **Mosque and Field**

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic the large central mosque hosted religious education classes and other associated activities for children during the month of Ramadhan, however otherwise the mosque is seldom used since there are smaller local facilities closer to each neighbourhood. Most participants instead reported regularly using the open fields around the complex for flying kites and other recreational activities.

#### **Reservoir**

The reservoir has become a regular fixture in the daily routines of many study participants from both neighbourhood typologies, but particularly for the *rusun* residents. Aside from the presence of open space for gathering, recreation and play, informal traders gather each afternoon along the road around the reservoir to service people coming and going, and from which most of the children reported regularly purchasing snacks and drinks.

#### **Football Field**

The football field located near the *rusun* is regularly used by children for football games, facilitated by a special local body and most often participated in by boys. Even so, a number of female study participants reported a strong desire to join the games, as well as skill in playing, but complained of regularly being obstructed from doing so on the basis of their gender.

### Semanan Market

Pasar Semanan is generally visited by *rusun* residents on account of the unofficial shortcut access which directly links the social housing complex with the main route to the rail station via jalan Semanan. This shortcut significantly shortens the journey time by approximately half.

### Pesakih Market

Pasar Pesakih comprises the Northern portion of Semanan Market, which is more regularly visited by *kampung* residents due to its close proximity with their neighbourhood. As well as a favourite destination for children from the *kampung* to buy food, snacks and drinks, the area is also occasionally visited by children from the *rusun*, who generally report travelling further from their home in the course of their regular daily activities.

### Transjakarta Bus Stop

In terms of infrastructure, Pesakih Bus Stop is one of the nearest and thereby most significant public transport links connecting both neighbourhoods to the wider capital city. The 'feeder' bus shuttle service operating between the *rusun* and the official bus stop essentially renders immediate access to residents, and some children reported riding the 'feeder' service for fun, even when they had no plans to take an onward journey. Running the length of the main access road past the *kampung*, the



**"It's fun playing hadroh music. Sometimes it's not really serious, sometimes we are just like messing around. If the seniors aren't there, we just have fun and run around the mosque!"**



service stops only at the *rusun* complex and Bus Stop, and therefore does not service *kampung* residents despite passing directly outside their houses almost hourly. For those children who rely on the Transjakarta Bus service for their daily school journey, the additional walking distance is considered a nuisance compared to the ease of access provided to their *rusun* neighbours.

### **Rawa Buaya**

Even though it is located a short distance from the pesakih residential neighbourhoods, well within the standard 1.5km radius for public transport integration, poor access means that few residents of either neighbourhood regularly use the commuter rail service. Not counting the unofficial shortcut path, walking journey times to the station can reach 45 minutes or more. Several study participants, both children and parents, reported a hope that station access would improve in the future.

### **Daan Mogot**

A formal recreation area with several malls, stores and other attractions. The closest such area to both neighbourhoods. Despite this proximity, few participants reported regularly visiting the area, however most would do so infrequently from time to time.

Figure 11. One of participant plays Hadroh for circumcision celebration

## 2. Zones of Regular Activity by Distance

In order to begin understanding the extent to which each neighbourhood typology adequately provides for the needs of its younger residents, study participants were asked to identify key locations where they carried out daily activities. Specifically, each participant was asked to identify the place they most regularly visited outside the home, the furthest they would regularly travel from the home, and their favourite place to spend time. These locations were then categorised according to their distance from the neighbourhood as being either neighbourhood (350m), local area (700m), or non-local (>700m), in accordance with DKI Jakarta Governor Regulation no. 44 of 2017 concerning Transit Oriented Development. The distribution of these spatial preferences is visualised in figure (12).

Unsurprisingly, the vast majority of participants from both typologies identified their 'favourite' and 'most frequently visited' place to spend time outside the home in the immediate vicinity of their neighbourhood (less than 350m radius). This supports the initial idea that children are highly local actors, particularly given the lack of on-site schooling as a result of the pandemic. Despite this overall tendency, some key differences emerge between each neighbourhood demographic.

As shown in figure (13), *kampung* residents were more likely to regularly visit specific favoured sites throughout the local area at an intermediate distance when outside the home, but would rarely consider travelling far beyond the local vicinity. By contrast, *rusun* residents reported a higher concentration of frequent and favourite activities taking place within the *rusun* complex itself, as well as a proclivity to travel further beyond the immediate local area.

It should be noted that behaviour patterns outlined in figure (13) were self-reported, and therefore are likely to reflect the perceived significance or memorableness of each location in the mind of participants. Nevertheless, it is interesting to observe the extent to which children perceive their daily activities as being highly dependent on, integrated with, or detached from the immediate local area of their neighbourhood. In general, the reporting supports the idea that *kampung*-resident children are more comfortable in their local neighbourhood than their *rusun*-resident counterparts, a finding affirmed by in-depth interview responses and field observations. By contrast, *rusun* residents were more likely to attribute increased significance to sites further from their home/immediate neighbourhood, for example the National Monument Park more than ten kilometres away.

