

Conference: Driving climate action through citizen engagement

SPEAK UP

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North Sea



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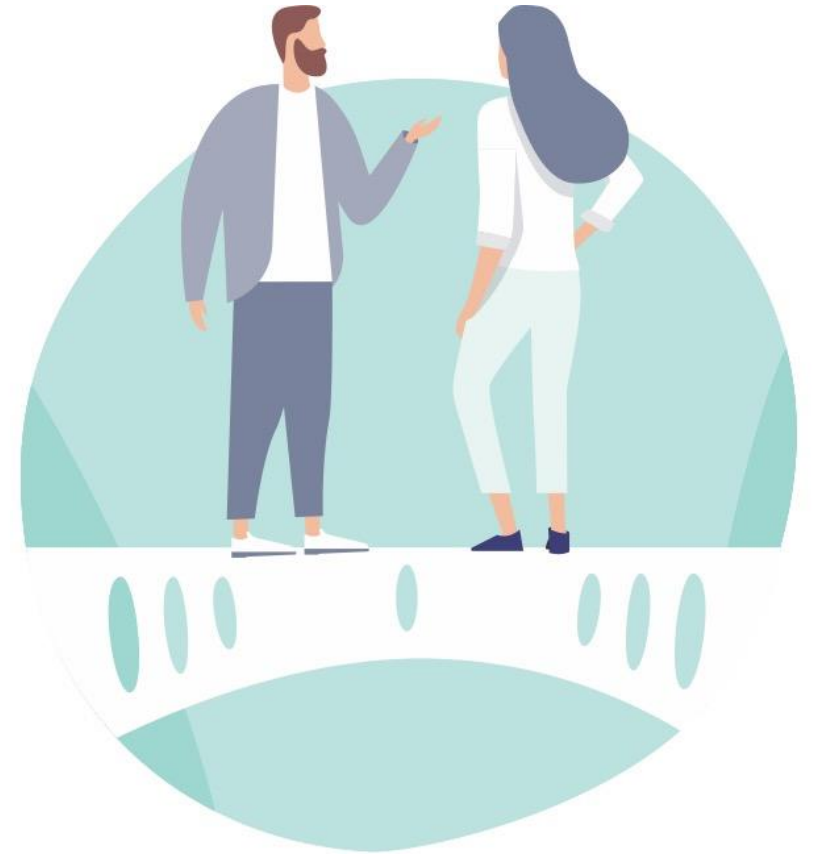
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North Sea

Conference: Driving climate action through citizen engagement

Welcome

BETTER
GOVERNANCE



Speak Up

4 JUNE 2025
12.30-17.30

CONFERENCE:
DRIVING CLIMATE ACTION THROUGH
CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

Our Keynote
Speakers:

PINENHUS - PINEN 3, 7870
ROSLEV, DENMARK



Anne Tortzen

Center for
Collaborative
Democracy
(Denmark)



Lise Jans

University of
Groningen
(The Netherlands)



Landry Mawungu

Hannah Arendt
Institute
(Belgium)



AGENDA

12:30	Doors open
13:00	Welcome and opening of the conference
13:05	Keynote by Anne Tortzen : “How may the municipality act as a catalyst for climate engagement?”
13:25	Panel : “Engaging citizens in local climate action – experiences from the climate villages” with Signe Bak Jørgensen (Project Manager, Skive Municipality), Maren Marie Pilegård Andersen (Project Manager, Vejle Municipality), Holger Meyer Højlund (VIA University College), Mette Sloth Høstgaard & Martin Kristensen from the climate villages in Skive
14:00	BREAK
14:30	Keynote and workshop by Lise Jans : “Building collective motivation for pro-environmental behaviour”
15:55	Keynote and workshop by Landry Mawungu : “It takes all of us – tackling the climate crisis collectively”
17:10	Closing & Drinks



The municipality as catalyst for local climate action



The municipality as catalyst for local climate action

- Why? A call for democratic and governance innovation
- How? Co-created climate action – examples
- What does it take? The role as boundary spanner



A democratic deficit

- 'Short termism' of the political system
- Technical-scientific knowledge dominates
- Strong 'vested interests'
- Citizens are granted limited political influence
- Fundamental value conflicts

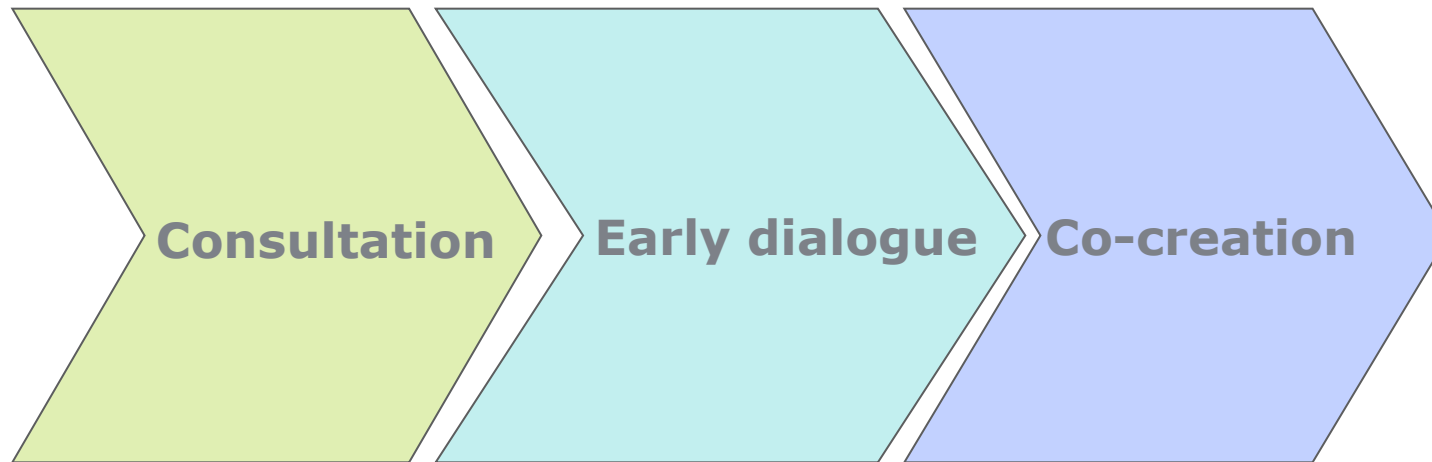




Wicked problems

- Challenges that affect a multitude of stakeholders
- Disagreement about the challenge and the solution
- Complexity - standard solutions do not work
- Context specific and ever changing
- Examples: Climate change, loneliness and wellbeing, poverty, multicultural integration...

