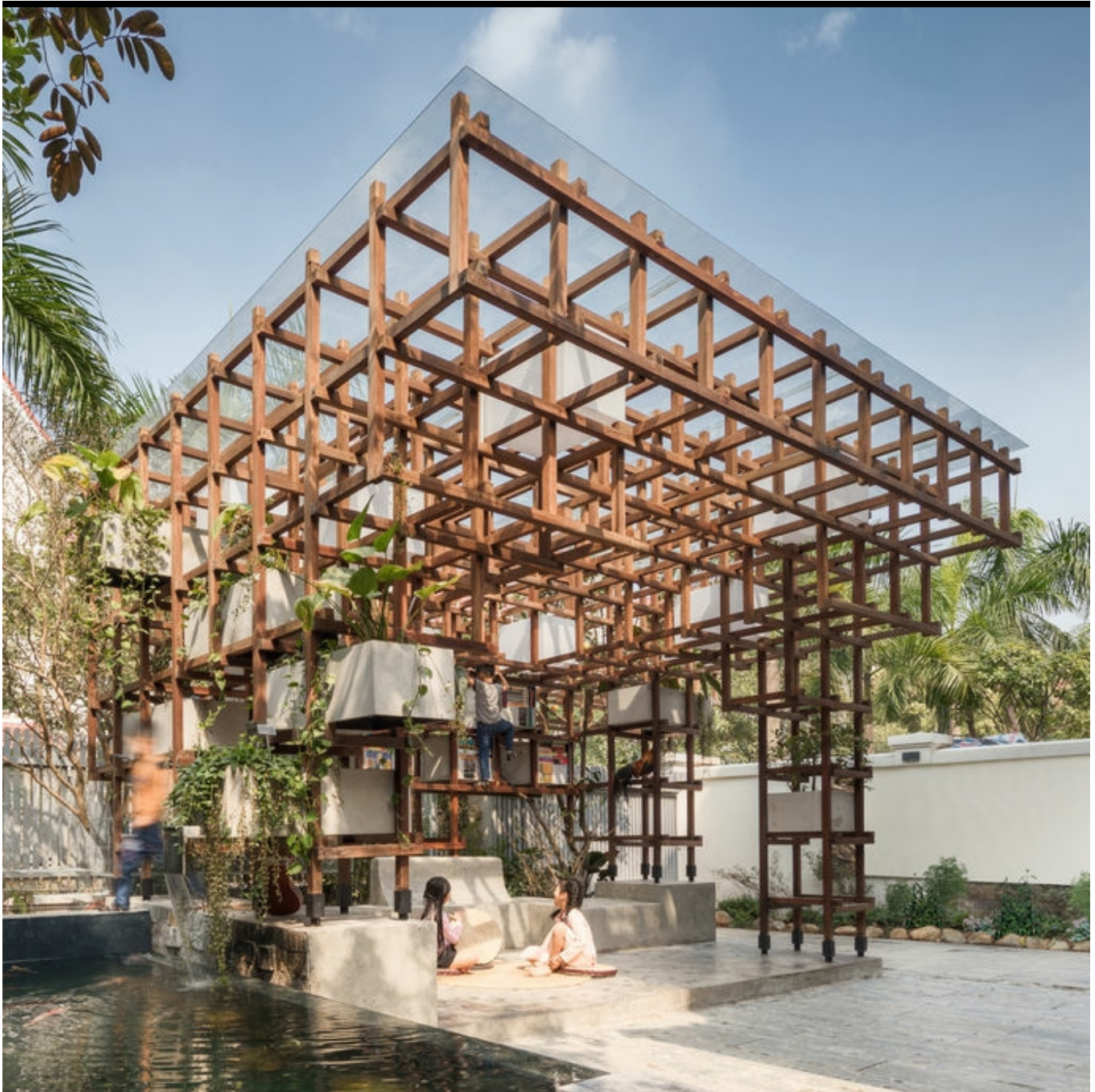


# THOUGHT-STARTER: CAN KIDS DESIGN OUR FUTURE CITIES?

By Livvy Houghton and Alex Hawkins

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*As urban planners and architects deliberate on the future of our cities, deputy foresight editor Kathryn Bishop considers how children are helping to reclaim the streets and redesign public spaces and buildings.*

According to the UN, one in eight people already live in one of the world's 33 megacities and by 2050 two-thirds of the world's population will live in an urban area. Our future towns and cities will need to confront several major challenges – in particular, how to create urban spaces that work for children.

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'It's about looking at what affects young people most and using this as a framework to inform all aspects of planning, designing or managing cities because it benefits all of us,' explains Sam Williams, landscape architect at Arup, which recently published *Cities Alive: Designing for urban childhoods*.

The city of Aberdeen is already working to become Scotland's first Unicef Child Friendly City, with pupils from local schools invited to its council's chamber to learn about decision-making within their communities. Meanwhile, in Hong Kong, architect Vicky Chan is teaching thousands of children about urban design and planning through a voluntary scheme called Architecture for Children.

Read the full micro trend [here](#).