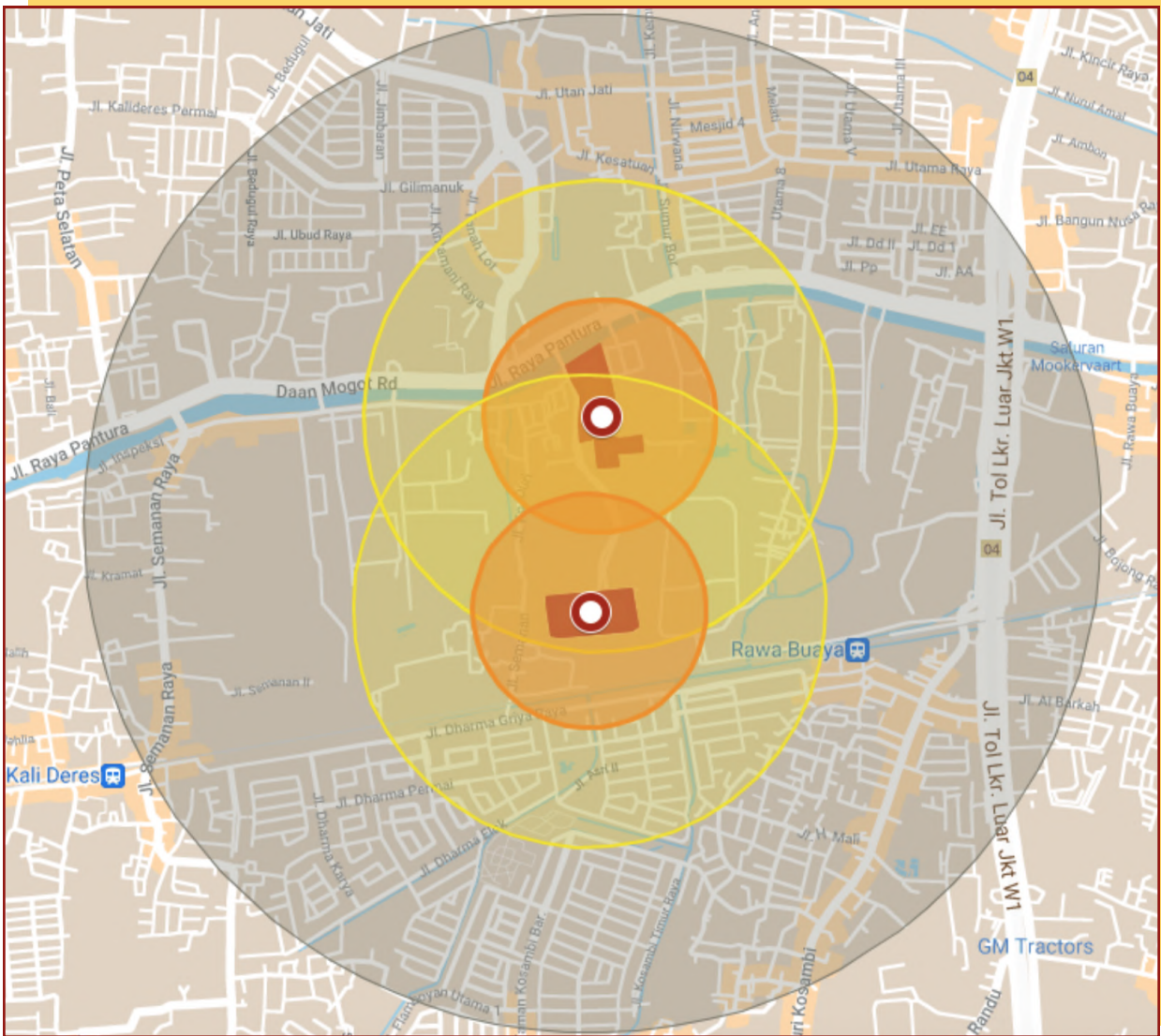


Figure 12. Compact Map with Spatial preference radiuses of Neighbourhood, Local, and Non-local

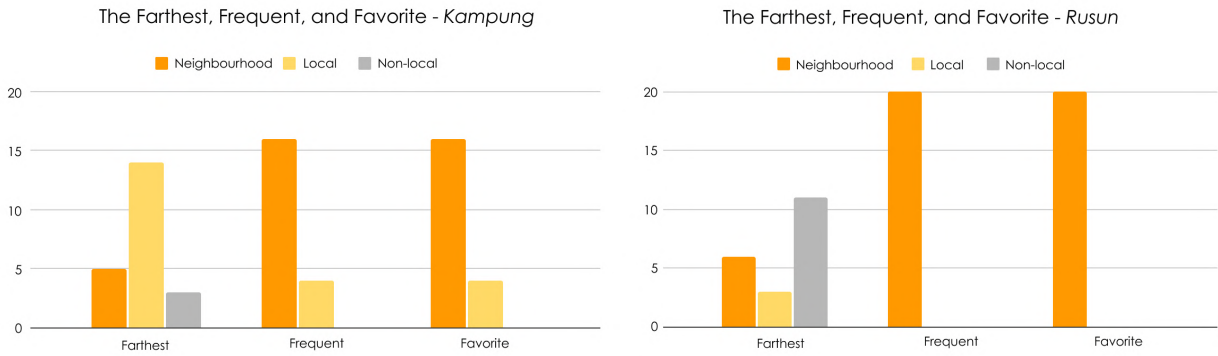


Figure 13. Charts of the Children's Farthest, Frequent, and Favourite Spots from both kampung and rusun

Figure (14) and (15) show the highly segregated patterns of behaviour for select residents of each neighbourhood on an average day. Figure (15) clearly shows the concentration of highly-local activity centred on the kampung itself.

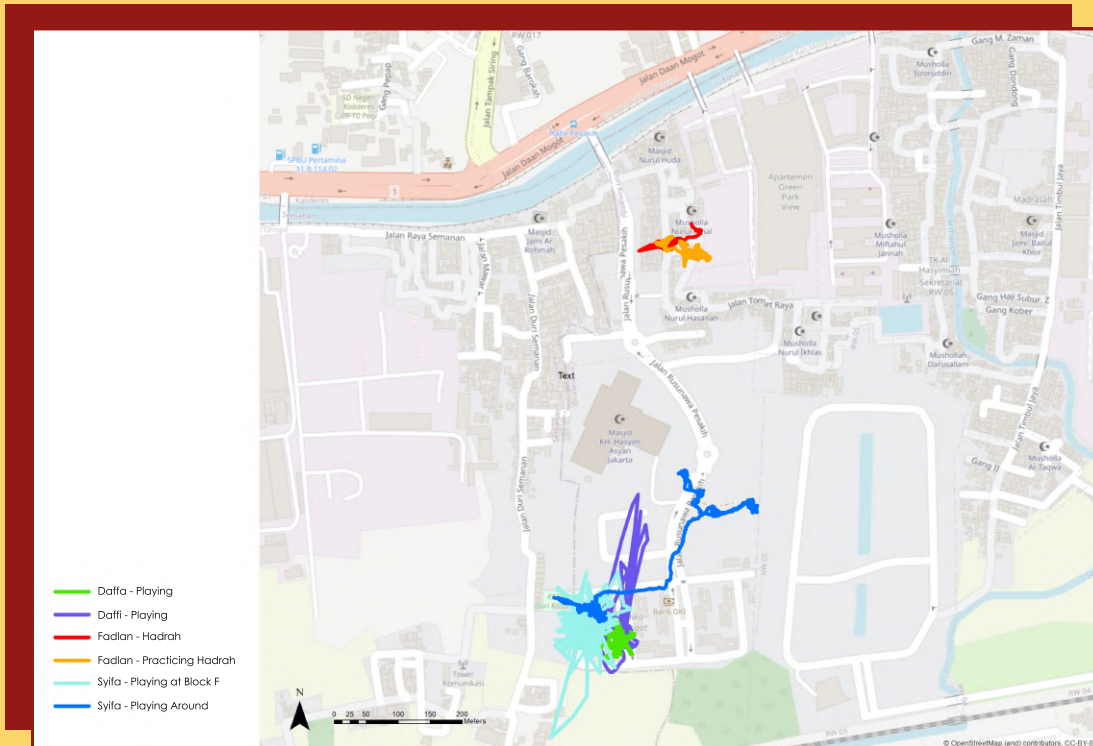


Figure 14. Routes taken from activity mapping of the children from both respective neighbourhoods



