Pilot projects on a roll

Year 2 pilot specific reports

WP 4 – Scenario and back-casting exercises by three communities: pilot projects

Deliverable 4.3 – Year 2 pilot specific reports (public)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

1 Introduction

At the time of submitting this deliverable, the FP7-funded research project InContext starts upon its last year. Aiming to identify conditions enabling societal transitions addressing societal challenges, such as moving towards an ecologically sound, economically successful and culturally diverse future, the InContext project examines the interplay between inner and outer context factors in building the context for individual behaviour. One of the assumptions of the InContext project is that individual and collective behaviour respond to both an outer context (like social norms, policies, and infrastructure) and an inner context (like needs, values and priorities). So far, initiatives to further sustainable development have focused mainly on changing external contexts. By conducting case studies and implementing pilot projects, InContext aims to gain insights on the interaction of the inner and outer context.

Work package 4 is aimed at developing alternative practices on community and individual level by drawing up a methodology, the 'Community Arena' (deliverable 4.1, Wittmayer et al 2011a) and putting it into practice in three pilot areas: Finkenstein (Austria), Rotterdam-Carnisse (The Netherlands) and Wolfhagen (Germany). Through an action research process of envisioning, backcasting, experimenting, self-reflection and learning, inner and outer context factors that build the context for behaviour are explored.

Goal and structure of the deliverable

This document is the third deliverable of WP4. The first deliverable described the Methodological Guidelines for implementing the Community Arena approach in the pilot areas (Wittmayer et al, 2011a). The second deliverable reported on the progress in the three pilot areas in the period from October 2010 until mid-September 2011 (Wittmayer et al, 2011b), and this deliverable focuses on pilot specific activities employed between mid-September 2011 and mid-September 2012.

In section 2, we provide a short review of the events of the last 12 months in WP4, including a short reminder of the different steps of the Community Arena process. In section 3, we describe the implementation of the Methodological Guidelines per pilot area during the last year. This includes detailing the activities performed along the Community Arena phases, including their adaptation to the local context. This section is not only meant to give an overview, but also to summarize and reflect some intermediate results from each of the pilot project areas. Section 4 provides some preliminary reflections on the methodology as well as an outlook on the expected substantive issues for reflection. Section 5 finishes the deliverable with an outlook on the further planning.

2 Looking back: the past year

This section gives an overview of WP4 during the period October 2011 until mid September 2012. Firstly, it provides the reader with an overview of the contact moments within WP4 (and to other WPs), including the main discussion points. Secondly, the phases of the Community Arena methodology are shortly introduced to refresh the reader's mind.

2.1 Contact moments within WP4

This section gives a short overview of the contact moments (besides regular mail-contact) of the WP4-team in table 1. Next to the project meeting in November 2011, the WP4 team met physically in May 2012 to discuss first outcomes and the partners were in regular contact during the intensive implementation phase.

Table1. Overview of contact moments within WP4 and with other WPs

Date	Contact moments
29.09.2011	Conference call WP4 - WP2 partners re. Deliverable 2.1
05.10.2011	Conference call WP4 partners
19.10.2011	*WP-lead conference call*
11/2011	Partner Meeting, Brussels
17.01.2012	Conference call WP4 partners
15.02.2012	Conference call WP4 partners
1.3.2012	*WP-Lead conference call*
19.3.2012	Conference call WP4 partners
5.4.2012	*WP-Lead conference call*
16.4.2012	Conference call WP4 partners
05/2012	WP4-meeting, Vienna
11.6.2012	*WP-Lead conference call*
11.6.2012	Conference call WP4 partners
2.7.2012	Conference call WP4 - WP6 partners re. Reality Check Fora
4.7.2012	Conference call WP4 – WP6 partners re. Dissemination
5.7.2012	*WP-Lead conference call*
2.8.2012	*WP-Lead conference call*
3.8.2012	Conference call WP4 partners
09/2012	Partner Meeting, Finkenstein

2.2 Refresher: the phases of the Community Arena methodology

WP4 uses an action research approach to create room for alternative practices on community and individual level to emerge. This research approach is described in the following phases of the Community Arena methodology as outlined in deliverable 4.1.