Citizen engagement version 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0



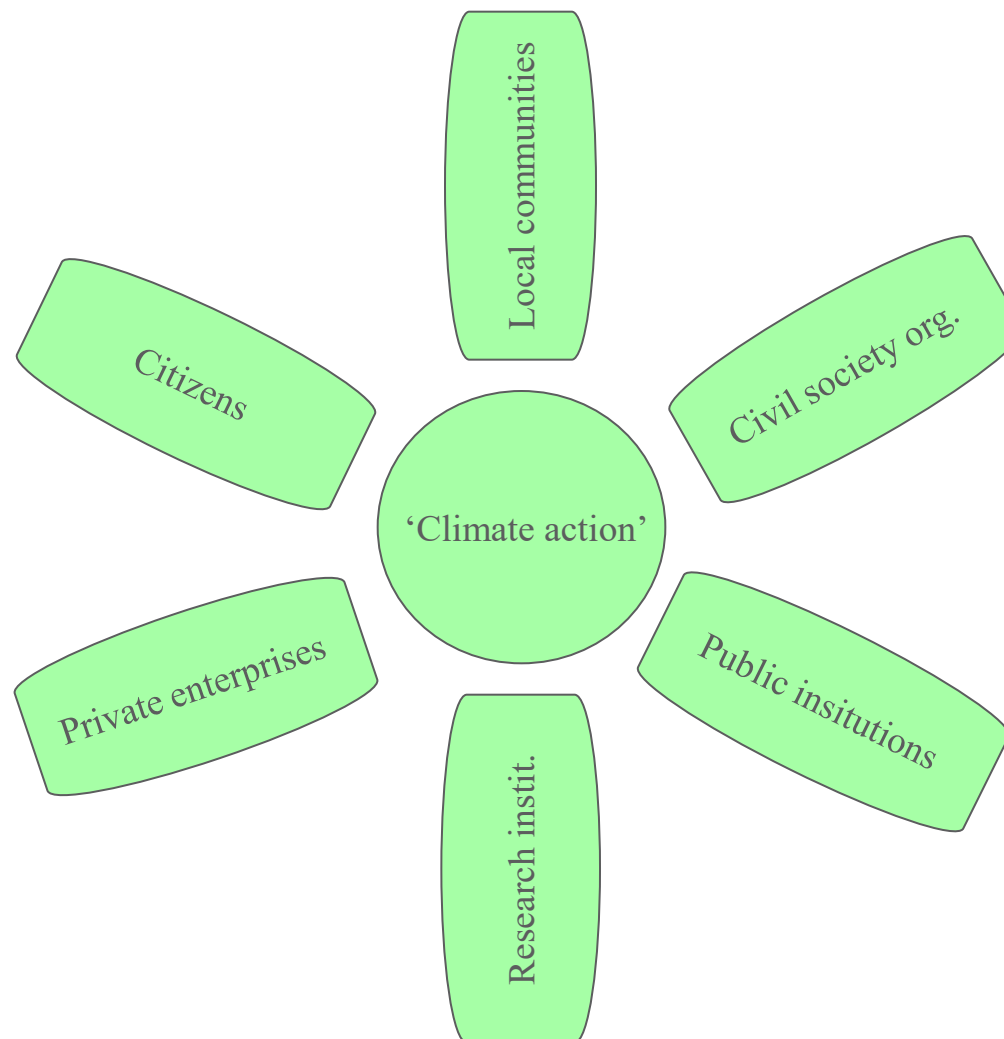
Co-creation: The idea

- bring together different **stakeholders**
- to collaborate on a **shared purpose**
- merging the **resources and knowledge** of different actors
- to work with '**wicked problems**' in society



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Multiparty governance



Co-created climate action Examples



'Sun over Brenderup' – a citizen-driven solar park



<https://klimalaboratoriet.middelfart.dk/fremtidens-energiforsyning/sol-over-brenderup>



Brenderup: What works?

- Political courage and support
- Minimizing risks: Climate Laboratory
- Local 'entrepreneurs' with relevant competences and drive
- Municipal boundary spanner and path finder



A reflection from Middelfart

Morten Mejsen Westergaard

Head of Climate, Middelfart Municipality:

"The magic does not happen behind the desk! Many municipalities are tackling planning processes in a real unintelligent way. We set out by talking with a developer who needs land for a solar project. And the local people sit there thinking: 'What the fuck?' Why don't we start by asking the local citizens: How would you like to work with the green transition? That would be a clever way to let citizens be responsible and develop their abilities.."

Møn Biosphere - Multiparty collaboration



<https://xn--biosfre-qxa.vordingborg.dk/>



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Møn Biosphere: What works?

