06 Nov, 2024

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Graduation Research | P5

Reaching the Unreachable?

Enhancing inclusivity and liveability in urban area development

Reaching the Unreachable?

Examining how inclusive participation can be fostered through engagement strategies for liveability in urban area development

P5 Suzan van Cuyk,

Nov 2024

1. Problem statement
2. Theory
3. Research method
4. Empirical research
5. Results
6. Conclusion

Why research fostering inclusive participation in area development?

What are we researching: Participation, Liveability, Urban area development

How is the research executed?

Two case studies: Defensie-eiland & Piekstraat, a comparative case study method for writing an advice on Piekstraat

Step-by-step approach to facilitating inclusive participation: Internal & External strategy for developers

How can citizen engagement strategies facilitate more inclusive participation for liveability in urban area development?

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How can citizen engagement strategies facilitate more inclusive participation for liveability in urban area development?

Over the past few decades, **technological advancements have accelerated**, **bringing new systems** and innovations **to** every aspect of **human life.**

Past

Past → Present

Cities must adapt, as urban populations grow, **to address challenges** like climate change, resource scarcity, and inequality. **Sustainable cities must focus** not only on environmental sustainability but also **on social sustainability.**

New Environment and Planning Act

'De angst voor participatie is ontzettend groot'

Hendriksma, 2024 (Binnenlands Bestuur)

Burgerparticipatie dient vooral ontwikkelaars en bevoorrechte burgers

Stapper, 2020 (UvA)

Omgevingswet legt participatie bij projectontwikkelaars

Van den Brand, 2020 (Gemeente.nu)

Bewonersbrieven te vaak te laat: raad wil betere sturing

Dessing, 2023 (Zaanstad Nieuws)

De nieuwe Omgevingswet maakt zijn beloftes niet waar, zeggen omwonenden

Van den Berg, 2024 (Volkskrant)

New Environment and Planning Act

Participatielessen uit Veenendaal: ga zo snel mogelijk het gesprek aan

Faas, 2024 (Stadszaken)

Digitale participatie: goed begin is het halve werk

citizenlab, 2024 (Nederlands Vereniging voor Raadsleden)

Goede participatie kost tijd. Slechte participatie nog meer

Royal HaskoningDHV, 2024 (Binnenlands Bestuur)

Opinie: omgaan met weerstand bij participatie? Zet je gedragsbril op!

Buhrs, 2024 (Stadszaken)

Problem statement:

1

Why research fostering inclusive participation in area development?

Research gap

Why research fostering inclusive participation in area development?

Problem statement

Rapid urbanization challenges social sustainability

Existing research focuses on government-led initiatives, the role of private developers remains underexplored.

The increasing shift towards digital participation raises questions about effectively integrating these tools.

Understanding the strategies necessary for fostering inclusive citizen participation is essential for enhancing liveability in urban areas.

Main research question

Problem statement

How can
citizen engagement strategies facilitate more inclusive participation
for liveability in urban area development?

Main research question

Problem statement

How can
citizen engagement strategies facilitate more inclusive participation for liveability in urban area development?

Concept 1

Citizen engagement strategies

Main research question

Problem statement

How can
citizen engagement strategies facilitate more inclusive participation for **liveability** in urban area development?

Concept 1

Citizen engagement strategies

Concept 2

Liveability

Main research question

Problem statement

How can
citizen engagement strategies facilitate **more inclusive participation**
for liveability in urban area development?

Concept 1

Citizen engagement strategies

Concept 2

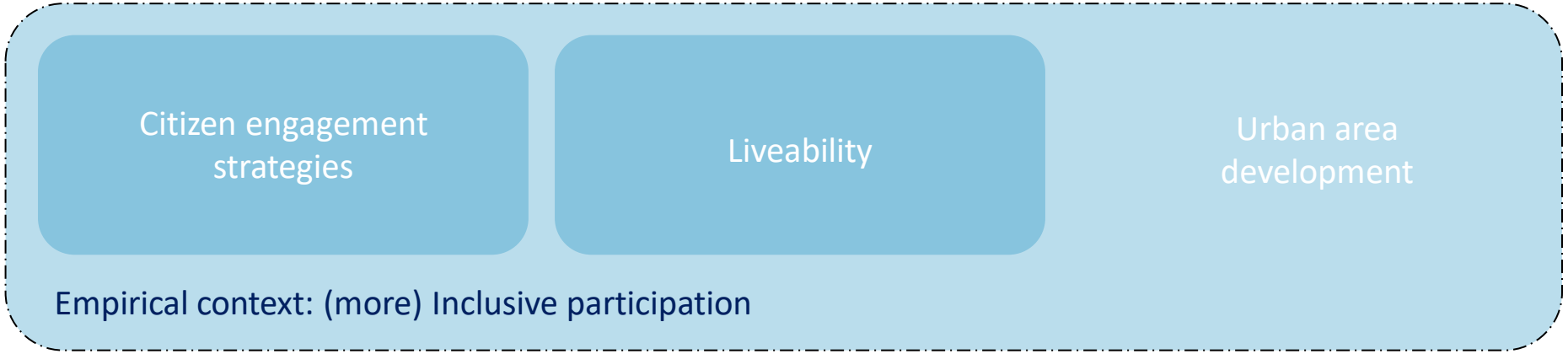
Liveability

Empirical context: (more) Inclusive participation

Main research question

Problem statement

How can
citizen engagement strategies facilitate more inclusive participation
for liveability in **urban area development**?



Theory:

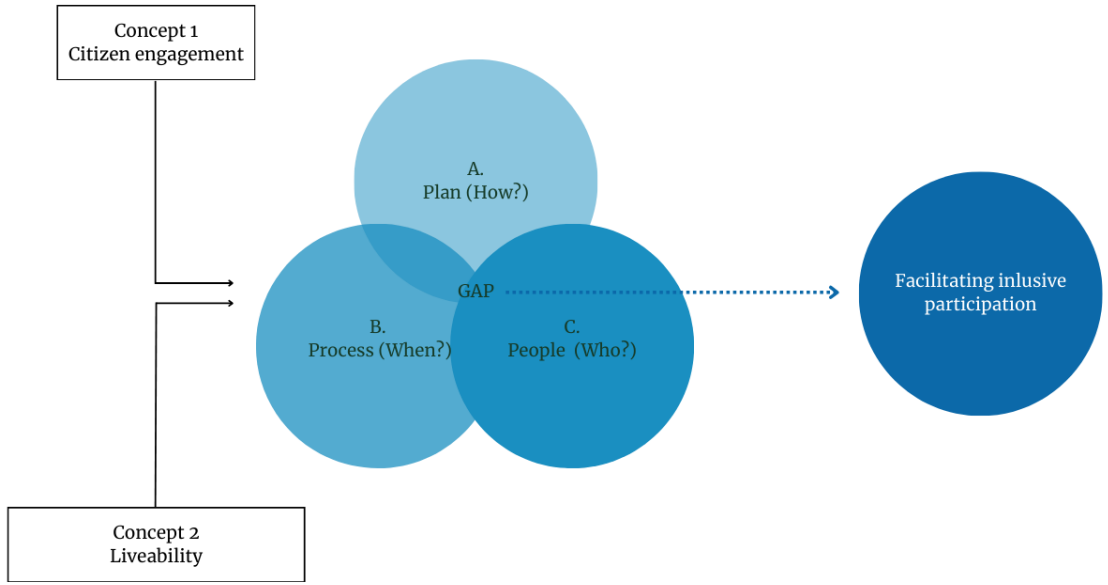
2

Theoretical background; **What** are we researching:
Participation, Liveability, Urban area development

Context, process & concepts

Conceptual model

Theory



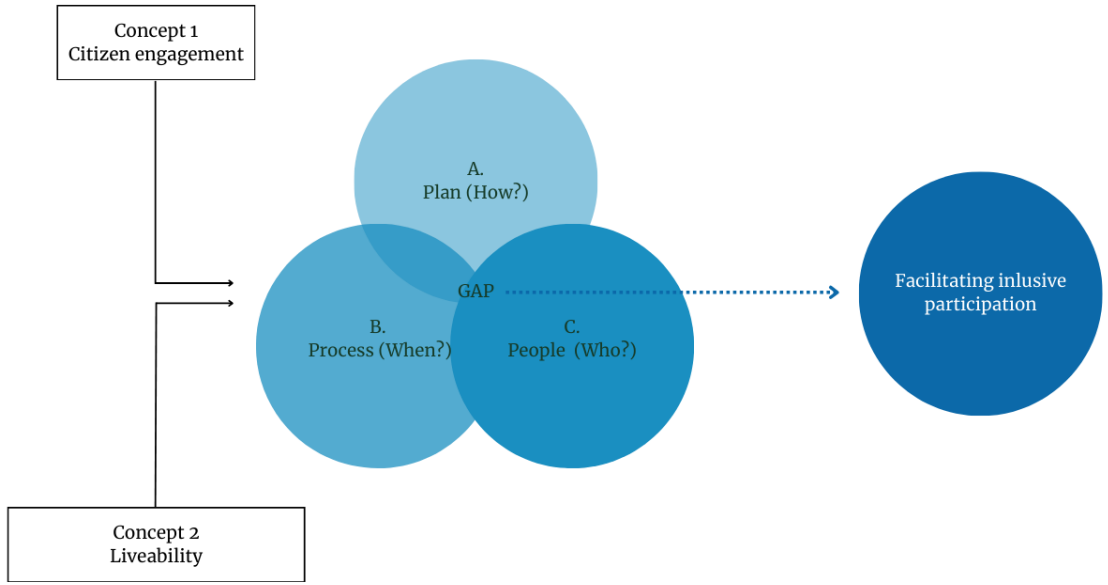
How?

When?

Who?