In deliverable 4.2, the focus was on phases 0 and 1. The current deliverable is focusing on phases 2 to 4 and deliverable 4.4 on phases 4and 5.

Table 2: Overview of the Community Arena methodology *(underlined are the participatory meetings)*

	Phases of the Community Arena	
	Key activities	**Key output**
0. Pre-preparation	A. Case orientation B. Transition team formation	A. Initial case description for each pilot B. Transition team
1. Preparation & Exploration	A. Process design B. System analysis C. Actor analysis (long-list and short-list of relevant actors) incl. interviews D Set up Monitoring framework	A. Community Arena process plan B. Insightful overview of major issues/tensions to focus on C. Actor identification and categorisation + insight inner context D Monitoring framework
2. Problem structuring & Envisioning	A. Community Arena formation B. <u>Participatory problem structuring</u> C. Selection of key priorities D. <u>Participatory vision building</u>	A. Frontrunner network B. Individual and shared problem perceptions & change topics C. Guiding sustainability principles D. Individual and shared visions
3. Backcasting, Pathways & Agenda Building	A. <u>Participatory backcasting & definition of transition paths</u> B. <u>Formulation agenda and specific activities</u> C. Monitoring interviews	A. Backcasting analysis & transition paths B. Transition agenda and formation of possible sub-groups C. Learning & process feedback
4. Experimenting & Implementing	A. Dissemination of visions, pathways and agenda B. Coalition forming & broadening the network C. Conducting experiments	A. Broader public awareness & extended involvement B. Change agents network & experiment portfolio C. Learning & implementation
5. Monitoring & Evaluation	A. Participatory evaluation of method, content and process* B. Monitoring interviews	A. Adapted methodological framework, strategy and lessons learned for local and EU-level governance B. Insight in drivers and barriers for sustainable behaviour

3 Results per pilot project area

In this section we focus on describing the key activities and key outputs of each pilot area with regard to the implementation of the Community Arena methodology (see Table 2).

3.1 Finkenstein, Austria

3.1.1 Overview Community Arena process

In Austria, the Community Arena is conducted in the village Finkenstein am Faaker See, on the border to Slovenia and Italy. It is one of the largest non-urban communities in Carinthia (one of the 9 Austrian regions) with regard to population and area. About 8,500 people live in Finkenstein - distributed to about 28 villages and settlements. Since the 1980s, the population has been growing due to both immigration and increasing birth rates. Most of the active population commutes out of the community – mainly to Villach, which is located near Finkenstein and which is the second largest town of Carinthia. Finkenstein itself is characterised by two main economic sectors: tourism (mainly in the eastern part of the community area) and (small) industry. Additionally, agriculture shapes the landscape.

The community is located in one of the most important regions for summer tourism in Austria and was one of the communities with most overnight stays in Carinthia for decades. But tourism has been declining lately - from more than 1 million to about 600 000 overnight stays per year. Currently, the annual European Bike Week is one of the highlights of the touristic season, which attracts tens of thousands of motorbike fans.

Finkenstein's community life is dominated by various factors: Firstly, the historically grown issue on the rights of the Slovenian minority is still present and separates some groups within the community although most controversies could be settled in the last decade. Secondly, immigrants from other Carinthian communities tend to participate to a lesser extent in community life than families who have been living in Finkenstein for generations. Clubs and associations find it more and more difficult to attract the younger generation. Thirdly, the structure of the village is quite decentralized and spreads over a big area, with different dominant problems and issues in each part.

During the Community Arena process a huge variety of topics has been addressed: Environment, energy and mobility; tourism, economy, agriculture and local products; social issues (education, organizations, etc.) and citizenship; politics, participation and regional development.

After completing the Community Arena phases 0-3 (see below) a common vision for the community has been agreed upon including guidelines for all sectors discussed. Currently, eight working groups have been installed to elaborate projects and measures for the short- and long-term implementation of the vision (phase 4). For an overview of the meetings see Table 4.