- An ambition wide enough to accommodate different contributions
- Linking 'the big agenda' with specific goals and ambitions of the participants
- A possibility to act and to be part of networks and communities



A reflection from Møn

**Kathrine Ohm Dietrich,
Biosphere coordinator, Vordingborg Municipality:**

“It is important that participants should gain or obtain something in terms of recognition, community, self-efficacy – or a possibility to brand their company and generate earnings. When you invite actors into multiparty collaboration, it is key to consider, what is in it for them”



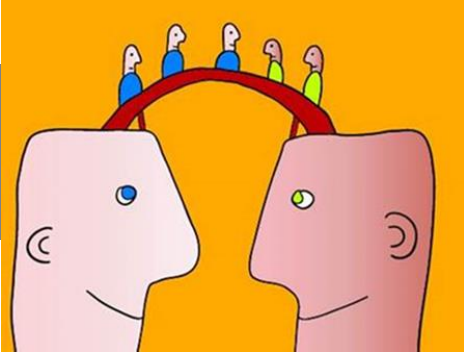
Three learning points on co-creationg climate action

- Place-based climate action
- Key words:
 - Community
 - Accommodate diversity
 - Opportunity to act
- The municipality as boundary spanner



What does it take? The role as boundary spanner





Working with a co-creative mindset – in practice

- **Mapping and linking** actors, resources and initiatives
- **Mobilizing, engaging** – and reaching out
- **Facilitating dialogue and** collaboration among diverse actors



`Boundary spanner' competences

- Building relations and networks – outwards and inwards
- Being open towards the needs and interests of other stakeholders
- Align expectations – clear framework for collaboration
- Political and organisational 'feel' – obtaining mandate and support
- Courage and creativity. Personal approach and persistence

Co-creation as a mindset: Not so simple

- Governance: Cross-sector, temporary, network
- The municipality as catalyst and facilitator
- Who decides?, what can we expect?, unequal power
- Diversity: Different perspectives. What is the common ground?
- Leadership: Developing favorable conditions for co-creation



Ressources



Panel discussion

“Engaging citizens in local climate action – experiences from the climate villages”

- **Signe Bak Jørgensen** (Project Manager, Skive Municipality),
- **Maren Marie Pilegård Andersen** (Project Manager, Vejle Municipality)
- **Holger Meyer Højlund** (VIA University College)
- **Mette Sloth Høstgaard & Martin Kristensen** (citizens of the climate villages)





BREAK

Be back at 14:30

Building collective motivation for pro-environmental behaviour change

LISE JANS

Associate Professor Social-Environmental Psychology

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An urgent need for change

Mitigation



Adaptation

Pro-environmental behaviour

Knowledge



Ability



Motivation



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Pro-environmental motivation

94%
OF THE EUROPEANS SAY THAT
PROTECTING THE
ENVIRONMENT IS
**IMPORTANT TO
THEM PERSONALLY**

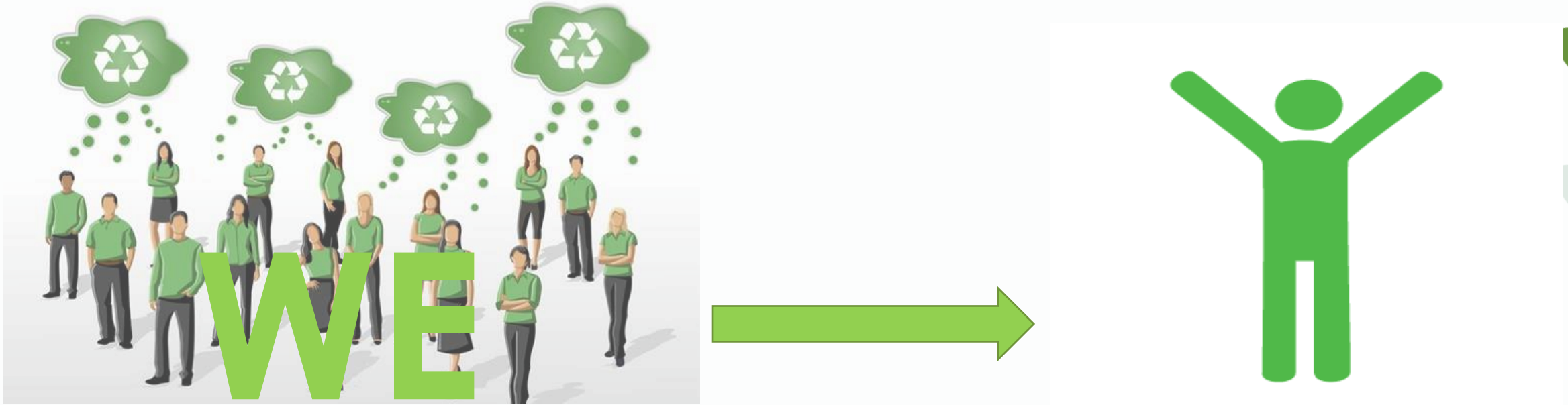


53%
SAY IT IS
**VERY
IMPORTANT**
41% SAY IT IS
FAIRLY IMPORTANT

Individuals tend to underestimate others' biospheric values, reducing their pro-environmental engagement.



Shared social identity as a key process



- Pro-environmental group norms, values, goals (identity content)
- Identification with the group
- Collective efficacy