Conceptual model

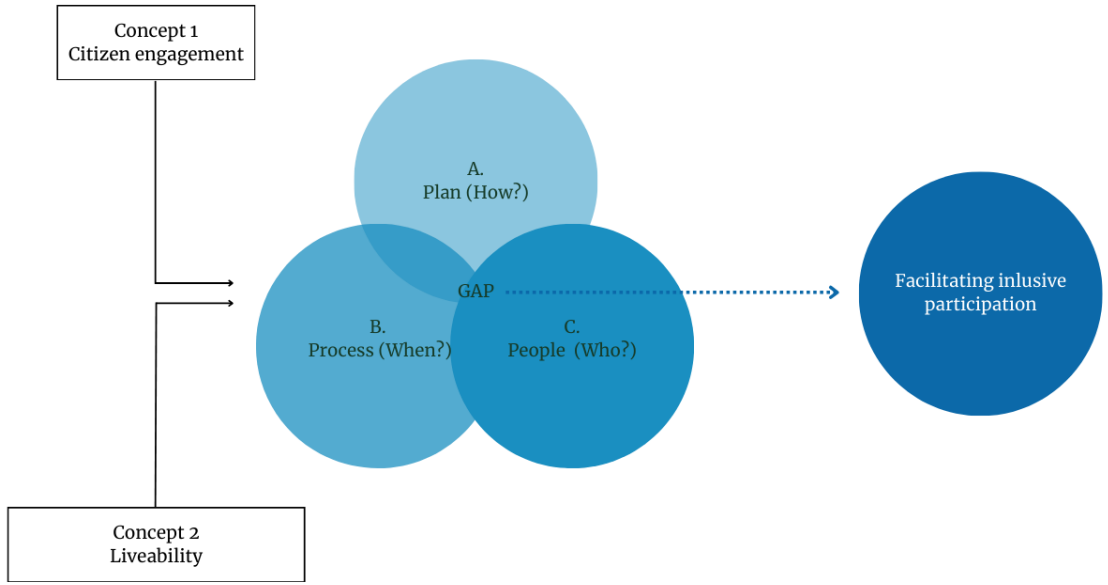
Theory



How? **When?** **Who?**

Conceptual model

Theory



How? **When?** **Who?**

Conceptual model

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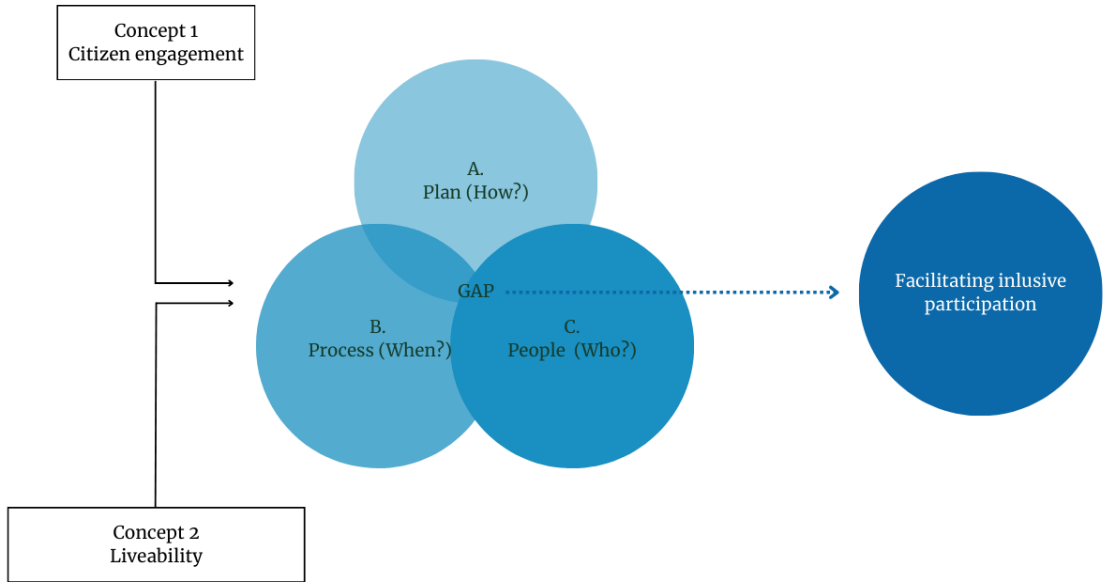


How?

In what way?

When?

At what time?

Who?

With whom?

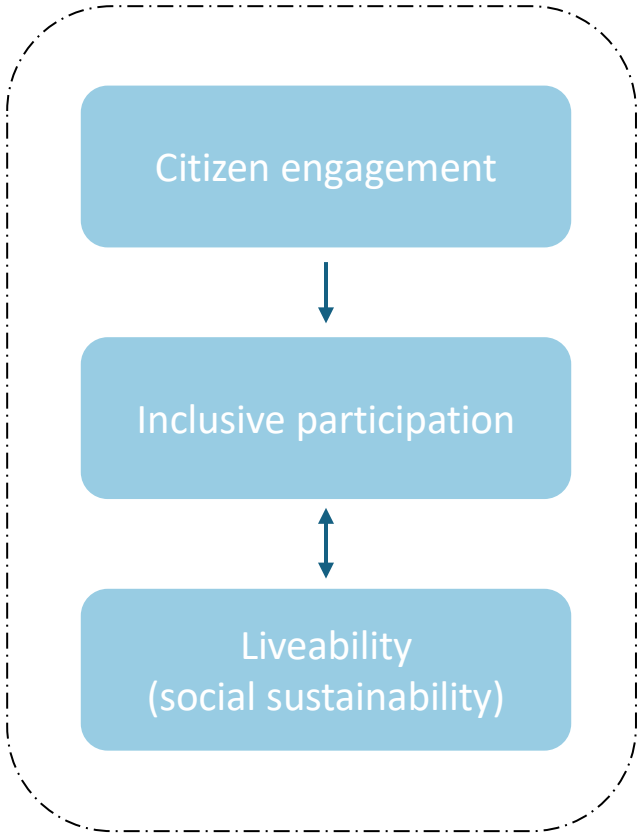
Theoretical model

Theory

How can

citizen engagement strategies facilitate more inclusive participation

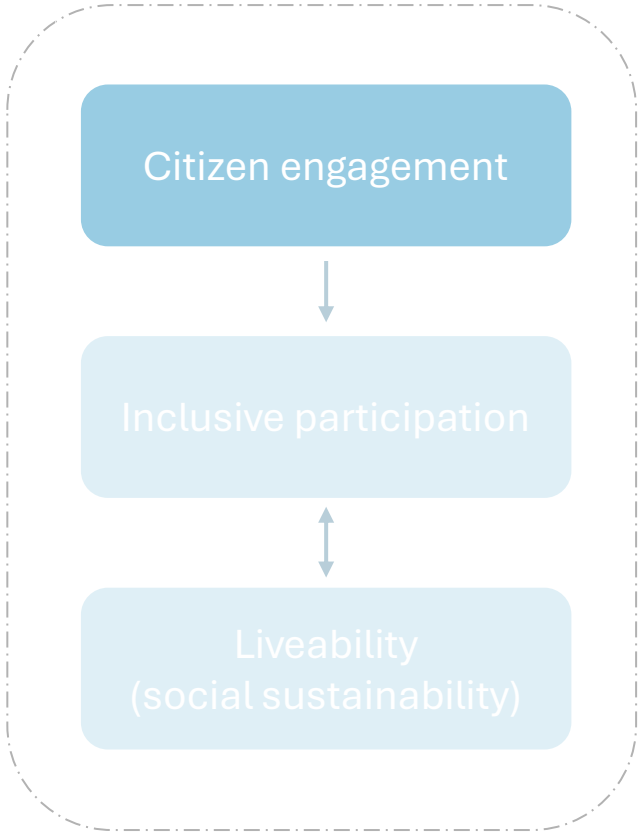
for liveability in urban area development?



Urban area development

Theoretical model

Theory



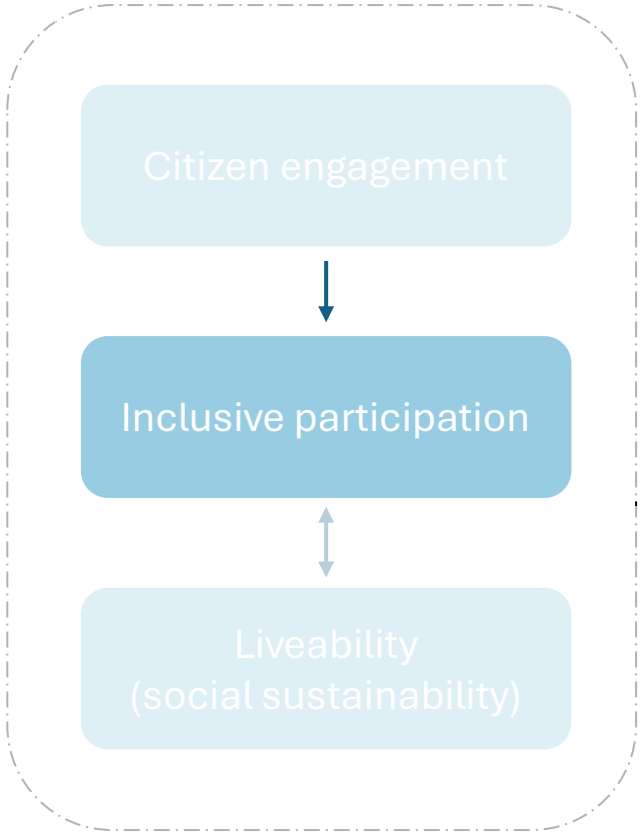
The term citizen engagement refers to **the process by which individuals or communities are involved in decision-making processes** that affect their local environment, governance, or public services.

Often, engagement lays focus on ensuring that **people are connected and interested**, not necessarily directly involved in decision-making.

Urban area development

Theoretical model

Theory



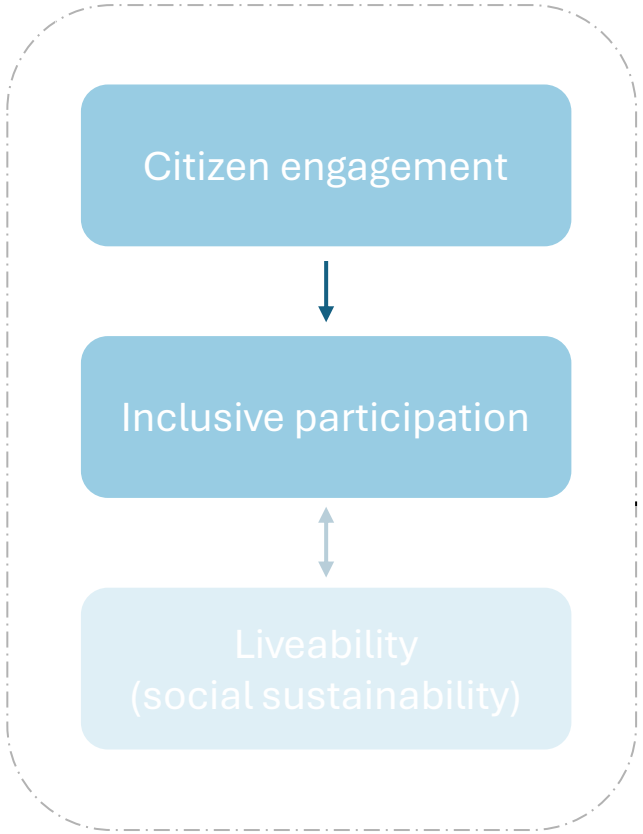
Inclusive participation **ensures all community groups can be involved and actively participate in decision-making**. This **removes barriers** preventing effective participation.