3.1.2 Phase 0 & 1

In Finkenstein, the pre-preparation was carried out between November 2011 and February 2012, applying desk research and analysing around 65 personal and telephone interviews (age range interviewees 20-83 years). This provided the basis for the system analysis and identification of frontrunners. A major effort was made to identify and select engaged citizens for the Community Arena, who reflect the diversity of Finkenstein, while not being representatives of the predominant political or institutional system. This makes system innovation, a central part of transition management, more likely. The phenomena of citizen engagement for public welfare has been explored in detail during this phase during which a shift from classical engagement in organizations to a more selective, individual, short-term engagement with a higher potential for innovative ideas could be identified.

A Kick-off meeting was held in January 2012 after a press release that was published in local newspapers, which demonstrated very high public interest in the initiative. In addition to the selected group of frontrunners, a long list of citizens interested in the process has been put together to reach out to a wider public during phase 4. During the preparation phase a major issue was to generate trust and confidence in the process as a basis for all further steps. In contrast to the Community Arena, the transition team was made up by stakeholders representing the community. They come from a variety of dominant institutions and different political parties in order to allow all stakeholders to take part equally in the reality-check process of the developed vision and measures. Due to a chronic cross-party mistrust, it was essential to communicate that the process was not limited to persons affiliated to a specific political party, but would offer a citizen-centred space addressing the concerns and ideas of all members of the community equally.

3.1.3 Phase 2: Problem structuring & Envisioning

The first Transition Team meeting in March was used to clarify the expectations of the members and discuss the process of the project. The representatives of a great variety of institutions like political representatives and the local government, businessmen, representatives of the tourism association, etc. could agree upon a general commitment for support. The first Community Arena meeting was held subsequently where the main topics of interest were identified using the dynamic facilitation method[1]: environment, energy, mobility/tourism, economy, agriculture, local supply, social topics and population. Combining the outcomes of the first Community Arena with the information collected and structured during the system analysis, the basis for the following Arena meetings was established.

The second Community Arena meeting was held on 16 March 2012 with 14 participants. This meeting focused on vision building and resulted in a collage of pictures of Finkenstein, as well as the creation of a set of core statements for the vision. The participants also visualized their vision in the form of a theatre play and the results were also discussed in a fictional interview with a local newspaper. Some of the participants found it difficult to turn away from

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[1]http://www.partizipation.at/dynamic_facilitation.html

topical issues to a more abstract level, but through the use of different creativity methods the basis for a common vision could be established. This step of abstraction was especially beneficial for getting the focus off the current problems within the community and concentrating on the current and future needs of the citizens in order to have a satisfying life.

On the following day the Transition Team met for a second time and took the decision to set up two working groups with broader participation from the community to follow up on two of the main themes arising from the scoping and visioning phase. One of the groups – on a (sustainable) economy – was initiated soon after and works on mainstreaming some of the ideas into the work of local entrepreneurs.

Table 3: Overview of transition team meetings in Finkenstein

Date	Meeting	# of part.	Goal	Main facilitation method	Results
02.03.2012	Transition Team 1	8	Presentation of the project, clarification of expectations Topics: • Process, structure and general information of/about the project	presentation and feedback, expectations, discussion	Commitment for support by representatives of great variety of different areas
17.03.2012	Transition Team 2	10	Information about the process Topics: • Discussion about agreement on the results of the Community Arena • Defining persons in charge of working groups		Ongoing information Initiation of two working groups

The third Community Arena meeting was held in April 2012. It started with a discussion, between the Community Arena and two representatives of the Transition Team, on the possibilities for political participation of citizens in decision finding processes, like the regional development plan. More space was given to the envisioning process, where abstract long-term visions had to be separated from short-term wishes and demands. By the end of the meeting two versions of one common vision for Finkenstein's sustainable and liveable future were drafted and combined to one shared vision in the beginning of the fourth Community Arena meeting, which was held in May. The final draft in combination with a set of core statements was fed into the next step of backcasting and planning pathways towards a sustainable and liveable future in Finkenstein.

The words used to formulate the vision represent some of the values central to the Community Arena members: freedom, joy, love of life, people and nature. Translated from German it says "We shape Finkenstein for the benefit of citizens and nature in freedom, with joy and love of life" This reflects the citizens' wish for participation, well-being as a common

individual and collective goal, social and environmental sustainability as well as economic sustainability as pre-requisite for freedom. The wordplay FinksteRn mixes the village name Finkenstein with the word for star, representing the collective goal, a shared vision and direction to go.