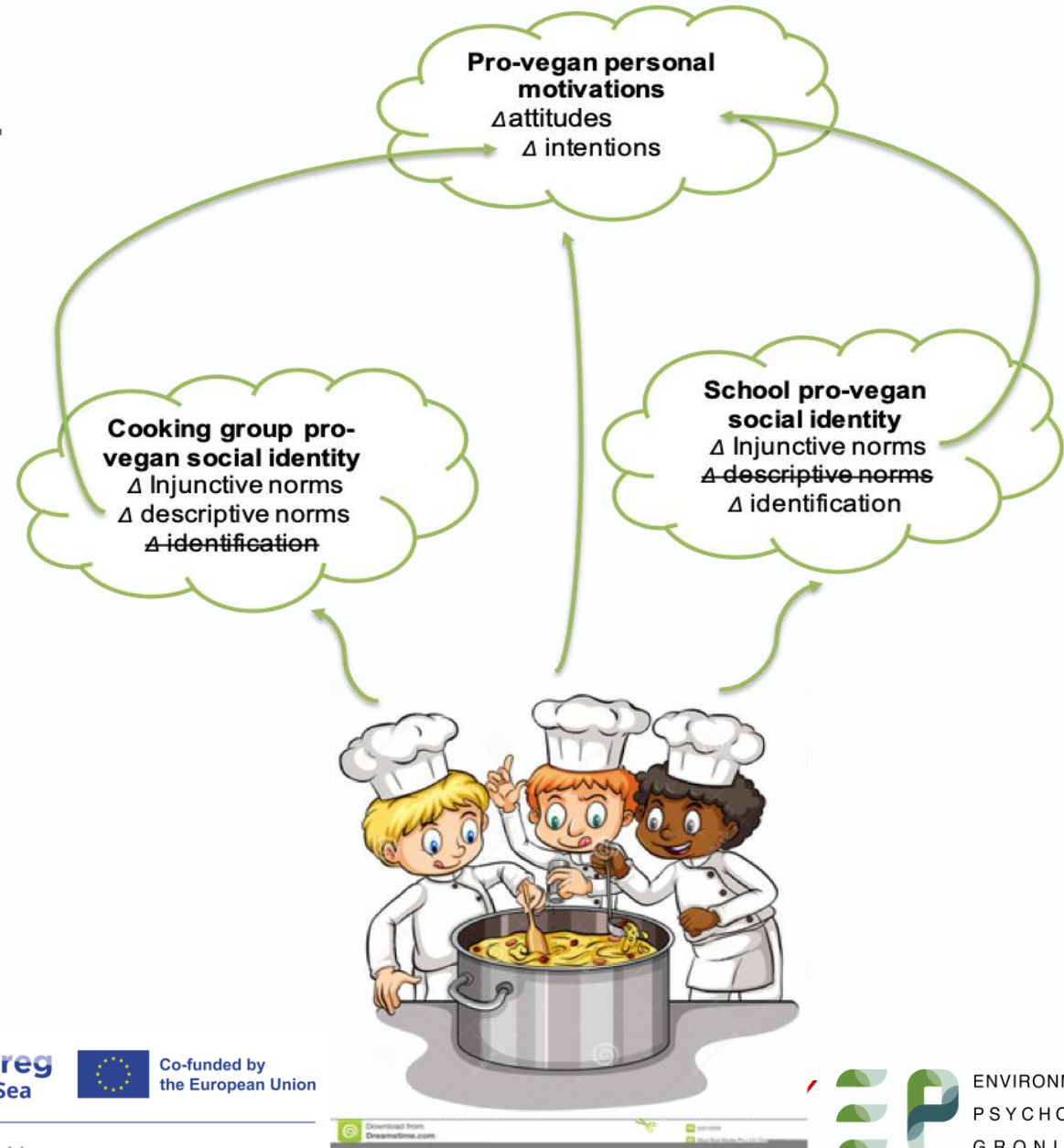
Formation of pro-
environmental
social identities?



1: Wo 'we' are depends on who 'they' are



3. Who 'we' are follows from what 'we' do



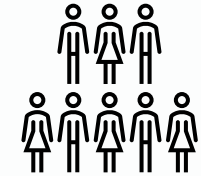
2. Top-down policies can signal norms

Example:
Electric
vehicle
subsidy

Injunctive norm of government:
'You should act'



Injunctive norm of citizens:
'You should act'



Descriptive norm of citizens:
'The majority acts'

Dynamic norm of citizens:
'More and more will act'

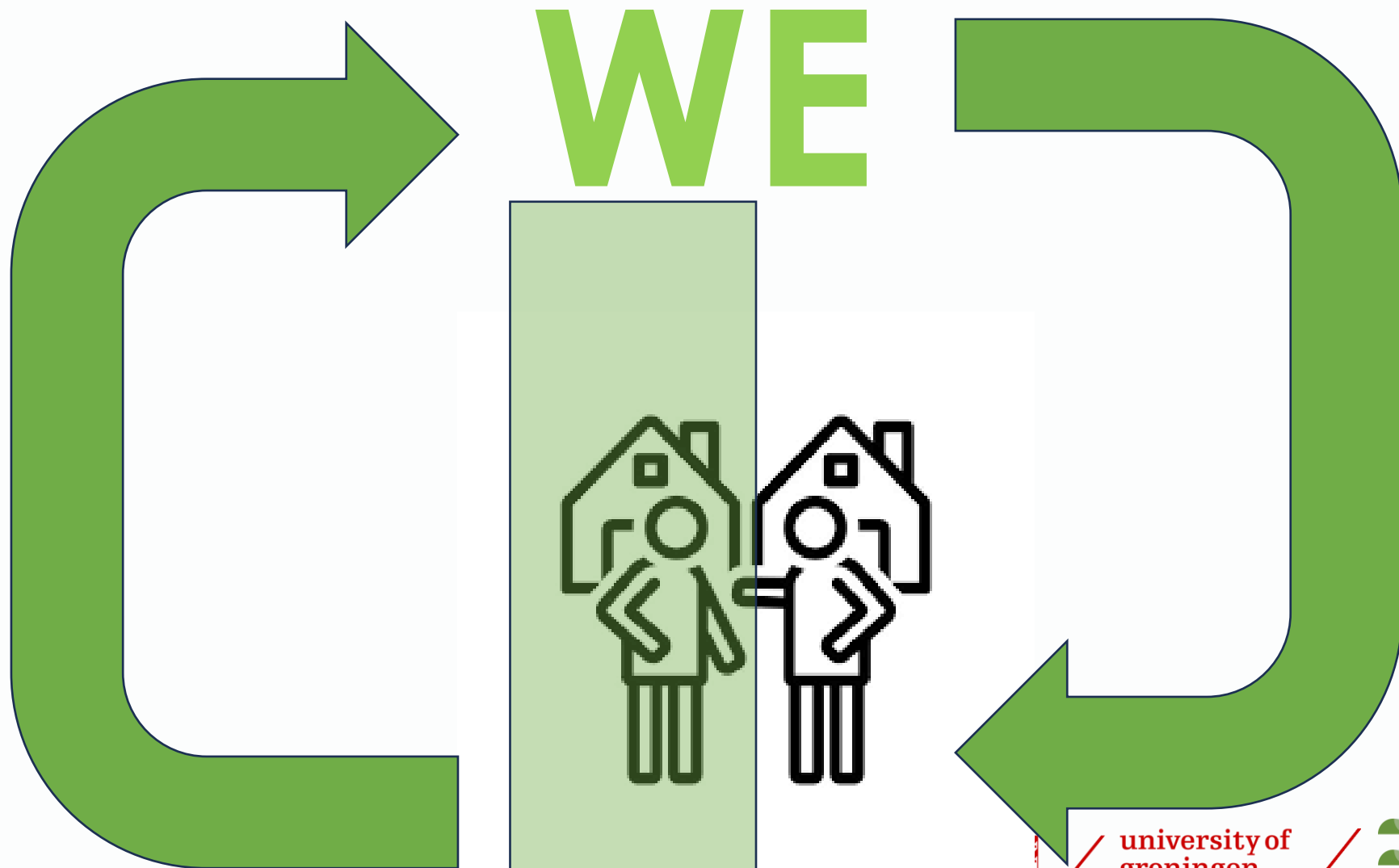
3. Bottom-up initiatives shape who 'we' are