These barriers can be linguistic, physical, digital, or socio-economic.

Urban area development

Theoretical model

Theory



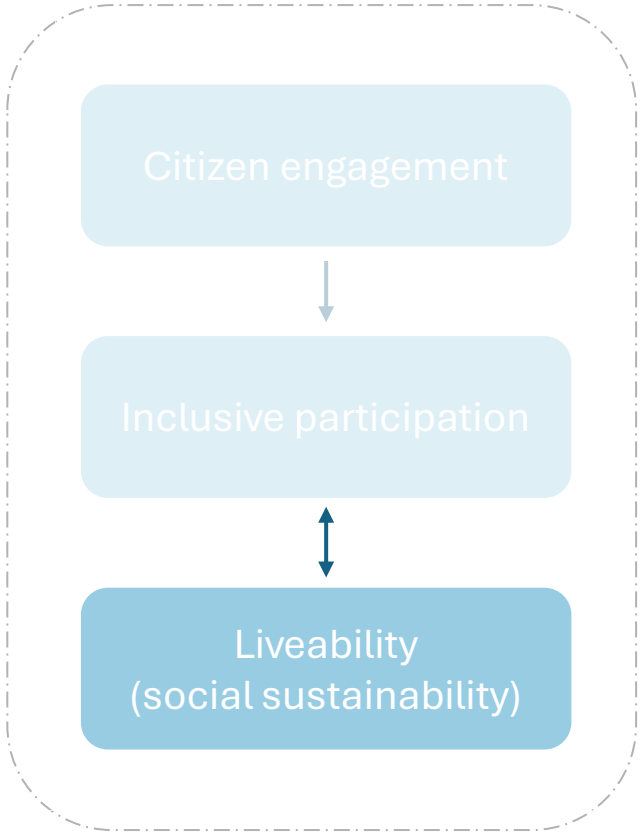
Citizen engagement is about creating opportunities for residents to be connected and interested in decision-making.

Inclusive participation ensures that these opportunities are evenly accessible to all community members, including those who are typically marginalized or disadvantaged.

Urban area development

Theoretical model

Theory



The term liveability usually refers to **the current quality of life in a specific area**, focusing on practical, tangible elements that affect day-to-day living.

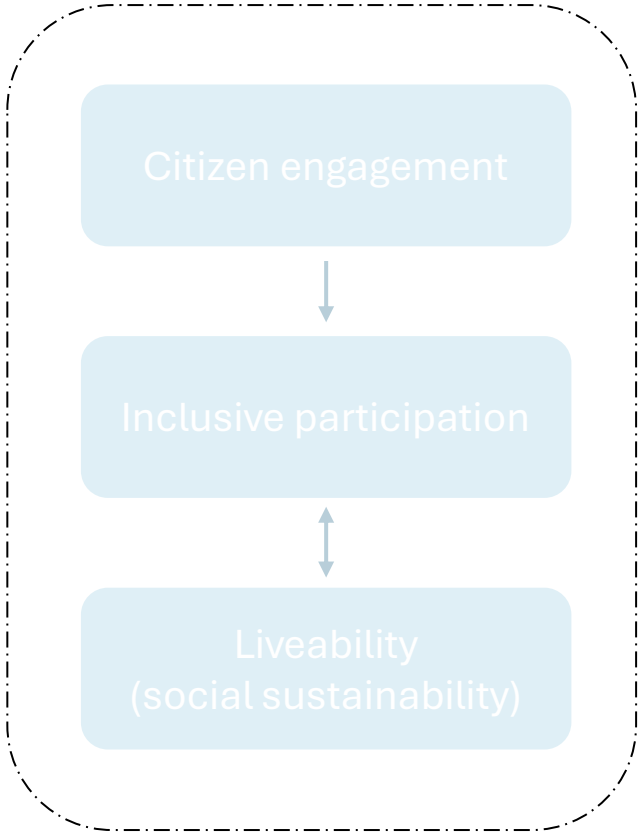
Liveability and social sustainability are used interchangeably as liveability in area development is viewed through a **long-term lens**. Addressing **not only immediate quality of life** concerns but also **broader, long lasting social and environmental impacts.**

Liveability is categorized into **five different concepts**:

Social equity, social inclusion, social capital, social cohesion, safety

Theoretical model

Theory



Urban area development is **the process of planning, designing, and implementing changes** to a specific geographical area **within a city or town.**

The goal is to **adapt and grow cities** to **meet the needs of their residents**, both **current and future**.

The development process can be divided into four phases:
Initiation, planning, realisation, evaluation

Urban area development
[spatial context]

Research method:

3

How is the research executed?

Research questions, method & case selection

Sub research questions

Research method

"How can **citizen engagement strategies facilitate more inclusive participation** for liveability in urban area development?"

1 What are current approaches for citizen engagement in urban area development? — Theoretical research

2 What challenges or barriers are commonly encountered when attempting inclusive citizen engagement in area development? — Theoretical research

3 How can specific citizen groups be better engaged to improve liveability outcomes in urban development projects? — Empirical research

4 What role do both digital and physical tools play in facilitating inclusive citizen engagement in urban area development? — Empirical research

Sub research questions

Research method

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Sub research questions

Research method

Theoretical research

Empirical research

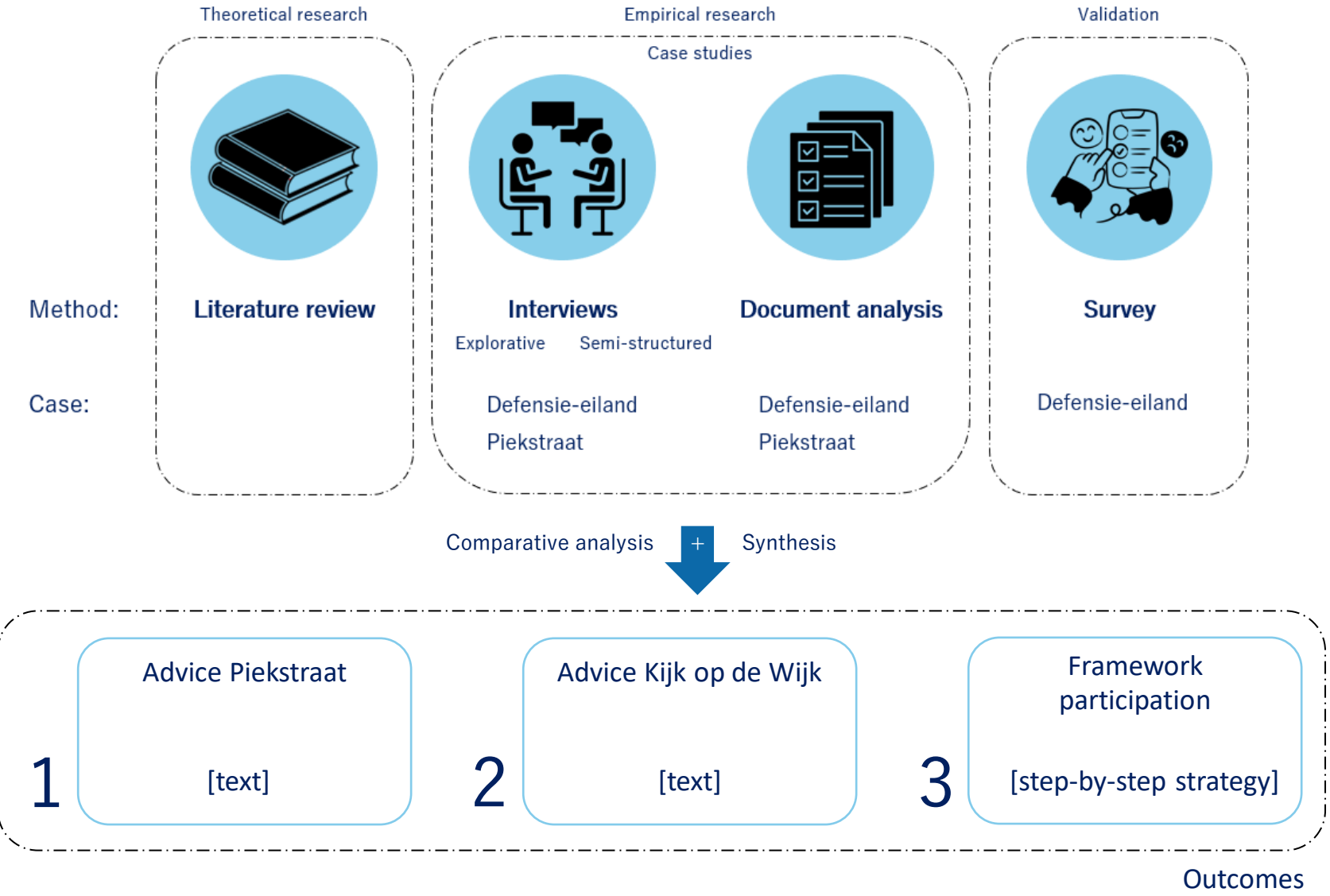
Case studies

Validation

Method:	**Literature review**	**Interviews**	**Document analysis**	**Survey**
		Explorative Semi-structured		
Case:		Defensie-eiland Piekstraat	Defensie-eiland Piekstraat	Defensie-eiland