Figure 15. Heatmap generated from the routes from activity mapping

### 3. Emotional responses to the Local Environment

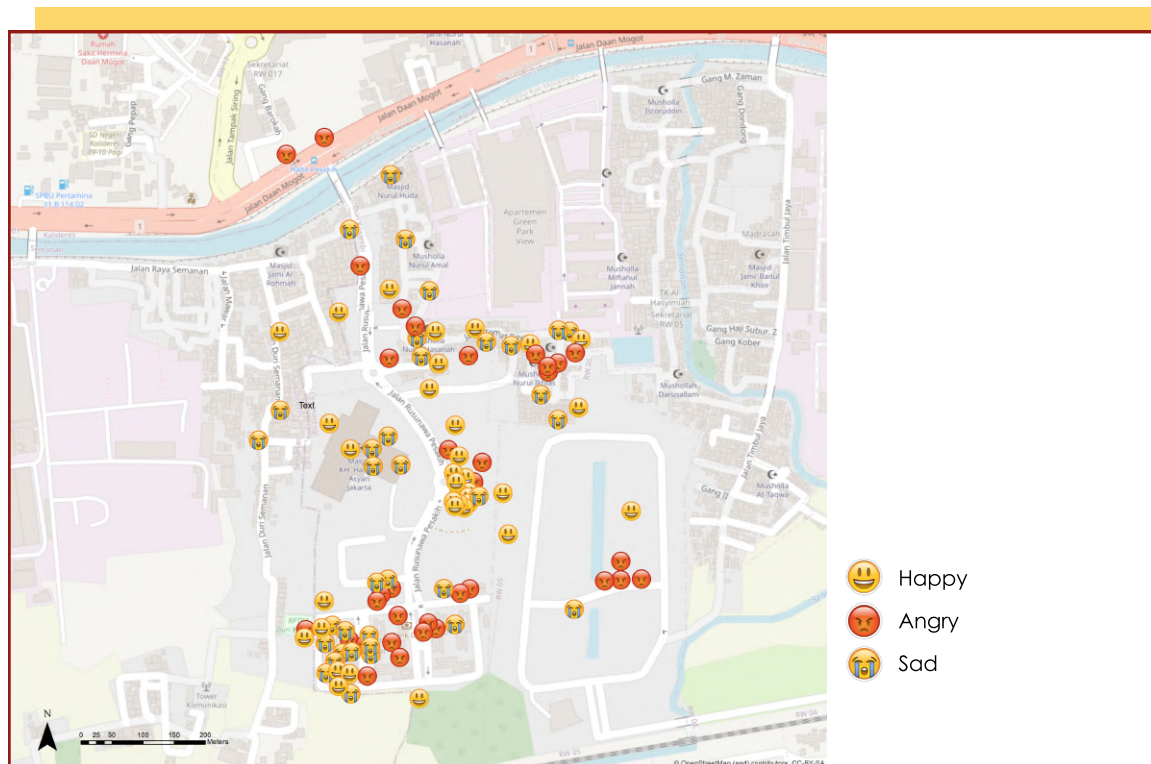


Figure 16. Combined emoji map of both respective neighbourhoods

#### Emotional Responses on Both Respective Neighborhoods

The following map indicates the emotional responses of study participants towards their local environment. Each participant (including parents) was instructed to place a succession of 'emoji' stickers on a blank map of the study site indicating their emotional state in a particular location. Each participant reported a single instance of feeling 'happy,' 'sad,' or 'angry,' but was otherwise given no direction as to what constituted an appropriate answer. The intention was to encourage free association, where each participant reflected on their personal experiences and recollections.

The specific instance which prompted the placing of each 'emoji' was then explained by the participant, recorded by the field team and placed adjacent to the marker for later analysis. Figure (16). displays the total emotional responses from all participants. Figure (17). and (18). show the variable distribution between *kampung* and *rusun* neighbourhood responses, respectively.

The overall distribution of emotional responses indicates a highly variable range of responses to various areas of the study site, determined largely by individual experiences, although a few broad patterns can be inferred.

The general distribution of 'happy' emotional responses falls largely outside each residential area itself, mostly in the wider 'neighbourhood' radius of 350m including extensive open spaces and a range of social/recreational activities. Furthermore, the majority of 'happy' responses within each residential area were those reported by parents rather than children, related primarily to security and a sense of community. This suggests that while all the children universally reported spending a large amount of their time at home, access to a wider area for recreation and social activities is perceived as a significant source of positive experiences.

By contrast, the relatively high concentration of negative emotion responses (both 'sad' and 'angry') for younger residents of both neighbourhood typologies was largely reported as related to personal, emotional or familial occurrences. This could indicate that access to a wider neighbourhood space plays an important role in stress mitigation by allowing children time to process or move on from negative occurrences by engaging in independent activities, either alone or with their peers, although establishing the significance of such a speculative relationship is beyond the limited scope of this research.

### **Emotional Responses Reported by *Kampung* Residents**

Compared to *rusun* respondents, *kampung* residents reported a relatively diffuse and highly variable pattern of emotional responses to their local neighbourhood.

#### **Happiness**

Several participants identified the *kampung* itself as the site of their 'happy' experiences, which generally included themes such as the presence of many friends, the ability to easily meet and play with almost anyone from the local community, and a general sense that the residential area itself was an enjoyable place to spend time, even when outside the home. Parents in particular reported enjoying the community atmosphere and perceived safety associated with the *kampung*. Beyond the residential area, common themes included open spaces to play or socialise, and the reservoir in particular was identified as a scenic spot at which many children enjoyed spending time taking photos together or spending time at the afternoon market.

#### **Sadness**

The primary negative emotion of 'sadness' was also often associated with the *kampung* residential area and immediate surroundings. In particular, children reported being upset or otherwise not enjoying the amount of the