- Initiatives set-up and led by regular members of a group to promote more pro-environmental behaviour within their group.



3. Bottom-up initiatives shape who 'we' are





Jans, 2021; Jans et al., 2024

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4. Citizen assemblies?

Informing vs.
Online consult.

Experience of:

- Feeling heard
- Having influence

Participating



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5. Condition



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101022565



Yet, **not everyone is included**

-Women, low SES are **less** likely to be:

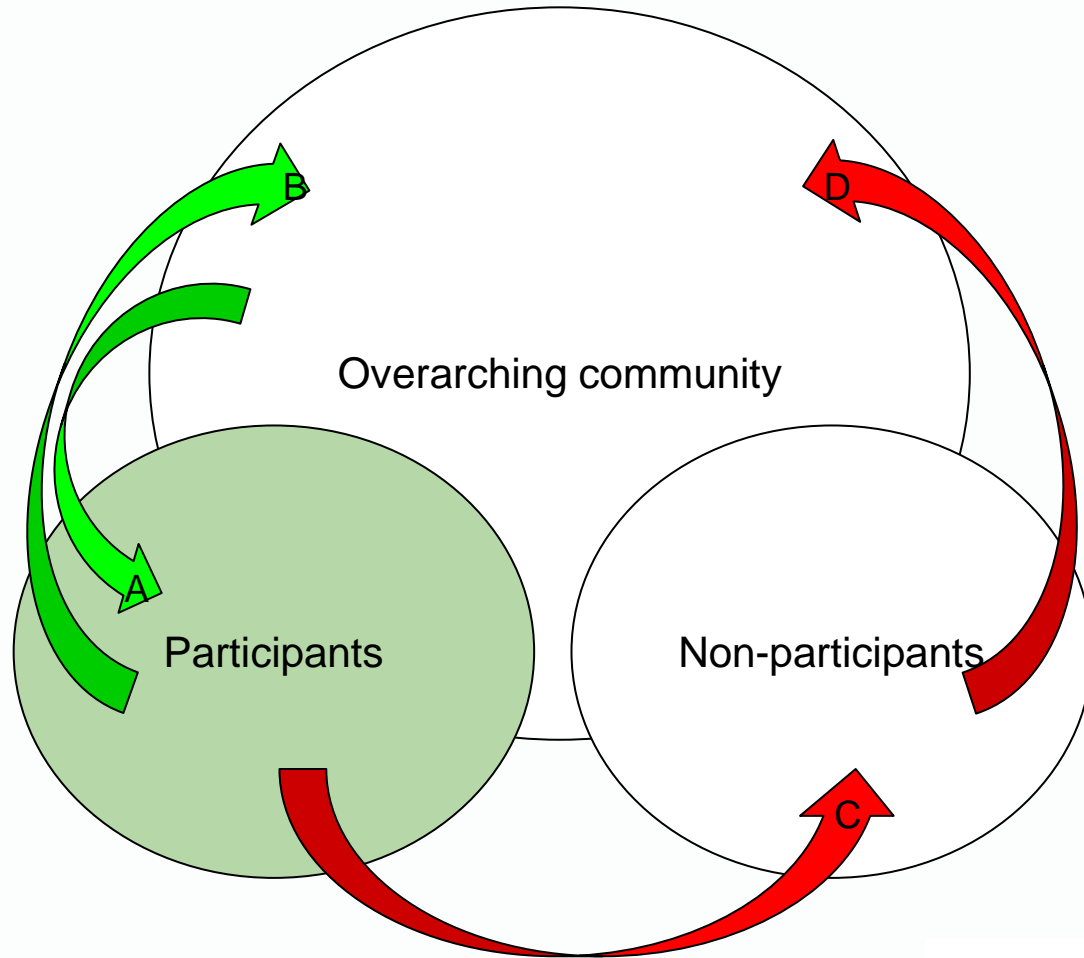


aware, willing to join, participating in community energy initiatives

and feel less **heard/ influential** in citizen assemblies



Motivation vs. Polarisation



Shared identity
is key

Discussion

We can **change from the bottom-up**

Citizen engagement has the potential to change our view of **who we are**

It can **motivate** and **unite**

And through this contribute to a **sustainable** and **resilient** society



"It Takes All of Us: Tackling the Climate Crisis Collectively"