Figure 1Graphical illustration of the Community Arena vision developed in Finkenstein

3.1.4 Phase 3: Backcasting, Pathways & Agenda Building

The fourth Community Arena was held on 11 May 2012 with the aim of discussing the measures to be taken to achieve the joint vision. In addition to the guidelines of the vision a logo representing the joint vision was worked out: This showed to have a very high potential for identification with the vision and details regarding the exact design of the logo were of big importance to the arena participants. To elaborate on the measures the method of backcasting was applied, asking the participants to locate the previously elaborated guiding principles for various topics on a timeline, starting from the vision 2030 backwards to their current situation 2012. Finding one topic to start with was quite difficult, as different participants had different views on what has the highest priority and what should be worked on immediately. After an intense discussion, two main parallel thematic strings were identified. One string lists the social topics, the second one energy/environment/mobility.

For putting all the ideas into practice, the next necessary steps were planned through a group discussion. First of all, eight thematic working groups were formed and one to two participants were recruited to coordinate them, in order to secure continuation of the process for the next months. An important next step planned was the presentation of the working groups and the first measures to the transition team to discuss their ideas about the common vision and the measures.

After the fourth meeting, the arena members asked for further inputs on the structure, tasks and activities they should fulfil, in order to start working in their thematic groups. The

researchers prepared a timeline and list of tasks for all groups, which were sent out to the Community Arena members to be discussed in an additional meeting in June.

In the third week of June, this coordination meeting between the transition team and the Community Arena took place, starting with two separate sessions of the Community Arena and the transition team. In both groups, less participants than in the meetings before showed up due to a shorter notification of the meeting than in the meetings before. A few arena members articulated their wish for starting the implementation phase of the process quicker, as the first phases were more focussed on vision development and deliberation than on action. In general, the arena participants as well as all transition team members expressed their high level of satisfaction with the progress of the project and its outcomes. The transition agenda was a fundamental starting point for the design of projects and measures.

3.1.5 Phase 4: Experimenting & Implementing

A public event in one of the houses of culture on 2 August aimed at disseminating the common vision, pathways and agenda. Expanding the transition network was at the heart of that meeting. An open invitation for joining the working groups and expressing feedback on the work done so far was pronounced.

Two of the working groups, sustainable economy and culture, had first meetings to refine the transition agenda regarding to their thematic field parallel to the Community Arena meetings, four more working groups had their first meetings in August. To extend involvement and keep the public informed about the progress of the project, a short report and a call for participation has been published in the community newspaper in August. The experiment portfolio is continuously being filled by contributions of the various working groups who are being supported by the transition team. Experiments and project implementations are planned throughout the rest of the year.

Table 4: Overview of physical meetings in Finkenstein

Date	Meeting	# of participants	Goal	Main facilitation method	Results
19.01.2012	Kick-off (phase 1):	~120	Public information, Finding participants Topics: • Presentation of the project and of the "Mutmacherei" (www.mutmacherei.net)	Presentation by project team	Huge public interest and media attention
02.03.2012	Community Arena 1 (phase 2):	11 (4 male, 7 female; 20 – 65 years)	Identification of main topics Teambuilding Identified topics: • environment, energy, mobility / tourism, economy, agriculture, local supply / social topics, population	team building methods, scaling attitudes, dynamic Facilitation	Guiding principles for main topics Good atmosphere, Participants got to know
16.03.2012	Community Arena 2 (phase 2)	14 (7 male, 7 female; 20 – 83 years)	Vision building Topics: • Input of system analysis • Vision building along identified main topics	Collage out of pictures of Finkenstein taken by the participants, presentation of visions (theatre, interview, local newspaper)	Guiding principles for visions
16.03.2012	Working group Sustainable Economy (phase 4)	10	Clarification of expectations Topics: • Presentation of the project		Planning of a further appointment
20.04.2012	Community Arena 3 (phase 2)	11 (5 male, 6 female)	Vision building Sharing: Transition team – Community Arena Connecting vision to needs Topics: • Discussion between two representatives of the transition	Group work	Two general visions (to be combined by the project team)