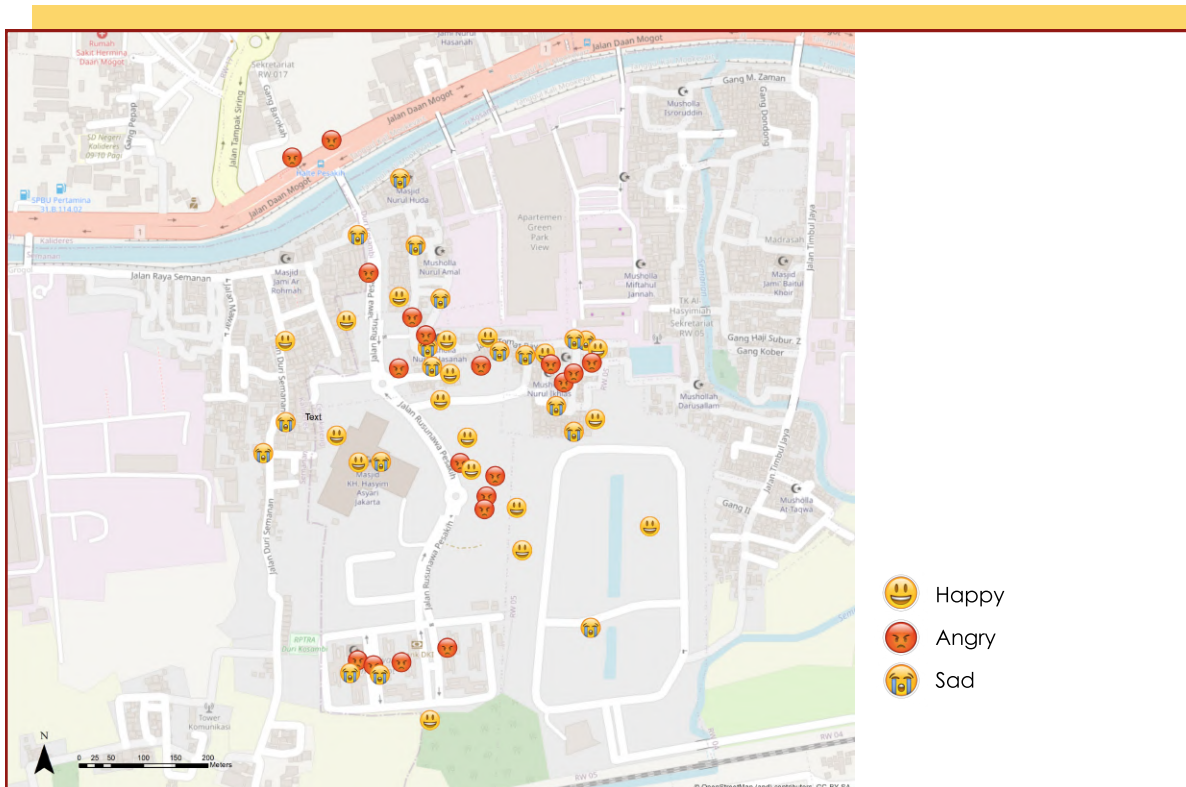


Figure 17. Emoji map curated from the children of *kampung* memories based on their emotions

trash they saw in their neighbourhood, and the unpleasant smell which would increase during hot weather. At the present time there is limited waste collection and processing infrastructure available in the *kampung*. Similarly, parents reported the primary source of negativity as being the *kampung* neighbourhood's tendency to flood during the wet season, and the disruption this brings in terms of lost or damaged possessions, sickness and other associated problems.

### Anger

As the most highly incidental emotional response, 'anger' tended to be concentrated in areas where respondents were most likely to interact with other stakeholders in the neighbourhood space. For children, antagonistic relationships with child residents of the nearby *rusun* neighbourhood was a key source of angry occurrences, as well as unfriendly interactions with security guards and other officials who would at times prevent them from accessing certain areas. Parents were more likely to feel angry because of perceived discrepancies between the facilities provided to their community and those given to the *rusun*, particularly the lack of feeder bus service. They were also concerned with the lack of safety provisions around the reservoir area, where a child had been reported to have died.

### Emotional Responses Reported by Rusun Residents

Immediately obvious from the distribution of emotional responses shown in figure (18). Is that *rusun* residents' significant emotional occurrences tended to occur within a relatively concentrated geographical area compared to their *kampung* counterparts, largely in the immediate vicinity of their social housing complex itself. They are also more highly segregated by type into more distinct sites of general 'happiness,' 'sadness' and 'anger.'

### Happiness

The concentration of 'happy' responses reported in the vicinity of the reservoir is striking, accounting for more than 80% of childrens' happy responses, and almost 60% of overall happy responses. The reasons for this were remarkably uniform, centred on the adjacent informal afternoon market, a focal point of local social and economic life at which many children and other residents would typically meet, socialise and purchase their favourite snacks. Parents were more likely to identify the safety, security and facilities within the *rusun* complex itself as the primary cause of their 'happy' response to the residential space.

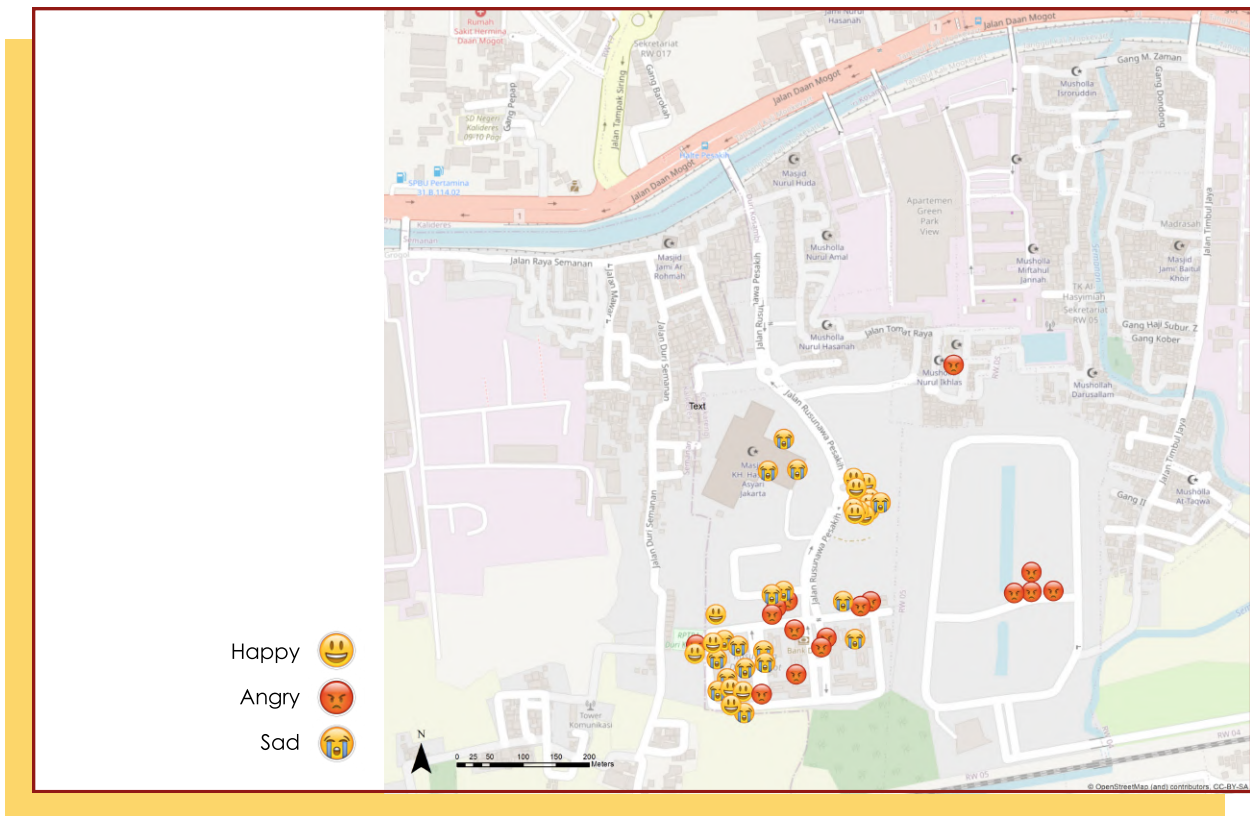


Figure 18. Emoji map curated from the children of *rusun* memories based on their emotions

### Sadness

By contrast, negative emotions were most likely to be reported by child respondents as being associated with the residential area of the *rusun* complex. The main cause of sadness was identified as the complex being 'boring,' or 'having nowhere to spend time,' as well as a lack of options in terms of snacks and other items on sale compared to the area beyond the *rusun* complex. Parents also reported being uncomfortable with the difficulty of monitoring their children from upper storeys of the residential complex, and the nuisance of going up and down flights of stairs in order to locate them or otherwise access facilities on the ground floor.