Research design

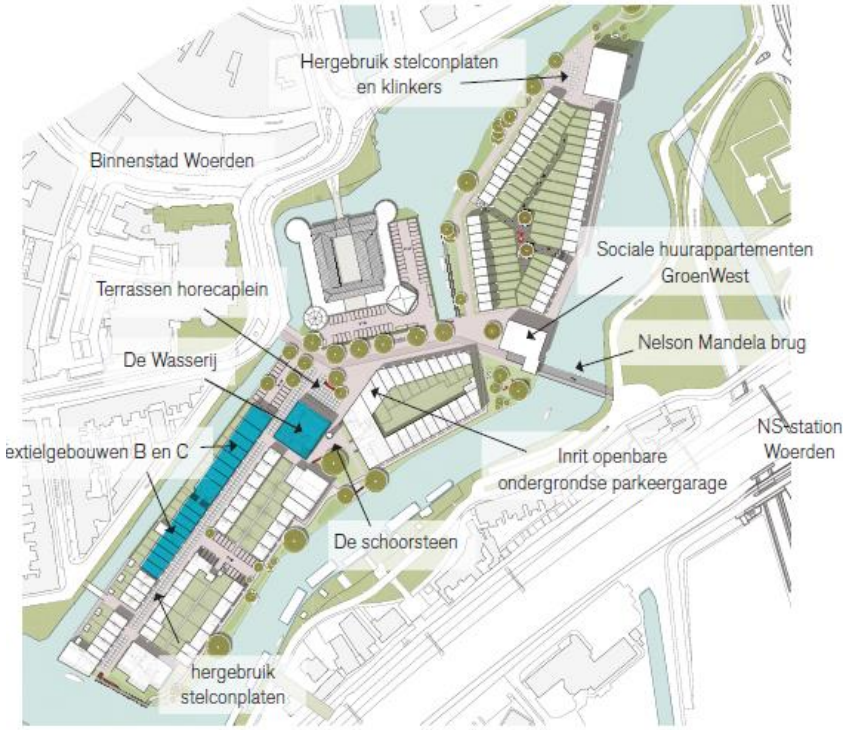
Research method



Case study selection

Research method

Defensie-eiland



Area development

+

Involvement VORM

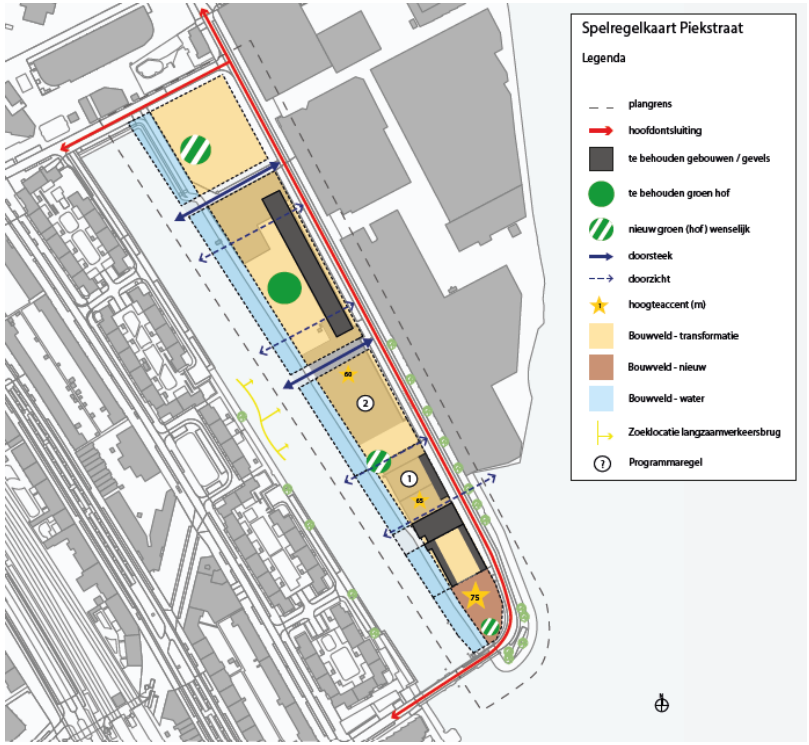
+

Abandoned area/poor liveability

+

Citizen engagement

Piekstraat



DEFENSIE-EILAND

Binnenstad Woerden

The project...

...has already implemented citizen engagement strategies.

The project...

…has already implemented citizen engagement strategies.

…development of the area is almost finished; therefore, a lot of information is ready to use.

The project...

…has already implemented citizen engagement strategies.

…development of the area is almost finished; therefore, a lot of information is ready to use.

…is award nominated and considered a successful example of socially sustainable area development.

The project…

…has already implemented citizen engagement strategies.

…development of the area is almost finished; therefore, a lot of information is ready to use.

…is award nominated and considered a successful example of socially sustainable area development.

…has been transformed from vacant/not in public use to a vibrant liveable housing area.

VORM Holding
24.196 volgers
4 u •

DEFENSIE-EILAND 💙 | En dan is het moment daar. De oplevering van Defensie-eiland in Woerden. Met de afronding van de Centraalbrug en het entreeplein klaar voor de bewoners. Samen met Blauwhoed waren wij verantwoordelijk voor deze ...meer

PIEKSTRAAT

Feijenoord Rotterdam

The project…

…is yet to be implementing a citizen engagement strategy.

The project…

…is yet to be implementing a citizen engagement strategy.

…is still in an early stage, therefore the advice can still be used during the development.

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...is yet to be implementing a citizen engagement strategy.

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...aims to revitalize an underutilized area to enhance liveability outcomes.

The project…

…is yet to be implementing a citizen engagement strategy.

…is still in an early stage, therefore the advice can still be used during the development.

…aims to revitalize an underutilized area to enhance liveability outcomes.

…carries the same objectives on the one hand but different challenges than Defensie-eiland, allowing lessons learned to be tested.

Empirical research:

4

Two case studies: Defensie-eiland & Piekstraat, a comparative case study method for writing an advice on Piekstraat

Case studies, analyses & advice

Case study analysis

Empirical research

Defensie-eiland

Piekstraat

1. Project specific information + **2. Liveability** + **3. Citizen engagement**

Project development process + Goals & objectives

Case study analysis

Empirical research

Defensie-eiland

Location

History

Demographics

Piekstraat

Location

History

Demographics

Case study analysis

Empirical research

Defensie-eiland

Location

History

Demographics

Piekstraat

Location

History

Demographics

Case study analysis

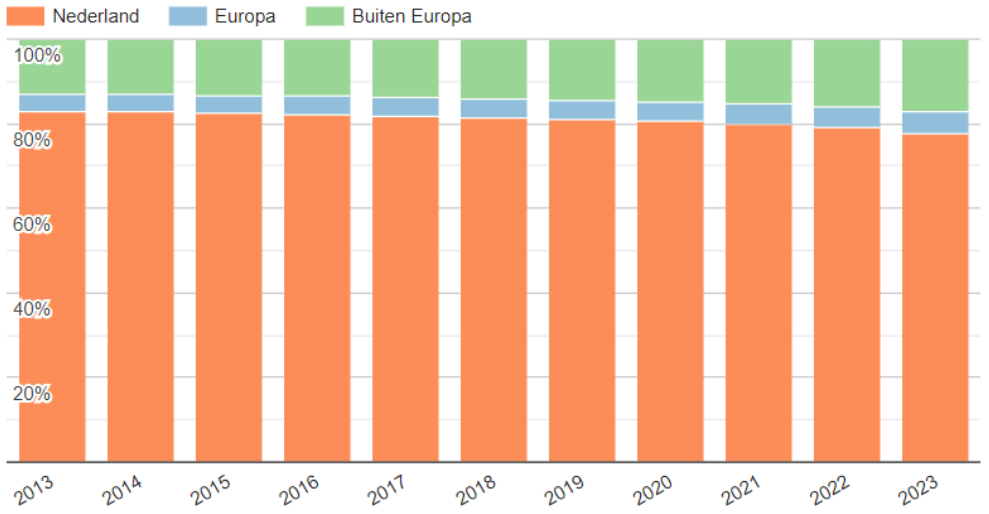
Empirical research

Defensie-eiland

Location

History

Demographics

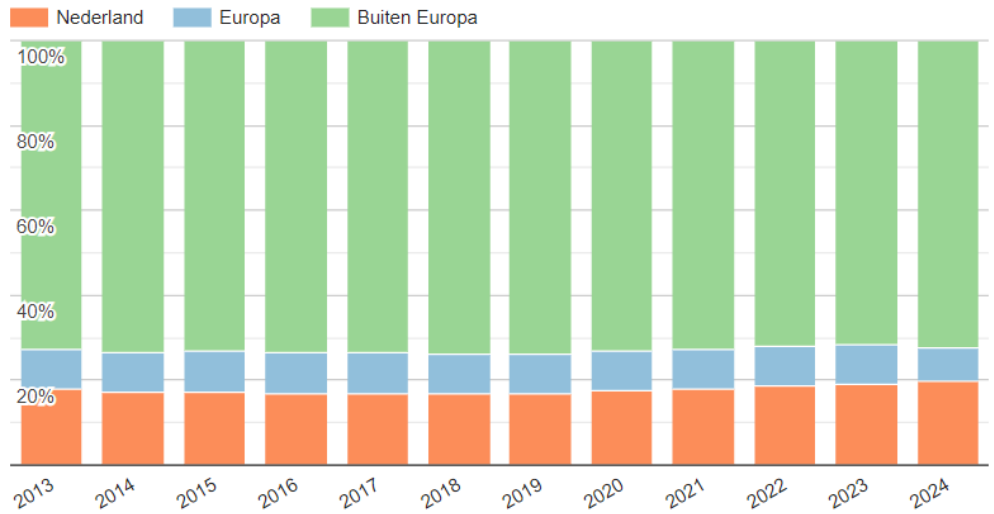


Piekstraat

Location

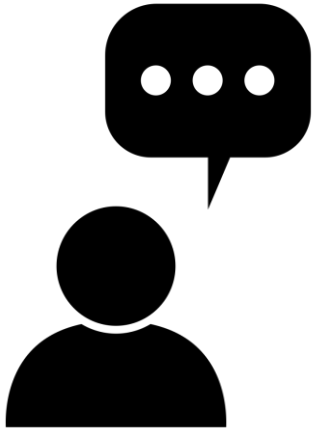
History

Demographics



Findings from interviews

Empirical research



1. Citizen engagement

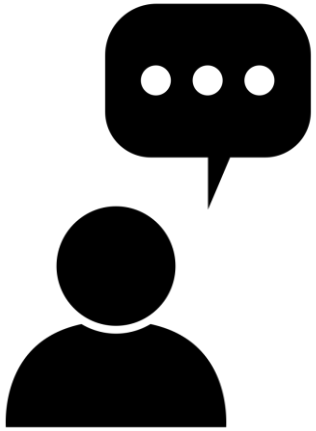
"If you give people the feeling that they are allowed to participate, and something eventually comes up that they don't agree with, they get angry"

Take-away(s):

- The importance of clear communication and expectation management

Findings from interviews

Empirical research



2. Inclusive participation

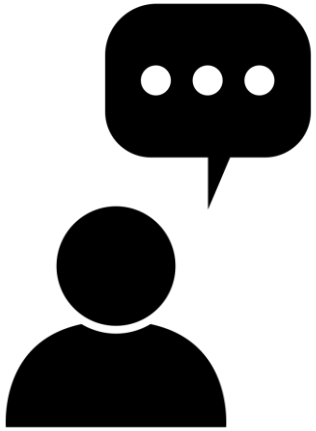
"While some people in the area focus on planting flowers, we rarely see involvement from residents of Moroccan or other ethnic backgrounds"

Take-away(s):

- There is a distinction between active and less active people in neighbourhoods
- In specific neighbourhoods, when immigrant residents don't feel at home, they become non active/not involved.

