PREVIOUS SITUATION
Croce del Biacco is a district on the suburbs of Bologna, characterized for being a place of transition between the periphery and the agricultural area of the city. The project area was divided into two residential parts, separated by a great void and a busy road that broke the connection between these two areas. In this central and disconnected area, it’s located a primary school.

The population of the district is very heterogeneous: autochthonous residents cohabit with immigrants, mostly Muslims, and an immigrant shelter centre. There was a willingness on the part of citizens, to have meeting spaces that can facilitate social cohesion in the neighborhood.

THE OBJECT OF THE INTERVENTION.
The project is the result of an international competition called by Fondazione del Monte. The name of the contest is illustrative: “Bella Fuori 3”. Already by this same title, it vindicates the need to find beauty not only in the center. It wanted to start a reflection on the new centralities of the contemporary city and their bonds of autonomy and attraction compared to the center.

The purpose of the intervention was to create a strategy that would allow to sew the urban fabric through uses that could give an answer to the existing urban scar between the two unconnected areas. For this, have been created some paths that allow to create walkways to some referenced urban elements (school, cultural center, Islamic center, public gymnasium, residential area...). New spaces were created through the removal of existing fences that can connect spaces that until then were isolated.

All this was done through a strategy of social and urban innovation, involving a private foundation as a promoter of an intervention of urban regeneration and articulating the process through a participatory process and thinking about a subsequent commitment of public management of common property.

DESCRIPTION
The intervention is based on a walkway that goes basting various uses along its axis so as to activate the spaces at different times and with different users. It's proposed as a system of different uses that was able to be turned on or off in different time bands according to their users.

It's tried that the intervention had a strong landscape identity through identifiable urban elements and a graphic design that could give character to the neighborhood. The first phase consists in connecting the existing pieces and solving mobility, reassigning a priority for pedestrians and bicycles. These connections balance the different parts of the neighborhood, creating flows that can reactive the void areas. To do this, the main entrance of the school is transferred, creating a new pedestrian access through a square located in a space previously inaccessible and now became the heart of the intervention.

Various uses were proposed: playgrounds linked mainly to the existing school, urban gardens for the elderly of the cultural center, sports courts and rest for young people, a small amphitheater as a cultural equipment for the neighborhood and as an extension of the existing gym, a social kitchen as a meeting point of neighbors, a space to develop a pop-up market, as well as a new parking area and new green areas for relaxation. The path proposes various intensities of use, intended to host a variety of situations and to endow polyfunctional scenarios this area of the district, transforming it into a new pole of centrality.

VALORACION
The participatory nature, that from the beginning was the project, has allowed to give an appropriate response to the real needs of citizens. The program is designed from the requests (wishes) of the citizen, so that have been developed only those areas of which had the certainty of a future management.

This commitment of citizens in the project, carried out through numerous sessions of both the project and the work, has reinforced the sense of belonging that people developed for the city and its public space. At the end of the process, was signed a pact of cooperation that, in an innovative way, regulated the various commitments that the associations and groups voluntarily assumed for the care and management of spaces.

The end of the work, therefore, is only a start. A start that will serve to calibrate with accuracy, the accuracy of daily life, the balance of the various parts of the park and that experiment is based on building a common reality. Elements that arose from a citizen desire, as a desire to reappropriate the near territory, a desire to give it meaning and a signified.

Time will tell.