### Anger

A range of angry responses were reported by child residents of the *rusun* complex, many which related to specific interactions with parents, friends or other community members. Common themes included the high temperature and lack of shade along the main road leading to the social housing complex and around the feeder bus waiting area, as well as negative relations with other children from the *rusun*.. Parents similarly reported being dissatisfied with perceived long waiting time for the feeder buses, and with the unsatisfactory quality of water infrastructure provided to the complex.



Figure 19. One of the children from *rusun* focused with the assessment from Workshop



Figure 20. Children from *kampung* doing the assessment from Workshop



Figure 21. The parents from *kampung* preparing for breakfast during Community Meeting



Figure 22. The emotion responses and hopes drawn of Workshop and Community Meeting

-Harapan Saya tidak ada Banjir lagi.  
 - Kedepannya ada arse utk bermain anak 2  
 - Kalau ingin ada acara tidak ada gedung/mula

Untuk Fasilitas Gedung Sekolah untuk Tk, SD, SMA, dan dekat

Seneng naik Turun Tangga

Munggu bis way Lama dari Hatre ke Rusun

If tau longkang masih ada banyak jaman  
 saya morder kemka sauci  
 d. alate ke tempo  
 lai karena tirai dan  
 muna i cana

1. Seneng tinggal Dirulun...  
 2. G...  
 3. Bantuan oppan alhamdulillah Tersebut akan Dengan Gabe.

KOLAMBE

LES bahasa Korea

SEMANG PERSAKI JADI KAYAKOTA

MARAH KILAU AMIAK SUSAH DI BILANGA

Bisa Buat Tempat Foto - Foto

saya senang berada di waduk, karena bisa bermain bersama teman dan melihat hal yang dimiripkan dan juga dapat tempat

Masjid bagus

Masjid ga bisa kayak sebelum ada covid dulu sering ada kegiatan di

Seneng di waduk

Ada korban nyemplung

Karna memiliki tempat yang bagus Untuk foto-foto Pemandangan

# WORDS FROM PESAKIH



Figure 23. Wordmap curated from notes of emotion mapping

## 4. Direct Insights on the Local Environment

Figure (23) shows the qualitative responses of each child relating to their experiences in the neighbourhood and wider local area. The size and boldness of each individual term is weighted according to the frequency with which it occurs in a given locale, and colour coordinated to correspond with the three key emotional states discussed previously.

The word map clearly shows a concentration of positive experiences associated with recreation and group activities outside each immediate neighbourhood itself, and in the wider local area of open space between them. This supports the earlier assertion that open spaces are key to the overall mental and social wellbeing of children in Pesakih. Negative experiences are far more likely to be individual, personal, or focused on the nature of the physical environment (the latter particularly an issue for parents).

## 5. Route Integration and Local Mobility

Figure (24) shows the major access routes and general integration of the study site, including both neighbourhood typologies, with the surrounding urban landscape. Primary routes used on a daily basis by residents and by the field team during the course of this research are shown in red, with secondary route access to certain key facilities shown in orange. Yellow stretches indicate unofficial 'shortcuts' regularly used by residents to cut overall journey times. Routes were recorded using cellphone GPS trackers and combined into a single map image.

It is clear that improving local access to the nearest commuter rail station should be an immediate priority to increase the overall integration of both neighbourhoods. The identified shortcut is only significant for *rusun* residents, who already have access to the transjakarta bus feeder services, and the total pedestrian journey time can amount to almost one hour depending on individual fitness. In single-vehicle households where women and children may not always have access to private motorised vehicles, journey times are therefore prohibitive for public transport use, and the use of online taxi services is common. Figure (25) shows how study participants from both neighbourhoods made their daily school commute prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the presence of some public transport options and a dedicated school bus service, private vehicles remain dominant, indicating Pesakih's suboptimal public transport integration with regards to its youth population.



Figure 24. Routes taken from route mapping, shows both major acces and shortcuts

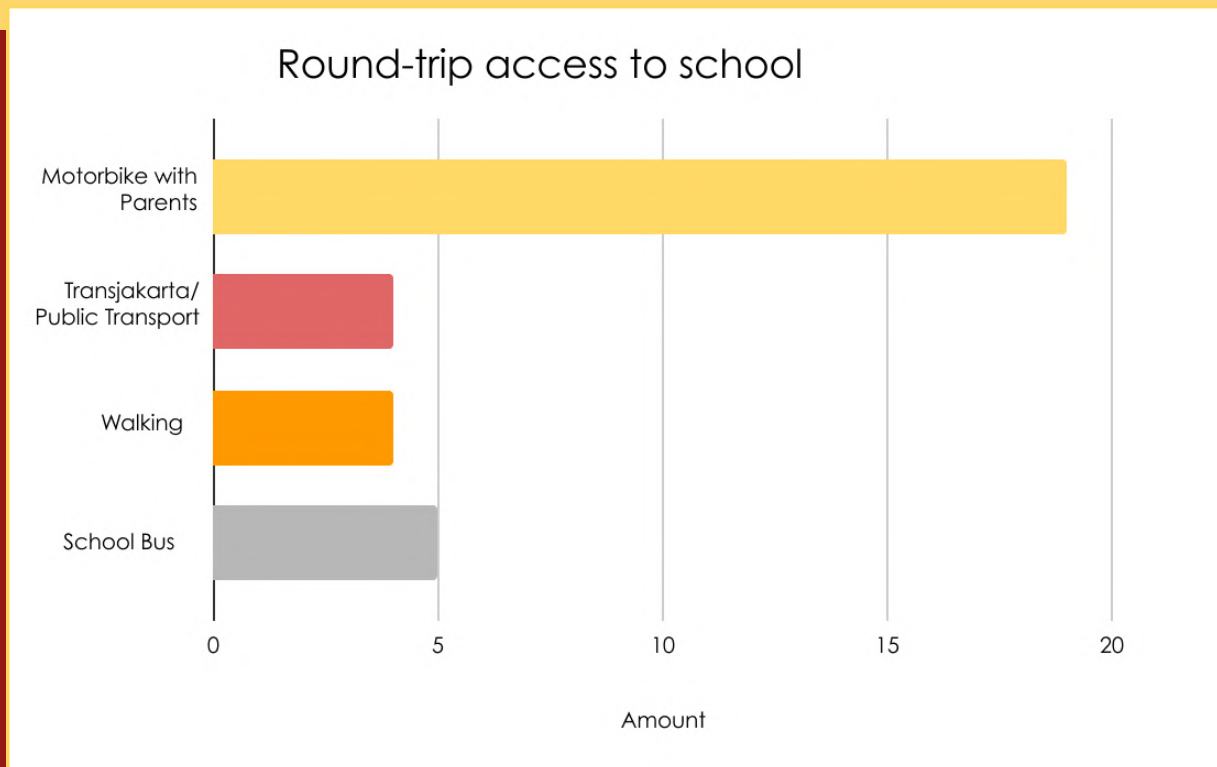


Figure 25. Round-trip acces to school chart from both respective neighbourhoods children



# A Preliminary Compactness Assessment for Pesakih's Youth Population

This introductory research has raised a number of important themes regarding the idea of a compact neighbourhood for children, each of which is suitable for further investigation. A selection of these key themes is outlined below, along with preliminary conclusions and speculative predictions where appropriate.