Findings from interviews

Empirical research



3. Liveability

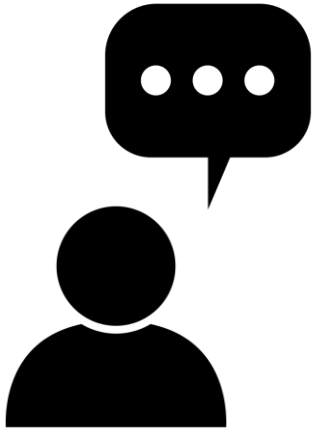
"I believe that a project which is aesthetically pleasing, and which provides a happy living environment for its residents, will also contribute to the community"

Take-away(s):

- Aesthetics play a role in providing liveability
- The involvement of residents in designing a neighbourhood contributes to community feeling

Findings from interviews

Empirical research



4. Digital tools

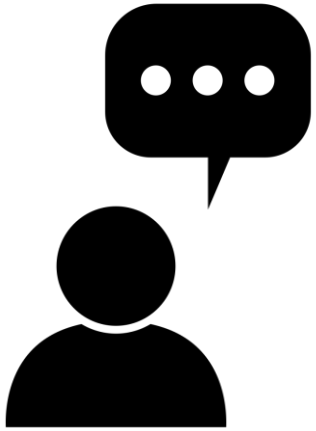
"The digital tools are helpful, but if they aren't in a language we understand, or if people don't have the means to access them, it's like being shut out. To truly include everyone, we need to make sure these tools are accessible and offer support for those who might not speak the same language or know how to use them."

Take-away(s):

- Digital tools do not solve all problems in inclusive participation
- Language forms a barrier as well as limited acces to mobile apps

Findings from interviews

Empirical research



5. Outcomes for developer

"If you are clear from the beginning and manage expectations well, you can remove objections. People feel heard, and that has benefits"

Take-away(s):

- The importance of clear communication and expectation management
- Benefits for the developer: removing objections

Survey

Empirical research

Use of survey

- Gather resident **perspectives on the citizen engagement** process during the Defensie-eiland redevelopment
- Assess residents' perceived impacts on **liveability outcomes**
- **Validate** and complement the insights gained from the in-depth interviews
- Collect more information on the Buurtpeiling tool and **insights on digital participation**

Synthesis:

5

Step-by-step approach to facilitating inclusive participation: Internal & External strategy for developers

Synthesis & strategy

So, how does inclusive participation contribute to liveable neighbourhoods?

Synthesis

Connection **participation** to **liveability**

1. Social equity is supported through **tailored participation** and clear management of expectations, ensuring that all community members can engage effectively.

2. Social inclusion is fostered by **early engagement** and hybrid methods that reach out to diverse groups, ensuring their perspectives are valued.

3. Social capital is enhanced through **relationship-building** and constructive feedback, creating networks of trust and collaboration that strengthen community ties.

4. Social cohesion is achieved **through** active resident engagement and the **promotion of safe public spaces that encourage community interactions** and a sense of belonging.

5. Safety is prioritized in design and engagement processes, **ensuring that residents feel secure and empowered** to participate in their community actively.

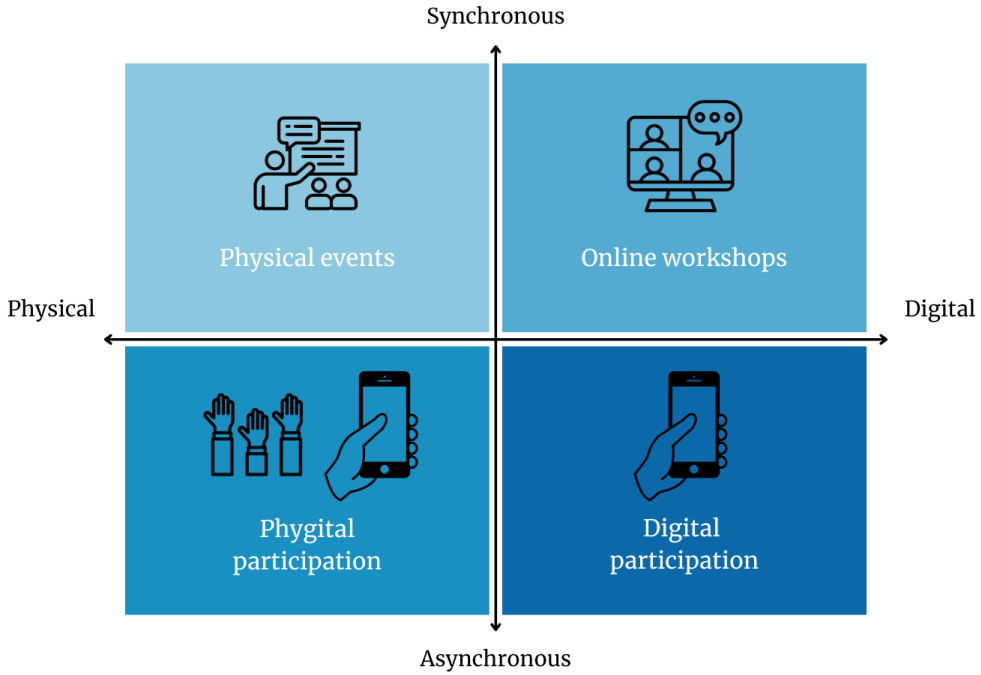
Synthesis results in **eight factors to successful participation**:

1. Early engagement
2. Tailored participation
3. Managing expectations
4. Hybrid engagement models
5. Building relationships and trust
6. Constructive feedback
7. Follow-up and feedback loop
8. Participation as risk management

What is phygital participation?

Synthesis

- You can reach a **wider audience**. Using both digital and traditional methods means no one is left behind.
- Combining different tools lets us **collect more data and gain deeper insights** into community needs and preferences.
- Different groups in a community can find a platform that suits them this also ensures **stronger community bonds**.
- While tech tools can make things more efficient, non-tech methods **build relationships and trust.**



"You get the best results by aligning online and offline participation methods."

Reaching the Unreachable

Synthesis

There are 13 groups defined between the ‘Unreachable’ and ‘Reachable’. All have their own specific barriers and opportunities

Unreachable	Reachable
• Young people • People with intellectual disabilities • People with physical disabilities • Elderly people • People with a migrant background • People with a lower income • Pressure-working adults • People with a low level of education	• Starters/Yuppies/Highly educated people • Older adults • Higher-income people • Active community members • People from migrant backgrounds

Survey conclusion

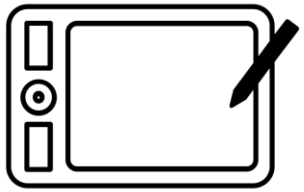
Synthesis

Several conclusions can be drawn from the survey results:

- 53 participants, 22 involved in the participation process

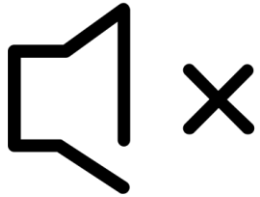
(Redefining) Elderly

- 70 + struggled less with user friendliness than expected
- Who are the elderly? 80+?, 85+?



Digital (il)literacy

- Middle ages don't always prefer digital
- User friendliness is high, digital preference low



Feeling unheard

- Feedback loops are not intact
- After delivery no comments on safety taken into consideration

Internal (inner-organizational)

Synthesis

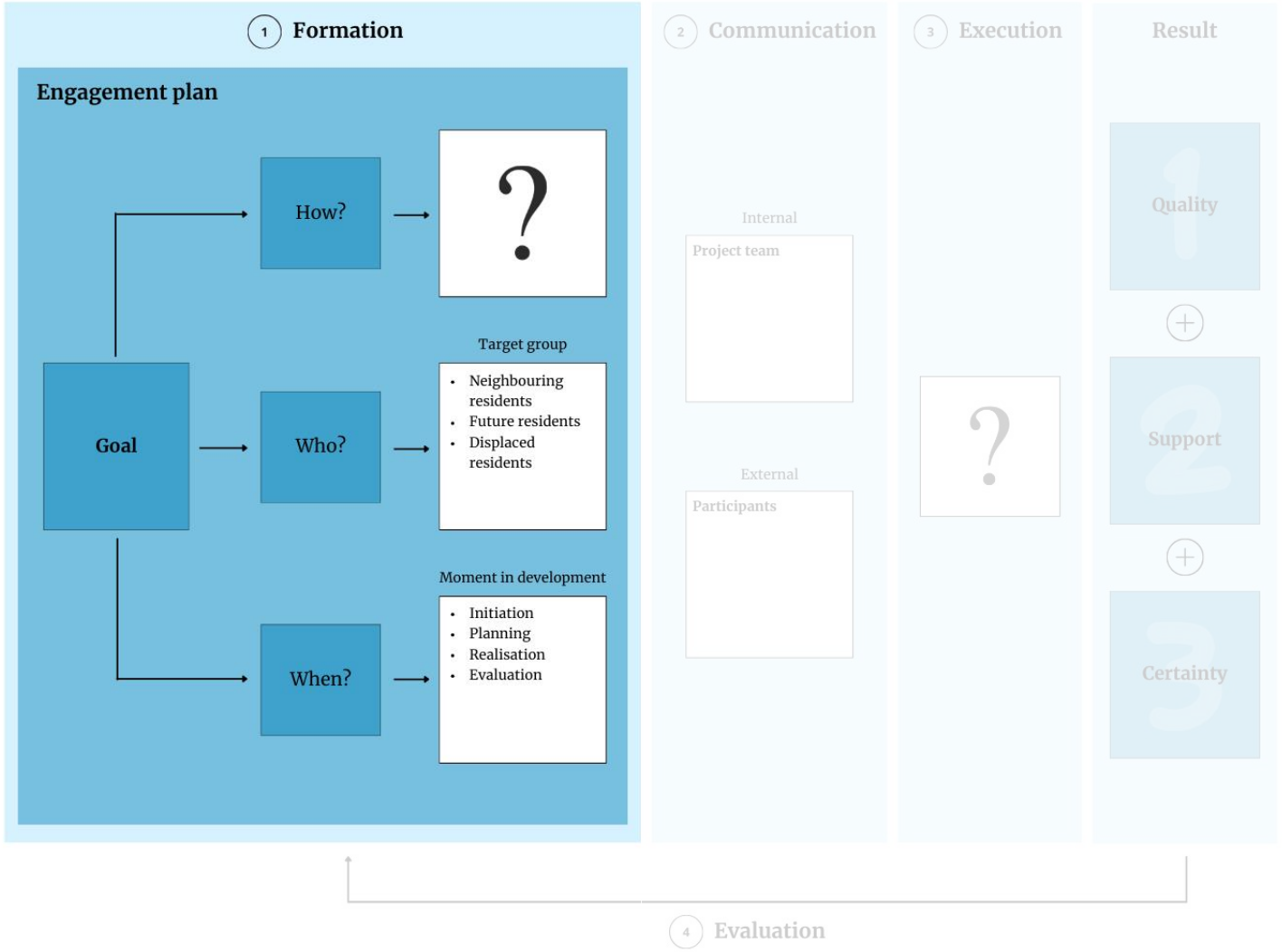
The first step to ensuring a successful engagement strategy is to clearly define and articulate it internally, ensuring all team members involved are aware of the plan.