			team and the Community Arena (participation at "ÖrtlichesEntwicklungskonzept") • Developing one shared vision out of personal visions of every participant		
02.05.2012	AG Sustainable Economy "WirtschaftsKlima" (phase 4)	~ 30	Mainstreaming ideas of Community Arena to local enterpreneurs Topics: • Networking, sustainable economy, regionalisation	World café	List of measures
11.05.2012	Community Arena 4 (phase 3)	10 (5 male, 5 female)	Transition paths, formation of sub-groups Topics: • Participatory backcasting and agenda setting	backcasting	Installation of 9 workgroups working towards the common vision
13.06.2012	AG Sustainable Economy "WirtschaftsKlima" (phase 4)	± 20	Agenda Setting Topics: • Organizing future collaboration	Group work, discussions	Three focus groups: competiveness, energy and participation
20.06.2012	Community Arena – Transition Team transfer meeting (phase 4):	13 (7 male, 6 female; 20 – 83 years)	Networking Community Arena members with Transition Team, extending involvement Topics: • Coalition forming, strengthening vision and agenda with institutional support	Presentation and structured discussion	Accepted vision and approved transition agenda draft
02.08.2012	Public event "Shaping Finkenstein" (phase 4):	± 35	Broader public awareness and extended involvement Topics: • Dissemination of vision, pathways and agenda; • Coalition forming and broadening the network	Adapted world café / open space	Extended involvement in working groups

3.1.6 Reflections on methodology in local context

Local context

The system analysis as well as the interviews during the preparation phase showed that a great deal of divides within the community was a major feature. Firstly, a divide between long-term inhabitants and new community members was identified, secondly a geographic divide between the eastern and western parts of the community, between the sectors industry and tourism as well as a historic divide between the Slovenian minority and the German speaking majority in the community.

The selection of Community Arena members required that this great diversity of inhabitants is represented and that a major focus was put on trust-building before and during the actual transition process.

Unlike in other communities, hardly any initiative in the community before was designed in a participatory manner, so there was a generally high interest for the initiative by citizens who did not have any possibility for contributing before. Most citizens the researchers talked to generally felt unheard and not understood by political representatives.

Community Arena participants

Fifteen community members have been selected to participate in the Community Arena. Criteria used were place of living within the community, age, gender and professional or educational background. Eight female and seven male participants were selected, two participants being under 25 years, two over 60, three in the range between 30 and 40 as well as three between 50 and 60 years. The biggest age group with five representatives was between 40 and 50 years. Both long-term residents as well as recently moved members of the community took part. In the Arena there were entrepreneurs, retirees, students, workers and employees in tourism and industry and a farmer.

Local stakeholders / transition team

Another feature of the diversity of the community emerged in the political landscape of the community. In order not to exclude any group from the beginning of the process, representatives of all six parties were invited to join the transition team, as well as representatives of the sectors of industry, education, tourism and agriculture. Most support for the process came from the ruling party as well as from local businessmen and representatives of tourism, whereas others remained sceptical to the process and questioned the impact it could have. As an external-led process there was a potential to bring together representatives who usually do not work together.

Trusting in an open-end process with no pre-determined outcomes was perceived as unusual and the methodological approach was not easy to understand by the transition team members. Openness to conduct the reality check for the measures developed in the

Community Arena was expressed but some transition team members remained insecure about their role in the process. At that point, specific working tasks for the transition team on an organizational level could have helped in speeding up the transition process,

The efforts to include representatives of the fields of industry and education did not succeed, as many representatives expressed a lack of time on the one hand, and on the other hand some of the women working in the field of education, who were contacted, left the impression that they didn't feel confident enough to participate as transition team members. It is noteworthy too that almost all transition team members are male.

Differently to the methodologically planned separation from the transition team and the Community Arena, in Finkenstein the Community Arena members expressed their wish for a direct discussion with the transition team quite soon. In order to increase trust between the two groups, it was essential to invite representatives of the transition team to one of the sessions of the Community Arena for a direct exchange.

Community Arena

During the preparation phase of the project, many interviews were conducted and many citizens contacted and asked for their opinions on and perceptions of the community.

The questions asked in the process of the actors' analysis seemed to surprise some of the interviewees. As participatory approaches have no long tradition in Austria, actors are not used to being asked what they (dis)like about their community, and why this is important to them.