## 1. Qualitative Neighbourhood Compactness Metrics

Based on the results of surveys and questionnaires conducted with child study participants, indicative metrics of general youth compactness were calculated for each neighbourhood typology. Each individual parameter was derived based on responses to a range of thematically similar and interrelated questions on the given topic within the survey and further qualified via in-depth interviews and discussions with participants. The results are shown below.



Figure 26. Compactness metrics chart of both respective neighbourhoods

As shown in figure (26), both neighbourhood typologies recorded a remarkably similar compactness profile, with high scores for fulfilling the recreational and commercial needs of their child residents, largely related to the availability of areas for play and the presence of vendors selling preferred snacks, drinks and other items, but scored relatively poorly in terms of facilities, and transportation in particular.

### Transportation

The low transportation scores for each neighbourhood typology were calculated based on typical transport options for key journeys such as going to-or-from school, and reflect their poor integration with the city's wider public transport networks and location far from the city centre. *Rusun* residents' higher scores reflect the benefits from feeder bus services, which connect them with the nearest TransJakarta bus station, and school bus services for children, but both neighbourhoods remain under-connected and residents rely primarily on private vehicles, or informal transport alternatives for short journeys.

### Recreation

The recreation metric was calculated based on resident's preferences for play, sports or other recreation activities, and how regularly these activities would take place within the neighbourhood itself. Both neighbourhoods were largely successful in providing areas for a range of recreational activities, with easy access to open spaces, although significant gender disparity was observed regarding access to certain spaces and the activities typically conducted within them. The *rusun* neighbourhood's higher score reflects the presence of dedicated activity spaces (RPTRA - *Ruang Publik Terpadu Ramah Anak* [Integrated Child-friendly Space]), a football pitch, and closer proximity to the popular reservoir-adjacent area.

### Commercial

Similarly, both neighbourhoods were able to effectively provide for most of the commercial needs of study participants within a localised area, and indeed children comprise one of the most lucrative markets for many informal traders and travelling vendors, particularly since the initiation of home schooling. The *rusun*'s higher score largely reflects its proximity to the popular afternoon market and special Friday night market, both of which are popular with children and take place in the reservoir-adjacent area immediately in front of the social housing complex. It should be noted that the *kampung* neighbourhood is located significantly closer to the local traditional market, however raw ingredients and other common sale items are of less direct relevance to children.

## Facilities

The facilities metric was based on questionnaire responses pertaining to residents' perception of existing shortcomings, and the ideal facilities which could be provided in the future. The existing facilities provided by the state in the *rusun* complex itself clearly explain the higher score from residents of that neighbourhood, however access from the nearby *kampung* neighbourhood is also possible, improving what would otherwise likely be an extremely low score if based solely on the immediate residential vicinity.



Figure 27. Informal merchant on the upper-levels, inside one of the units from Rusun

## Social

The sole metric on which the *kampung* neighbourhood scores higher in terms of compactness than the *rusun* complex is in the extent to which the children's social needs are provided for in their local environment. Although an abstract and difficult to quantify notion, these scores were based on children's perception of having either positive or negative relationships with their peers, neighbours, and other children in the vicinity. Many *rusun* children reported antagonistic or otherwise negative relationships with other children in the neighbourhood, particularly those from different residential blocks.

## Summary

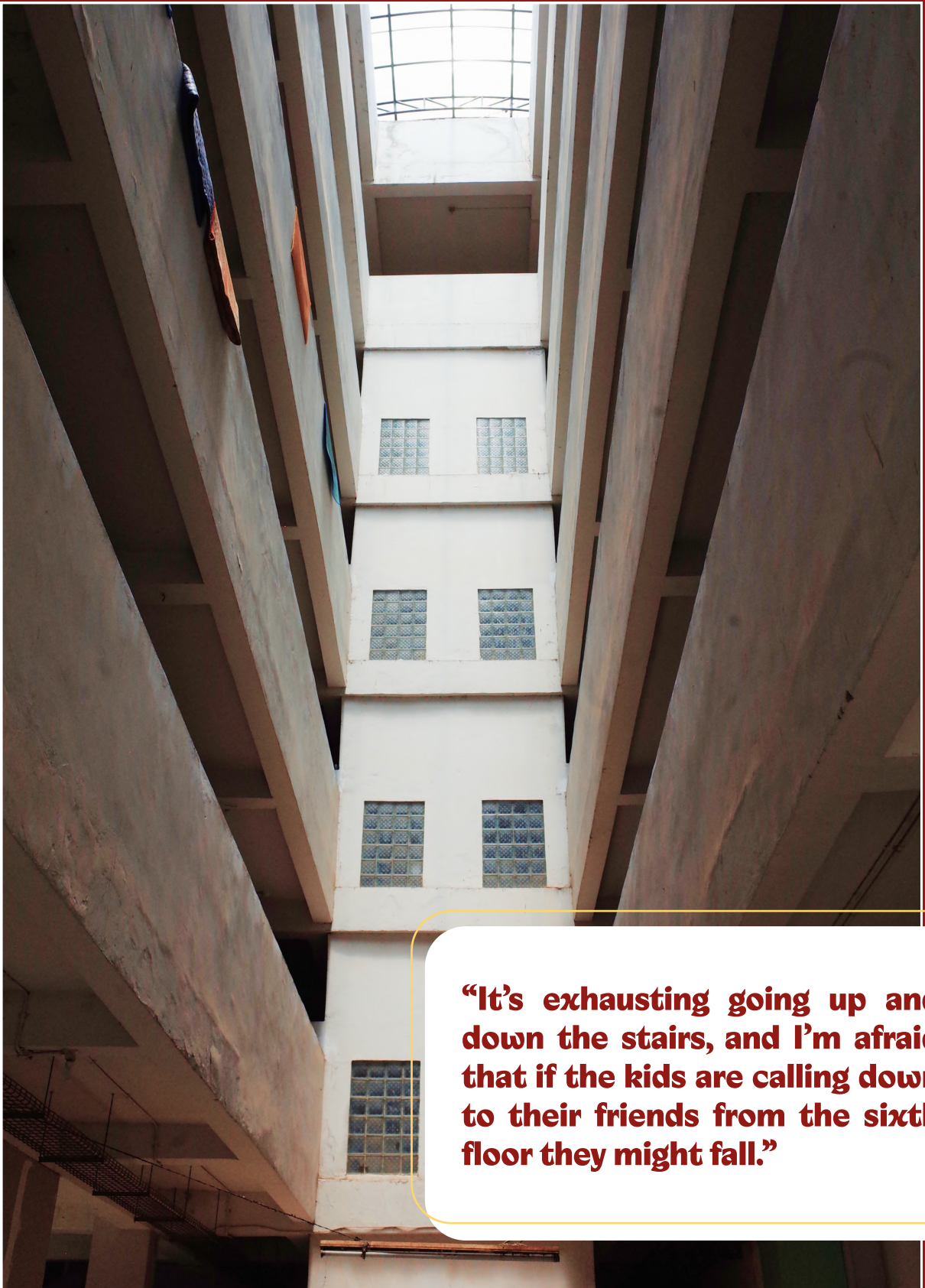
Overall, the *rusun* neighbourhood's higher scores for most key parameters can be attributed to the provision of key public services within the complex itself, and specific efforts to better integrate the social housing complex into the wider urban fabric. By contrast, the *kampung* neighbourhood performs strongest in terms of providing for the children's perceived social needs, which could be a result of the closer intercommunal and interhousehold interaction reported by residents of all ages.