In other words:
Clarify your goals.

How? Who? When?

The inner-organizational framework in which the engagement plan is woven consists of four steps:

1. Formation
2. Communication
3. Execution
4. Evaluation



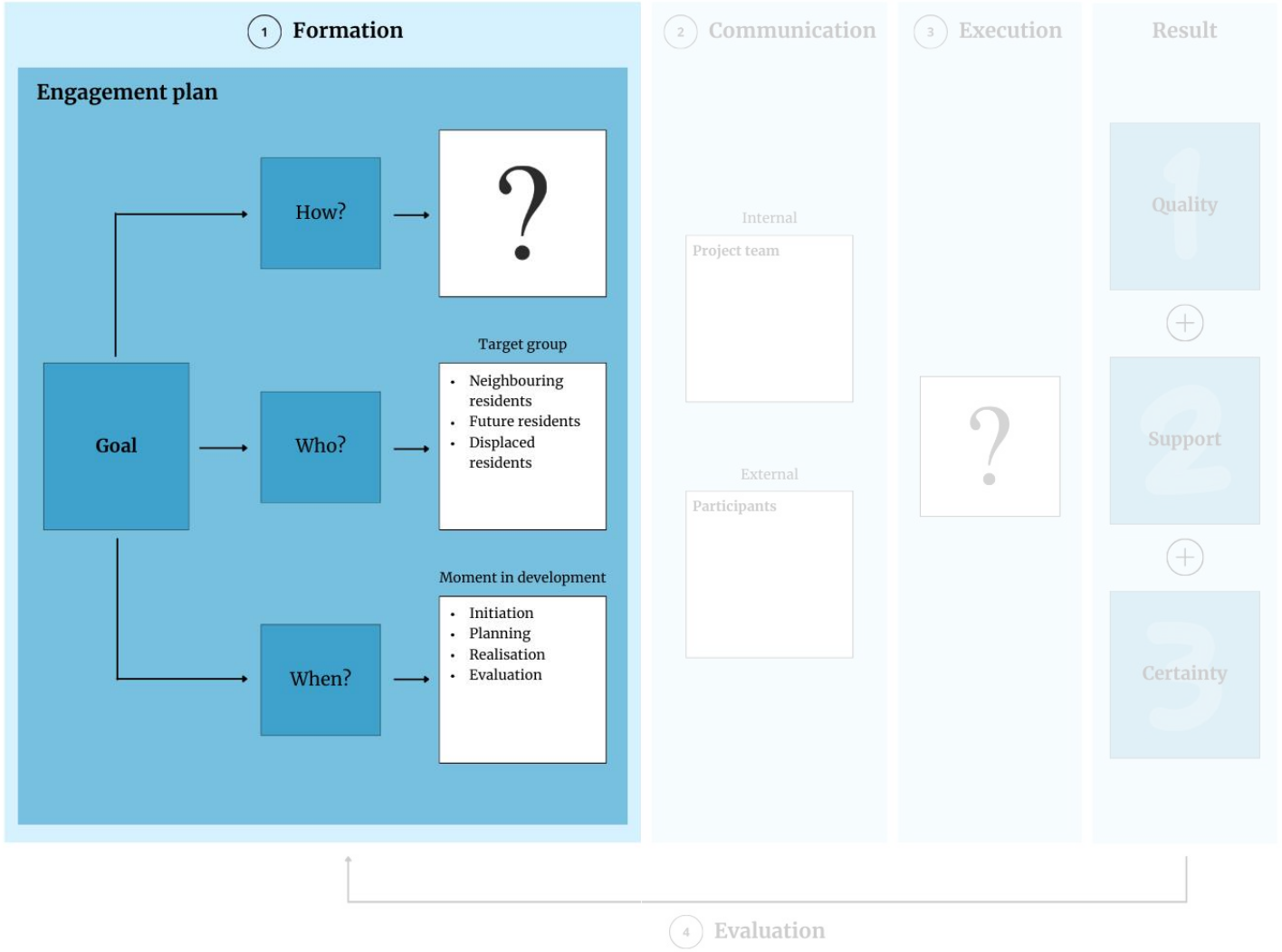
Internal (inner-organizational)

Synthesis

How? Who? When?

Who?
13 target groups with barriers and opportunities
Unreachable/Reachable

When?
Synchronous/Asynchronous
Early as possible/Later



Internal (inner-organizational)

Synthesis

1. Formation
2. Communication
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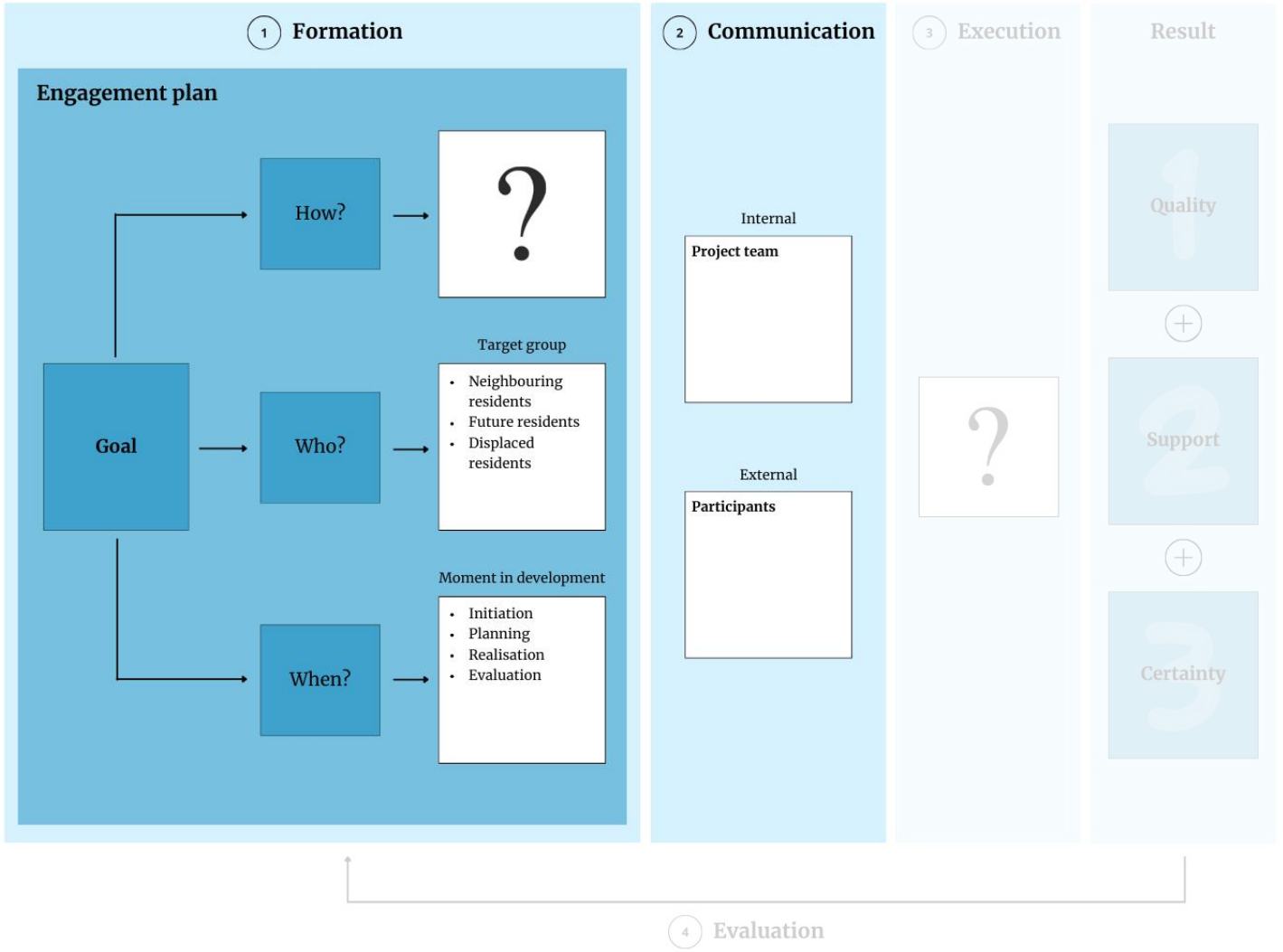

Internal (inner-organizational)