We started the process in January 2012 through a public event where the project was presented. More than 100 citizens came to learn about the project. The event, planned and organised to raise public interest could not fulfil the expectations of many citizens at that time, who already expected first results of the process. Nevertheless, many citizens expressed their interest in participating in the Community Arena by signing up into a list. The huge interest led to a rejection of some citizens who were asked for later participation in the project during the implementation phase. Many actors asked for a clear and transparent justification on how exactly the Community Arena was formed and which criteria were used. Naming them "frontrunners" as the methodological guidelines suggested would put the Community Arena members under pressure in that local context. As a consequence, the researchers decided to communicate only the objective criteria of age-balance, gender-balance and geographical balance and leave out the additional qualitative frontrunners criteria according to the guidelines. How critical the issue of selecting the Community Arena members was observed showed, when in the newsletter of one political party the fact that arena members had relatives active in politics, was criticised.

Using dynamic facilitation in the first Community Arena meeting was a very powerful instrument for showing the participants how a structured moderation can contribute to get an overview on the issues and problems people deal with and to find possible solutions at the

same time. The feedback was very positive and allowed them to dedicate themselves to the process.

Timing is crucial in the process of coordinating such a diverse group of citizens. Thus, it was decided to appoint the second arena meeting very shortly after the first one, only two weeks later. This turned out to be very positive.

The vision building session (second Community Arena meeting) profited greatly from the use of creative methods. Using photos from the participants as a base for the vision how Finkenstein should be in the future connected directly to the inner dimension of the participants and gave room for discussions on an emotional level. After a creative session designing a newspaper, conducting an interview and making a play situated in the future of the community, it was a quite easy task to deduct guiding principles for different sectors relevant to the community.

The third Community Arena meeting started from a difficult point, where all members brought along a suggestion of their preferred wording for a community vision. Some of these were on an abstract level, while some were very specifically linked to one topic. Having two similar versions of the wording after several group discussions was a success and an important base for the backcasting session in the fourth Community Arena meeting.

Although the group worked together very well with respect and dedication, their heterogeneous background revealed the difficulty of deciding on one or a few common projects. On that point it was necessary for the researchers to offer a structure of opening the Community Arena to include a broad range of people who would work together in groups of their interest and contribute ideas and work in line with the common vision. The diversity of the participants led to a longer process, but it also raised the opportunity to broaden outcomes with improvements in many fields.

One immanent goal of the researchers was the empowerment of the Community Arena members to organize their own interests in a way that contributed to their own and the community's well-being and to sustainability at the same time. Some participants already had specific ideas, which can be followed on a broader basis; others articulated their ideas and wishes for the first time, but were not ready yet to take on responsibilities themselves. However, the aspect of being able to articulate them has a high potential to inspire others. Their impact as role models or frontrunners will be observed again later in the process.

In respect to learning from each other, talking about lifestyle and behaviour elements like food consumption or means of mobility encouraged discussions, which inspired Community Arena members to question their own behaviour. One of the participants, for example, frequently talked about the experience in using a bicycle as a means of transport to go to her work, which led to discussions on mobility behaviour and the impact of alternatives. The mutual understanding on different demands increased during the discussions, for example when one member expressed the lack of kindergarten facilities and its impacts to others who never thought of it before. Some topics like the wish for a broader supply with local food showed a collectively risen awareness through the discussions within the Community Arena process.

Action research and external facilitation

In all four meetings of the Community Arena one or two external moderators facilitated the process and two researchers switched between setting the organizational frame, co-facilitating and observing. As sustainability researchers, a normative direction towards more sustainable lifestyles was to be made transparent. Nevertheless, the term sustainability was avoided in the communication with arena members, as the researchers' experience had shown that for some individuals or groups the term has a negative connotation of abstinence. Instead, higher quality of life with reduced consumption of resources was communicated as the goal of the process, which was very useful in broadening the interest in the process but also highlighted the difficulty that different citizens and stakeholders had a very diverse understanding of what quality of life is or should be.