Introduction to the Collective Impact Model

Skive 04/06/2025

Landry Mawungu



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hannah
arendt
instituut

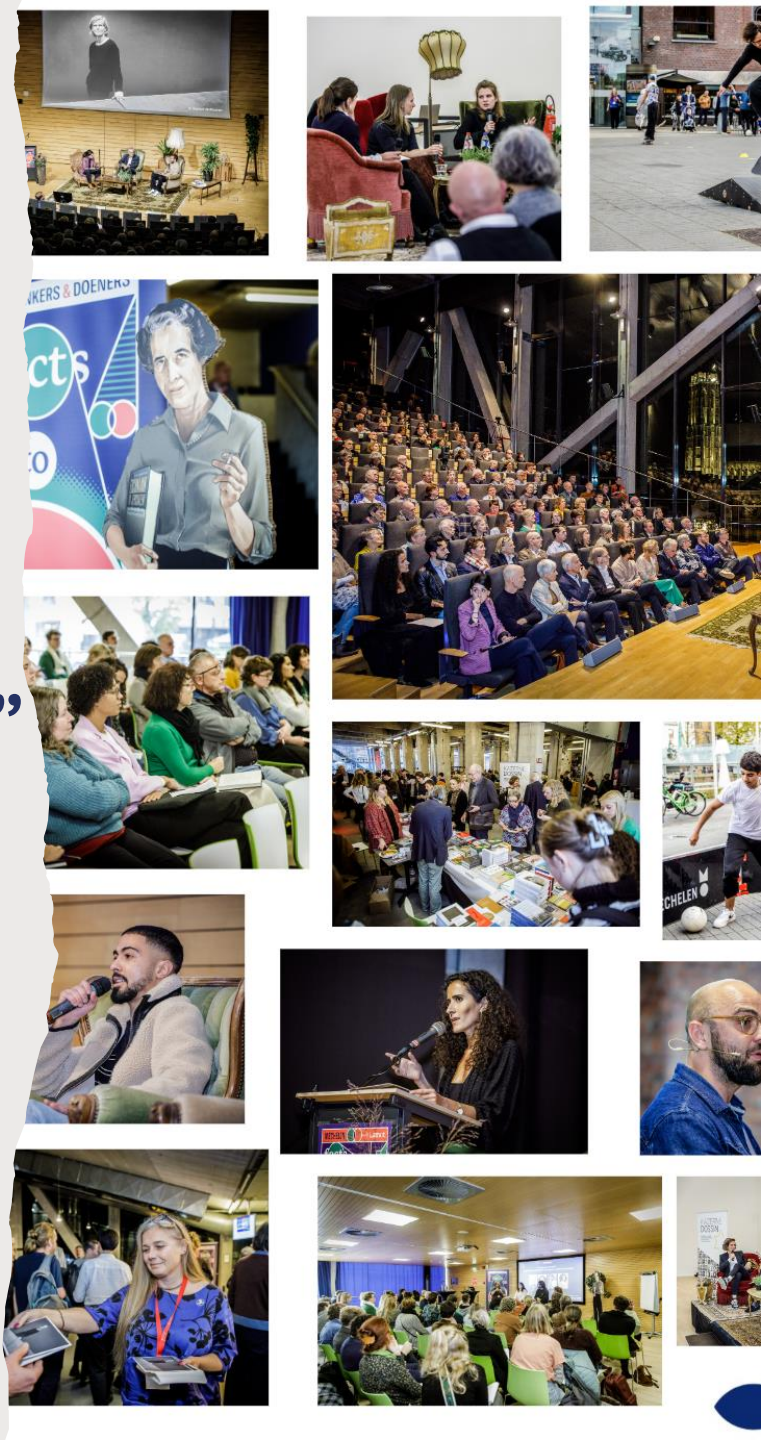
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Hannah Arendt Instituut
Mechelen, Belgium

“Connecting science and practice”

Research. Rethink. React.

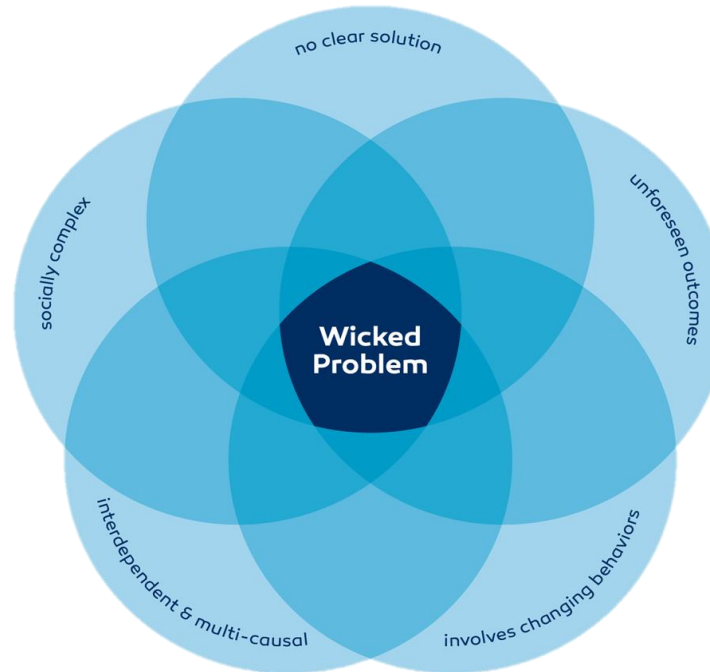


“No single organization is responsible for any major social problem, nor can any single organization cure it.”

2011, John Kania, Mark Kramer

Wicked Problems

- poverty
- radicalization & harmful polarization
- financial crisis
- **climate change**
- health crises (e.g. COVID-19)
- Crime
- drug use
- challenges regarding migration and integration
- etc.

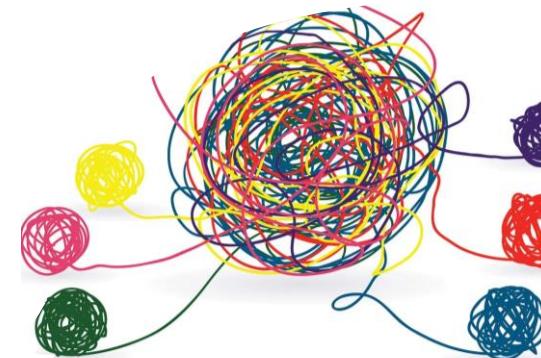
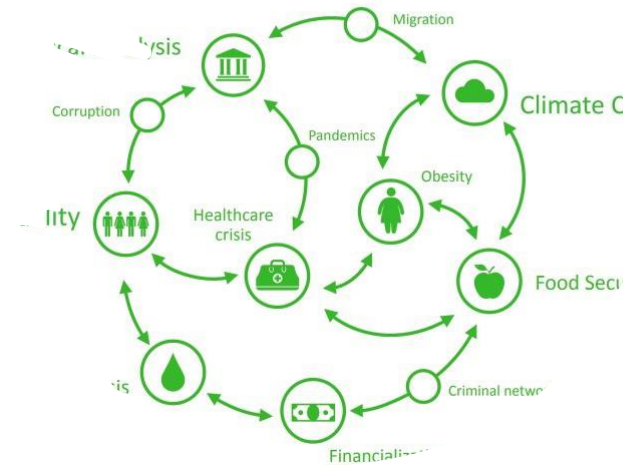


CLIMATE CHANGE : a wicked problem

'wicked' problem]

cial planning) a problem that seems
sible to solve because of how
interconnected to other problems.