## 2. Intergenerational divergence

A recurring theme in interviews, surveys and workshops conducted during this research was the different perspectives between child participants and their parents regarding their local neighbourhood. Predictably, parents' concerns largely centred on the safety and security of their residential area, available facilities and other practical concerns, while children tended to focus on less tangible features of the neighbourhood such as relationships with other stakeholders and how different spaces made them feel.

The general responses of child participants largely supports the premise of this research, that children are highly local actors, but also indicates their proclivity for wider interaction with spaces beyond their home compared to adults. Although adults occasionally reported being concerned about their children's whereabouts when playing far from the home, they reported more concern about an increasing tendency by younger generations towards sedentary lifestyles, dominated by playing games on smartphones and other gadgets. It seems clear that improving the 'child-friendliness' or 'youth-compactness' of a neighbourhood is likely to encourage extended periods of physical play and exercise, as well as reducing the potential for accidents and injuries to take place during the process.

Overall, the Pesakih area was found to provide relatively well for the needs of its youth population, with a wide range of primary services available and reasonable access to secondary facilities such as cultural institutions and open spaces (discussed below). It is unclear, however, how this will change in the coming years, as the needs of study participants evolve in the later half of their teen years and as they transition to young adults. Though likely becoming more mobile and thereby better able to access more distant facilities and services, it is also likely that their daily needs and activities will become increasingly complex in the future. Further research is needed to investigate how compact the neighbourhood is in terms of its ability to support young people in their transition to adulthood and increasing independence.



**“It’s exhausting going up and down the stairs, and I’m afraid that if the kids are calling down to their friends from the sixth floor they might fall.”**

Figure 28. Six storeys of Rusun Block F, no elevator is installed



Figure 29. One of participant expressing his concern during the interview

### 3. Open Spaces and the neighbourhood

Unlike the vast majority of low-income neighbourhoods in Jakarta, both the *kampung* and *rusun* residents at Pesakih have access to extensive open spaces in the immediate vicinity. Although these spaces are not maintained and in many respects do not meet the standards of true 'parks' or even 'fields,' they are nonetheless suitable for a range of recreational and commercial activities, and in that sense a real luxury, particularly for children. It is in these spaces that most of Pesakih's youth population's regular social and recreational activities take place, identified as the primary sources of their daily happiness in the months since the COVID-19 pandemic. Access to these public open spaces largely negated most shortcomings in the physical environment of each neighbourhood typology by providing secondary areas for socialising and play.

The benefits of regular exercise from activities such as playing football, kite-flying or even simply walking extended distances between different areas cannot be overstated in maintaining the physical and mental health of a youth population currently attending school online from their homes, nor can their role in providing a more stimulating environment, where children are more likely to spontaneously encounter their peers or engage in imaginative play (Chaudhury et al., 2015). It is unsurprising therefore that these open spaces were viewed positively by all study participants, and play a central role in the social life of communities from both neighbourhoods. Such local access to open spaces is extraordinarily rare in Jakarta, even in higher income areas, yet the positive impact on youth wellbeing and overall quality of life support a growing body of research into the critical significance of open spaces in building truly compact neighbourhoods.

In addition to the physical, social and psychological benefits of these open spaces, they are also the site of a significant amount of supplementary economic activity, where residents earn additional income by providing goods and services largely catering to the children playing nearby (though not exclusively). This will be discussed in more detail below.

## 4. Informality and the Compact Neighbourhood

The role of informality in the production of remarkably compact neighbourhood environments is of obvious significance for all residents of Pesakih. Shortcomings in the provision of goods and services by the formal economy provide livelihood opportunities for entrepreneurial residents, who have established a vibrant and highly-localised informal economy. As previously identified, children, as the most highly-local actors in both neighbourhoods, play an important role in this local economy by generating significant market demand.

*Kampung* are well-known as highly informal spaces, where individual residences often serve multiple functions as both housing and places of business, however the nature of urban informality in the context of *rusun* social housing complexes remains under-researched and poorly understood. Observations by the field research team noted that almost every available space on the lower floors of the *rusun* complex has been colonised by an informal enterprise of one sort or another, from simple warung-style shops and restaurants to barbers' salons and miniature garment factories. Small-scale agriculture and aquaculture operations are common in green spaces outside the residential blocks. On upper floors, individual households have established similar vending enterprises on an even smaller scale, largely catering to residents with impaired mobility or younger children who typically remain closer to their residential unit. Secondary informal enterprises such as porters to assist residents in carrying heavy items up flights of stairs are also an important part of this *rusun*-specific informal ecology.



Figure 30. Informal activities in the neighbourhoods



The focal point of Pesakih's informal economy is undoubtedly the open spaces between both of the study neighbourhood typologies, where regular daily and weekly patterns of trading punctuate the rhythm of local life. Sidewalks are transformed into impromptu terraced restaurants, with a few sheets of tarpaulin materialising open air spaces for socialising and family gatherings seemingly out of nowhere, while the weekly night market provides a range of recreational and consumer highlights for residents of all ages.

The importance of these self-generating informal spaces to the lives of child participants in this research is clear; comprising a significant portion of their reported 'positive' experiences, sites of regular recreation and purchasing preferences. In turn, children form a key customer demographic for many of these enterprises, who tend to congregate at already popular sites, reinforcing the overall social-recreational value.