Synthesis

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2. Communication
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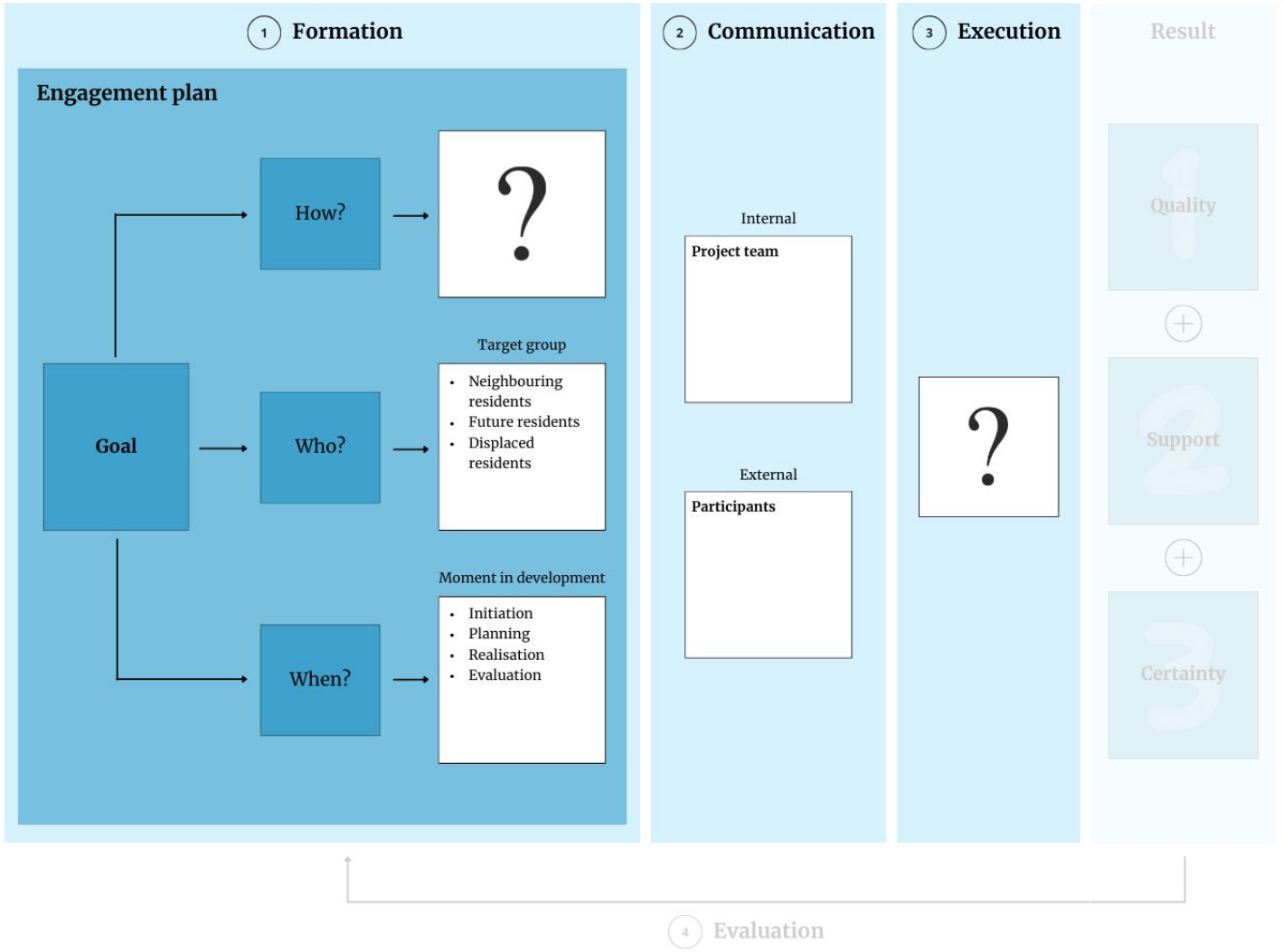

Internal (inner-organizational)

Synthesis

1. Formation
2. Communication
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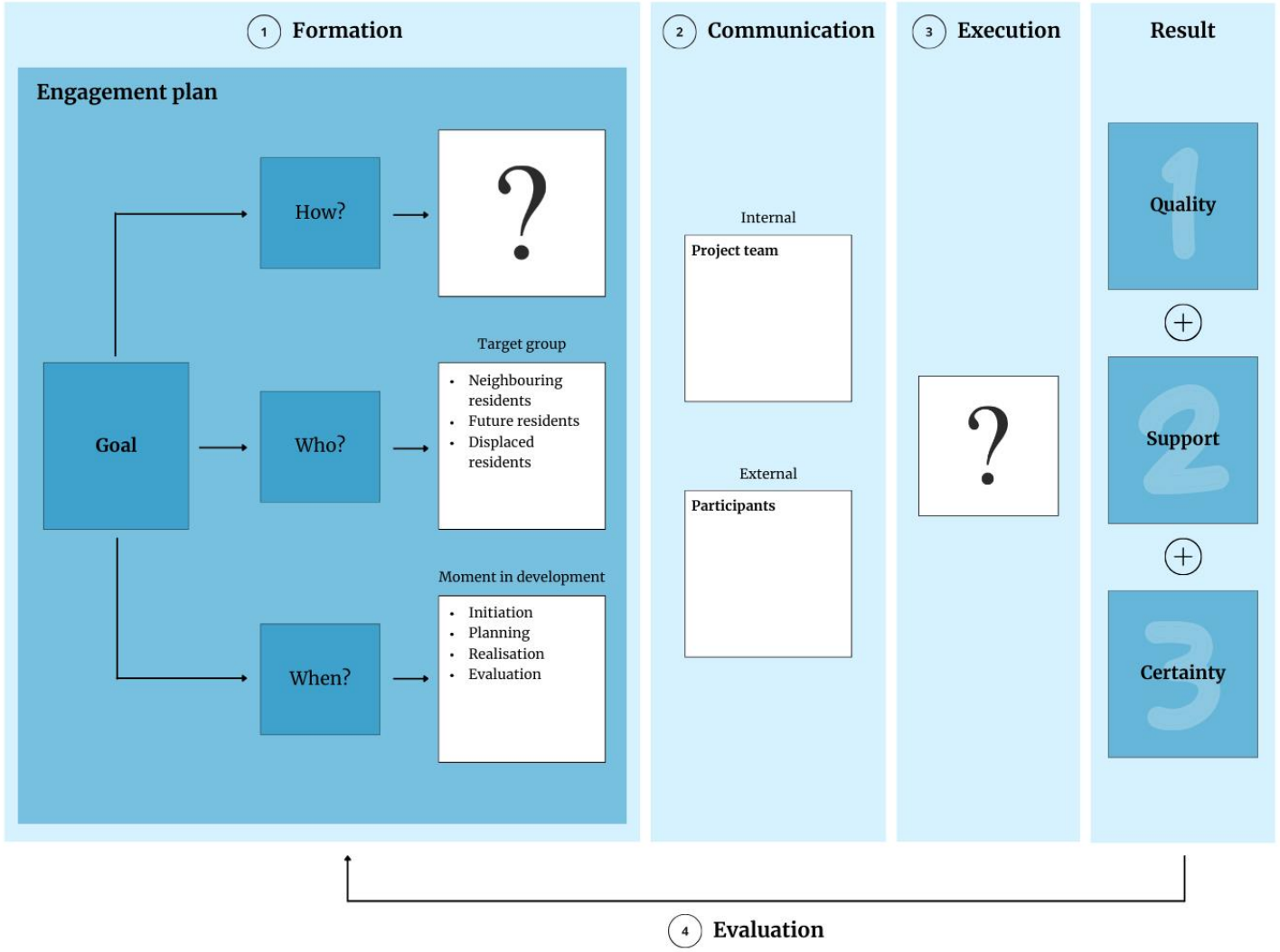
4. **Evaluation**



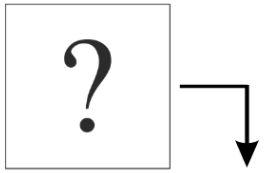
Resulting in benefits for the developers as:

Quality, Support, Certainty

External (inter-organizational)

Synthesis

Let's zoom in on the **How?**
Essentially, this is the engagement plan, or external strategy for a developer to implement.



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Clarify your goals

Create commitment within your team. Determine expected output. Are you identifying problems, devising solutions, or making decisions? Before launching, define what your main goals are. Do you want community members to share their ideas (ideation), allocate resources (participatory budgeting), or vote on different scenarios (poll)?

Key actions:

- Outline the engagement's purpose (e.g., problem identificaiton, ideation, budgeting, or decision-making).
- Ensure all team members and partners are commited to the defined goals.

2

Determine target audience

Who do you want to reach? How will you reach them? Determine which segments of the community should be involved in the engagement process. Ensure to focus on underrepresented or marginalized groups to achieve a more inclusive decision-making process. Tailor outreach strategies to the specific needs of these groups to encourage meaningful participation.

Key actions:

- Map out relevant participants
- Develop targeted outreach strategies to engage specific groups, ensuring inclusivity.

3

Develop a communication plan

An effective communication plan is crucial for attracting diverse participants. Utilize both digital (social media, newsletters) and traditional (local newspapers, flyers) channels to ensure widespread reach. Aim for transparency, clarity, and inclusivity in your messaging.

Key actions:

- Use a mix of online (social media, newsletters) and offline (flyers, town hall meetings) communication.
- Ensure your messaging is clear, transparent, and emphasizes the importance of participation.

4

Select tailored engagement tools

Select the most suitable engagement tools, depending on your project goals and target audience. For instance, if you're collecting input, use surveys, polls, or interactive maps. For more complex decisions, you might consider scenario planning through workshops or focus groups or participatory budgeting.

Key actions:

- Choose your tools based on your goals (e.g. surveys, polling, participatory budgeting, interactive mapping)
- Ensure tools are intuitive, accessible, and provide meaningful ways for the community to contribute.

5

Combine online and offline methods

To foster maximum engagement, offer both online and offline participation options. An online survey can easily collect data and input and is an easy way of data collection, while in-person meetings can facilitate more personal dialogue and involvement. Host hybrid events for those less comfortable with digital tools.

Key actions:

- Host hybrid events for residents who prefer face-to-face interaction, simultaneously promote digital tools.
- Simplify interfaces and spread clear instructions to reduce barriers to participation.

6

Facilitate active participation

Incorporate methods that encourage people to engage actively. To ensure that citizens engage meaningfully in the project development process, it's essential to incorporate methods that actively involve them. These techniques should be designed to make participation optimally accessible. Digital tools and platforms used for participation should be easy to navigate and intuitive.

Key actions:

- Organize interactive events where community members can collaborate in real-time.
- Use game-like elements (gamification) to make engagement fun and interactive.
- Provide non-monetary incentives

7

Ensure transparent communication

Throughout the engagement process, maintain transparency by sharing how feedback will be used. Clearly communicating what input was received, how decisions were made, and what actions will be taken is important. Transparency builds trust and sustains long-term engagement from the community.

Key actions:

- Share regular updates on project progress, including decisions made and why.
- Clearly report how citizen feedback is being integrated into development decisions.

8

Evaluate the process and outcomes

After the engagement process, **conduct a thorough (internal & external) evaluation** to assess its success and gather insights for future projects. Analyze participation data, assess whether the objectives were met, and collect feedback from the community on their experience. Use this evaluation to refine future citizen engagement strategies.

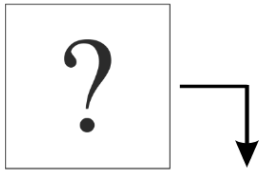
Key actions:

- Evaluate participation rates, inclusivity and effectiveness of engagement tools.
- Gather feedback from stakeholders on the process and outcomes.
- Adjust future strategies to ensure continuous improvement.

External (inter-organizational)

Synthesis

The **eight clearly reasoned steps** outlined below demonstrate how the implementation of inclusive participation, when properly implemented with intrinsic motivation, can contribute to liveability in area development.