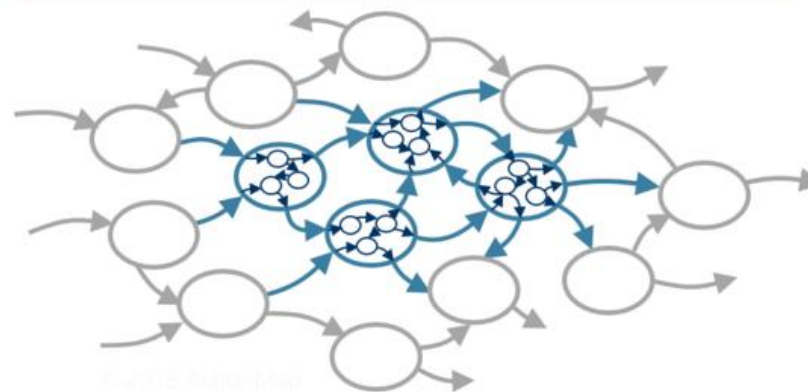
Climate Change a Wicked Problem





Based upon Rittel and Webber (1973)

...need Wicked Problem Solving



© 2018 ActionMap Inc

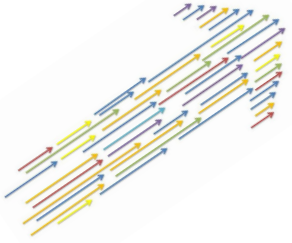
“Complex problems require complex responses, which are usually rooted in a collective approach.”

"It Takes All of Us: Tackling the Climate Crisis Collectively"

How can a local government foster, strengthen, and support collaboration, engagement and collective action?

- What role do we play in this?
- What can we do?
- How should we organize ourselves?



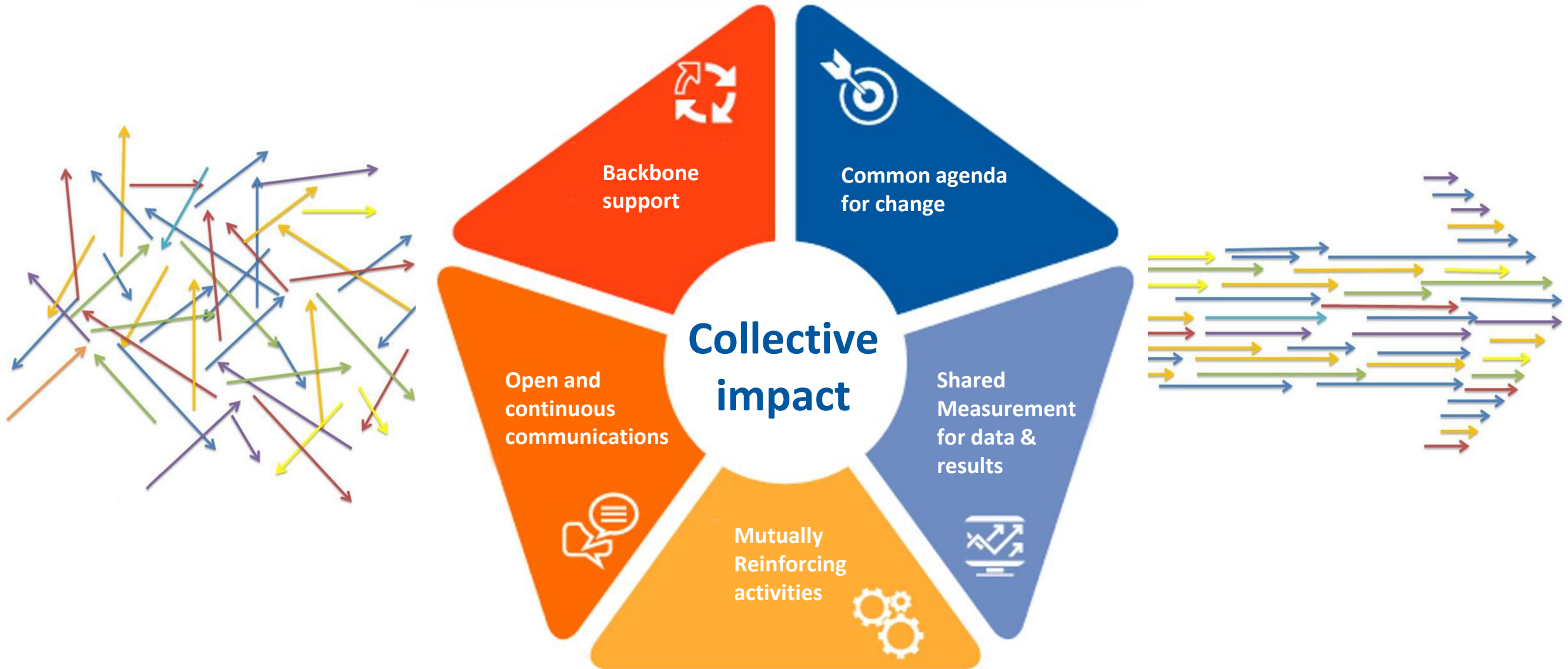


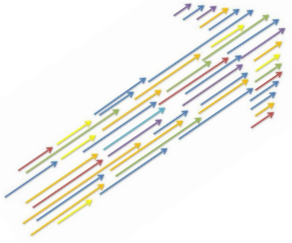
Collective Impact Model

- 2011: John Kania & Mark Kramer
- Collective Impact arises when actors from different sectors come together around a common agenda to solve a specific, often highly complex, community problem.
- Key foundations for realizing collective action and impact



Collective Impact Model





Pre-conditions for Collectieve Impact

The first phase is a preparatory phase. It assesses to what extent the community is ready for a Collective Impact initiative.