The status of these diverse enterprises is highly variable, falling somewhere on a spectrum between wholly informal and formally registered, however it is clear that otherwise vacant and available spaces which facilitate residents' capacity to take independent business and recreation initiatives is an important contributor to overall compactness in the low-income neighbourhoods of Pesakih. Recognition of informality as a contextual economic and lifestyle preference for many will unquestionably improve future approaches to the design and management of residential housing blocks and other neighbourhood spaces, as well as the wider urban environment more broadly.



## Conclusions and Recommendations

### Growing Up in Pesakih

### Youth Compactness and Social Mobility

The scale of this preliminary research is insufficient to draw empirically significant conclusions regarding the ultimate impact of variable compactness metrics on the long-term wellbeing and socioeconomic mobility of Pesakih's youth population, however it does suggest a range of key themes for further research, and raises interesting questions about the viability of compact neighbourhoods in Jakarta more broadly.

Firstly, despite the relatively low-income status of most residents, both the *kampung* and *rusun* neighbourhood typologies investigated for this research were largely able to provide for the basic needs of their youth population, despite different strengths and weaknesses as outlined above. Given the highly-local nature of children's daily habits and overall lifestyle, particularly since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and online-only schooling, they are perhaps less affected by the relatively poor integration of their neighbourhood within the wider capital region than working-age adults, and able to fulfill most of their daily needs within a short walking distance of the home.

At the same time, Pesakih's childhood residents are also remarkably fortunate in having immediate access to expansive (semi)green open spaces in their neighbourhood, a luxury unavailable to the vast majority of Jakarta's population regardless of socioeconomic status. These spaces are a theatre for a wide range of social, cultural and economic activities, many of which specifically designed for children, and provide a great many opportunities for all kinds of recreation and imaginative play. That these open spaces are shared between the two study neighbourhoods contributes to harmonising their overall compactness metrics, with variations in degree attributable to the relative distances from each residential area to specific locations within the wider neighbourhood space.

Whether a more 'socially-compact' neighbourhood, compared with a more individualist neighbourhood with better facilities, will produce divergent long-term outcomes, will become more apparent as the younger generation mature and transition to young adults.

It is worth mentioning that the *kampung* model of intense inter-household relations and cooperation is long-established in much of Indonesia, with *rusun*-style individualism a relatively new system by comparison. Many *rusun* residents reported feeling less closely connected to their neighbours, less able to call upon them for help, and generally forced to become more self-reliant than before their eviction and relocation. The potential for this cultural dislocation to disrupt established behavioural patterns or household economic strategies remains an important area of further study.

## Recommendations for Low-Income Compact Neighbourhoods in Jakarta

In pursuit of more compact neighbourhoods in which urban residents are more easily able to lead comfortable, fulfilling lives, a number of preliminary recommendations can be drawn from the Rapat Tetangga research project. Each of these themes requires further investigation to determine specific details of form, function, and scale, but are nonetheless identified as being important for the overall compactness of Pesakih's low-income neighbourhood typologies, and potentially for neighbourhoods across Jakarta more generally.

### 1. Rail Integration

A recurrent theme throughout this research was the unsatisfactory level of neighborhood integration within the wider metropolitan transport network. This was particularly significant for *kampung* residents, but was regularly reported by *rusun* residents as well. In particular, the lack of access to the relatively nearby commuter rail station at Rawa Buaya seems a relatively simple and low-cost issue to resolve, through the simple addition of an elevated access walkway, for example, which would drastically reduce journey times for pedestrians.

### 2. Gender Priorities

An important aspect of youth compactness which was raised during this research was the extent to which gender plays a key role in terms of access to facilities and spaces within the wider neighbourhood. Female residents were more likely to feel excluded from participating in sport and recreation activities, despite having a strong desire to participate, and a lack of spaces dedicated to 'female-friendly' activities was also noted. Addressing gender-based inequity by considering the intersection of gender and the neighbourhood will be an important part of increasing overall compactness in the future.

### 3. Open spaces

The critical role of Pesakih's open spaces in the cultural, social and economic life of residents has been discussed at length throughout this paper, yet the full potential of these spaces to improve the overall wellbeing of local communities remains underutilized. Improved management, landscape design and safety measures would all increase the use-value of these important spaces many times over, by providing dedicated sites for socially desirable activities such as exercise and important cultural events. The gendered dimension of access and utilisation of these spaces should also be addressed, to ensure equal opportunities are afforded to female residents and priority given to their specific needs and preferences. This will help deliver an equitable distribution of these already significant benefits.

### 4. Socio-cultural spaces

The provision of dedicated socio-cultural spaces is a key part of reinforcing community solidarity, social harmony and overall well being. Existing spaces, though frequently utilised, remain suboptimal in their capacity to provide for the needs of local residents, to the extent where corridors within the *rusun* complex are regularly used as auxiliary socio-cultural spaces. Improved access to and capacity of these spaces will provide opportunities for residents to engage in a range of important extracurricular activities.

### 5. Informality

Participation in the informal economy is a fact of everyday life for millions of Jakartans, and plays an important role in the overall socioeconomic reality of both *kampung* and *rusun* residents in pesakih. Informal enterprises can empower residents by providing livelihood opportunities flexible enough to suit a range of other lifestyle considerations, including mobility and familial responsibilities, and maximise the value of highly-local and context specific knowledge. Recognition of the role played by urban informality and the provision of spaces and regulations which facilitate its presence will help strengthen the economic resilience of low-income communities.

## Resident Aspirations

Figure (31) shows the matrix of words reported by participants when asked to describe their hopes for the future of their respective neighbourhoods.

Rapat Tetangga has only initiated the process of uncovering the nature of interactions between Jakarta's people their neighbourhoods, beginning with the younger generation of highly-local actors for whom 'the neighbourhood' is the setting in which vast majority of their individual and collective life occurs. As they mature, and engage more widely with their city in a globalising world, this inherent complexity will surely only increase, with new challenges, needs, demands and solutions arising every step of the way. Regardless, this research has firmly established the central importance of the neighbourhood in many areas of modern life, and the role of collective spaces in maintaining the physical, psychological and economic wellbeing of low-income communities in particular.



Figure 31. The aspiration spoken derived from the workshop and interviews

As shared spaces which incorporate diverse aspects of collective and individual life, neighbourhoods will always be a site of contestation as well as cooperation. Exactly how each neighbourhood functions, and in the interests of whom, is determined by a range of stakeholders both internal and external, formal and informal, through a process of continuous dialogue and negotiation. There is no set template for the ideal neighbourhood. Instead, collaboration between these various stakeholders should be strengthened, and encouraged as the basis for developing contextual proposals on a case-by-case basis. Our neighbourhoods change with us, as individuals and as a society, and despite increasing uncertainty, what is clear is that in the post-pandemic era of digitalisation, remote living and increasing social stratification, the role of Jakarta's neighbourhoods in the lives of its citizens is set only to increase in years to come.

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