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Conclusion:

6

How can citizen engagement strategies facilitate more inclusive participation for liveability in urban area development?

Discussion & conclusion

Overall conclusion

Conclusion

How can
citizen engagement strategies facilitate more inclusive participation
for liveability in urban area development?

Overall conclusion

Conclusion

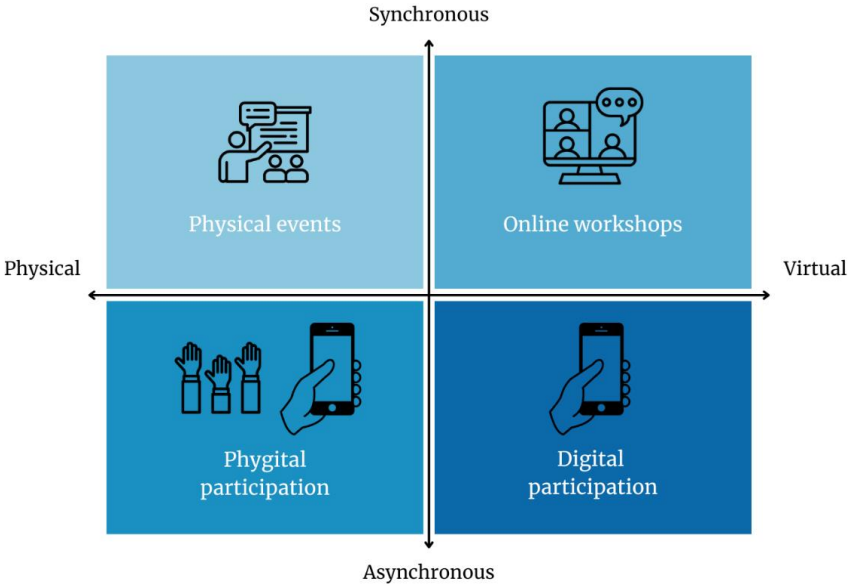
How can
citizen engagement strategies facilitate more inclusive participation
for liveability in urban area development?

By answering all sub-questions, it becomes clear that **inclusive citizen engagement** requires a well-balanced mix of **early and tailored approaches** (SQ1),

overcoming barriers related to **demographics, trust, and physical safety** (SQ2),

focusing on the **needs of specific groups** (SQ3),

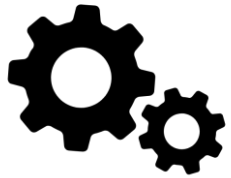
and leveraging **digital and physical participation tools** (SQ4).



Together, these insights address the main research question by demonstrating how a strategic, multi-faceted approach to citizen engagement can **enhance liveability** in urban development projects.

Recommendations for practice

Conclusion



Align with key stakeholders

Set a coherent goal

Clear communication

Use clear and transparant communication

How, who, when?

Encourage correct implementation

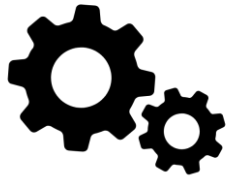
Keep in touch

Maintain ongoing conversation

1. Formate → 2. Communicate → 3. Execute → 4. Evaluate

Recommendations for practice

Conclusion



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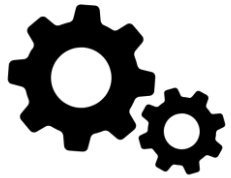

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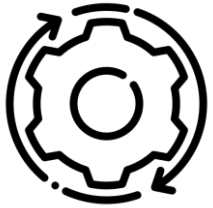

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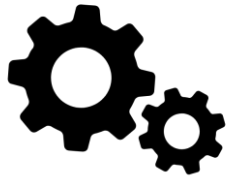

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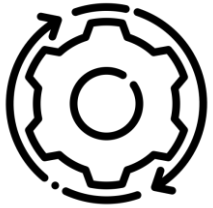

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Conclusion

Speak up & Listen

When voices are heard and ideas shared, we lay the foundation for urban environments that not only meet needs but inspire thriving, connected communities.

Lay out a new plan…

Building the future of cities starts with listening to the people who call them home.

Give the opportunity to make their voice count for sustainable, liveable, and inclusive urban environments!

Questions?

Nov, 2024

Management in the Built Environment,
Delft University of Technology

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Prof. Dr. P.W. Chan

STUDENT

Suzan van Cuyk
4686233

06 Nov, 2024

Management in the Built Environment,
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SUPERVISORS

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Graduation Research | P5

Reaching the Unreachable?

Examining how inclusive participation can be fostered through engagement strategies for liveability in urban area development

Suzan van Cuyk

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TU Delft

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Additional slides

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Management in the Built Environment,
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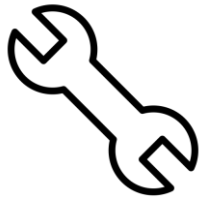
Discussion

Conclusion

Definitions

Participation/engagement;
Liveability
Social sustainability



Tools

Survey question formulation was restricted

Demographic differences

Limited findings

Sense of uncertainty

The built environment is ever changing

Limitations

Conclusion

Interviews

Limited scope of participants (Defensie-eiland)

Case studies

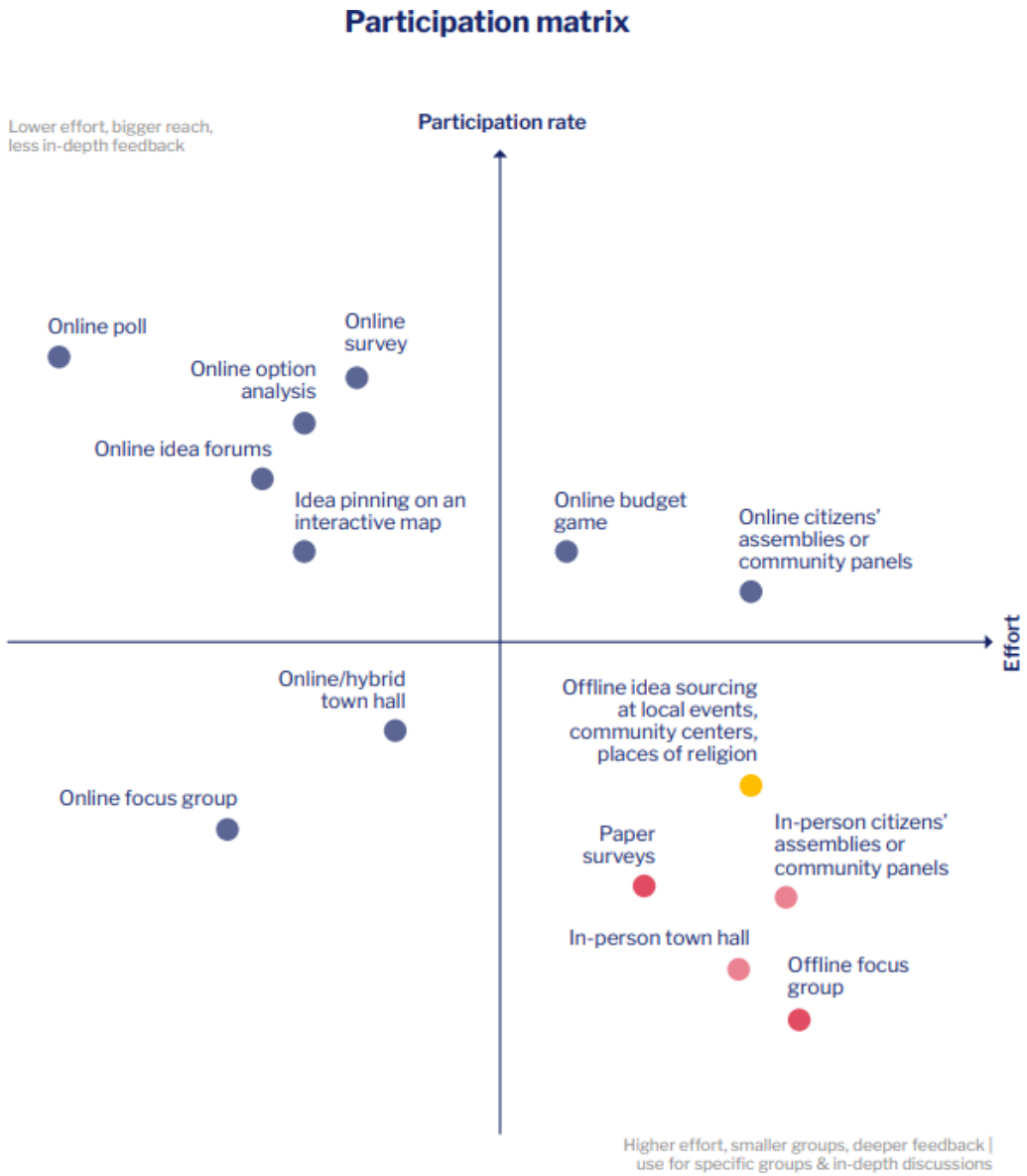
Limited findings with limited case studies

Limited time

Availability and time of participants and research

Participation

Theory



Participation matrix (GoVocal, 2024)

Survey

Empirical research

Plan for survey:

- Gather resident perspectives on the citizen engagement process during the Defensie-eiland redevelopment
- Assess residents' perceived impacts on liveability outcomes since the project began
- Validate and complement the insights gained from the in-depth interviews by providing 'agree/disagree' statements
- By QR code, spread by flyers in the neighbourhood

Results:

- Validate and complement the insights gained from the in-depth interviews (mainly for advice on Piekstraat project)
- Collect more information on the Buurtpeiling tool and insights on digital participation

Challenges for advice Piekstraat

Empirical research

1. Ensuring inclusive participation

The area is **not easily accessible**, and its **physical relationship with the surrounding area is poor**. Piekstraat is somewhat isolated due to its proximity to water. This negatively impacts the natural development of a vibrant local atmosphere. It's important to **ensure inclusive participation**.

2. Building trust

For ensuring inclusive participation, building trust and overcoming resistance is a key factor.

3. Balancing individual and collective needs

4. Coordinating phasing of development

One challenge in developing a liveable Piekstraat is **coordinating the phasing of the development** among multiple landowners

Breakdown of results

Strategy

- By **combining the results** obtained from both the **theoretical and empirical** part of the research, noteworthy **definitions**, **recommendations** and **correlations** are **incorporated into a synthesis** that will lead to the drafting of an **inclusive participation strategy for developers**.

These are divided into:
Key challenges of participation, **incentives** and **disincentives** of participation, participation for **underrepresented groups** and **phygital** participation