There are three pre-conditions for Collective Impact:

1. Urgency for Change
2. Influential Champions
3. Adequate Resources



Collective Impact Model

5 Conditions



Condition 1: Common agenda

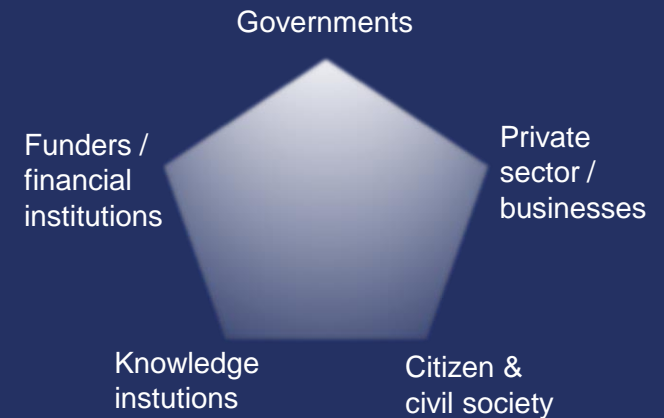
A **shared understanding** of the problem and a **joint approach** to solving it through agreed-upon actions.

A shared agenda defines what we want **to achieve together**. It shapes **a sense of community**, builds trust among people, fosters **engagement**, and strengthens the coherence between different actions.

The **process is at least as important** as having a plan, it's also building **collective commitment to community change**.

It is an **iterative process**, takes time, and can be adjusted along the way.

Divers tools: *citizen assemblies, co-creation labs, working groups, etc..*



“All members of the community commit to contributing to the measurement and interpretation of data in order to strive for progress and impact.”

Continuous learning & Evaluation

Engage with data , integrate different perspectives on data and what they reveal, and adjust actions if needed.

Condition 2: Shared measurement



Condition 3: mutually reinforcing activities

Identifying complementary projects and activities and integrating them into a mutually reinforcing action plan to achieve the desired outcomes..

Questions to consider:

- Can the activities of different actors be **linked or aligned**?
- Can existing activities be **adjusted** to better contribute to the collective impact goals?
- Are there **gaps** that need to be filled?



Main focus: How can partners align their resources to achieve the shared agenda?

Condition 4: Open and continuous communication

Formal and informal communication channels to keep all actors **informed** en **engaged** about progress and key milestones.

But also to communicate about the initiative **to a broad and diverse audience**

1. Builds Trust and Relationships
2. Aligns Efforts Toward Common Goals
3. Promotes Transparency (expectation management) and Accountability
4. Facilitate learning and Adaptation
5. Encourages community engagement



Condition 5: Backbone support

The backbone in the Collective Impact model provides the essential support structure that **coordinates and facilitates collaboration among diverse stakeholders**. It does not set the agenda or make decisions for the group but **helps build a shared vision, fosters alignment, manages communication, and supports data collection and learning** processes. Its role is to keep the initiative moving forward by strengthening relationships, tracking progress, and maintaining community engagement.



Six key functions of the backbone

Guide vision & strategie

- Building a **shared understanding** of the problem
- Providing **strategic guidance** toward a common agenda

Support aligned activities

- Ensuring **mutually reinforcing activities** take place:
 - Coordinating and facilitating **communication and collaboration**
 - **Bringing** partners and key external stakeholders together
 - **Catalyzing or incubating** new initiatives or collaborations
 - Providing **technical assistance**
 - Creating **pathways for and recruiting** new partners
 - Seeking opportunities **to align** with other efforts

Establish shared measurment practices

- Collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and reporting data
- Analyzing or developing **shared measurement systems**
- Providing **technical assistance** to build partners' data capacity

Building public will

- Building will, consensus, and public engagement:
 - Producing and managing external communications
 - Creating a sense of urgency and a call to action
 - Supporting activities that engage community members

Advance Policy

- **Advocating** for an **aligned policy agenda**

Mobilize Funding

- Mobilizing and coordinating **public and private funding** to support the goals

Leadership principles for backbone leaders

1) Facilitative Leadership

- Not a dominant player, but facilitates collaboration among partners.
- Encourages shared ownership and joint decision-making.

2) Servant Leadership

- Focuses on supporting other stakeholders rather than seeking visibility or power.
- Creates conditions for organizations to collaborate effectively.

3) Adaptive Leadership

- Flexible in responding to changing circumstances and new insights.
- Continuously monitors and adjusts strategies based on feedback and data.

4) Systems Thinking

- Considers the broader ecosystem and works toward structural change.
- Connects sectors, organizations, and communities to create synergy.

5) Data- and Results-Oriented

- Bases decision-making on data and shared measurements.
- Continuously evaluates to learn and improve.

6) Inclusive and Participatory Leadership

- Involves all relevant stakeholders (including citizens, organizations, and policymakers).
- Ensures diversity of perspectives in decision-making.

7) Transparency and Trust

- Builds on open communication and clear expectations.
- Establishes and maintains trust among partners.

Citizen engagement raises the question of how to foster true collective action—and how local governments or municipalities can actively support it (perhaps *by engaging in backbone support?*). It goes beyond simply organizing a citizens' assembly to ask, “*What should the city do?*” It’s about creating the conditions for everyone to get involved and take action together, guided by a shared agenda.



“No single municipality is responsible for any major social problem, nor can any single municipality cure it.”

Thank you for Listening

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Thank you!