3.2 Rotterdam-Carnisse

3.2.1 Overview Community Arena process

Rotterdam is the second largest city of the Netherlands, numbering almost 600 000 inhabitants from 127 nationalities. Until recently Rotterdam was home to the world's largest port, and thus has heavily industrialised areas. The city is divided by the river Meuse (and the old harbour area) into a South and North part. Neighbourhoods on the south bank were historically, and still are, the place where immigrants move into the city. Instead of an aging population, Rotterdam has a very young population, which has a relatively low level of education and a high level of unemployment.

The pilot project area is situated in one of the neighbourhoods in the south of Rotterdam called Carnisse. Carnisse became a city neighbourhood when the city and the harbour were extended on the right bank of the Meuse around 1900. Houses were built until early 1950s. In 2007, Carnisse (as part of Rotterdam South) was listed as one of the 40 neighbourhoods nationwide that the national government labelled as 'neighbourhoods of extra interest' ('aandachtswijken'). These neighbourhoods are all seen as having problems in multiple domains (social, physical and economical). Carnisse, together with seven other neighbourhoods in Rotterdam South, is still labelled as such and receives special attention and funds from the national government.

The context of Carnisse in 2011 is strongly influenced by the current economic crisis, which has led to huge cost reductions, government budget cuts and a withdrawal of the welfare-state. Although old welfare structures are being dismantled, there is still a high level of (non-)governmental activity as well as a long history of local participatory processes and interventions by professionals and/or researchers. The inhabitants of Carnisse who took part in the Community Arena process (either through interviews or as arena participant) expressed their frustration with these phenomena, but were also eager to relativize the picture of a deprived neighbourhood by pointing to the many initiatives that are arising from within the community.

The Community Arena process started in August 2011. The period until February 2012 was marked by a high level of activity of the transition team in the neighbourhood, doing interviews, attending meetings and getting acquainted with the locality. As of February 2012 the arena meetings took place and until May 2012 a problem description, a vision and first ideas for pathways and measures had been formulated. During the same time a first experiment had been start, the preservation and re-opening of the local community centre. For an overview of the meetings see the summary Table 6.

3.2.2 Phase 0 & 1

The transition team is primarily made up of researchers from Drift and the TUDelft and also includes practitioners from the Veerkracht project involved in Carnisse (for more details see deliverable 4.2; p. 19). From August 2011 to February 2012, the transition team were doing the system and actor analysis, which led to a selection of potential participants for the arena

process as well as a problem description based on interviews, observations and secondary data.

The system analysis is based on secondary data from desk research (historical data, policy reports, media coverage), some 45 interviews, three official meetings in the neighbourhood and a number of informal (street) conversations. The system analysis includes an analysis of macro-level influences (such as historical and institutional embedding), an analysis of the neighbourhood in terms of its stocks and characteristics including emerging niches on the micro level (such as promising neighbourhood initiatives and frontrunner activities) and an identification of the six main topics for Carnisse.

The actor analysis has also been based on the interviews mentioned above. The interviewees were identified using desk research (searches in press articles, internet, policy documents, etc.), snowballing-method, and involving local contacts in Carnisse and nearby neighbourhoods. Besides some 45 more formal interviews, we also had informal street talks on the streets. Criteria for inviting people to join the arena were as follows: having a passion for the neighbourhood, being active in the neighbourhood, feeling the urgency for change, and having new ideas or thinking about creative actions.

On the one hand, the experience of other researchers and policy actors shows that inhabitants of Carnisse are weary of participation processes that do not have immediate practical outcomes or interventions. On the other hand, the Community Arena methodology recommends first holding deliberative meetings before taking concrete actions. Therefore, the process design was partly done in a participatory and interactive meeting with five frontrunners from Carnisse in November 2011 (a so-called 'pre-arena meeting'). They were consulted for their input with regard to making the approach more context-specific and overcoming participation fatigue by raising commitment. During this meeting a first draft of the emerging problem description was discussed, but more importantly, the process as intended in the methodology was presented and discussed. This resulted in the recommendation to balance activities focusing on 'thinking' (i.e. discussions) and activities focusing on 'doing' (i.e. a more practical focus). Coping with this balance had also been an issue in a previous version of the Community Arena in Oud-Charlois (see the case description in Deliverable 4.1 appendix, pp. 33).

On the basis of the outcomes of the pre-arena meeting, the process design was slightly adjusted: deliberative participatory meetings (as suggested by the methodology in phases 2 and 3) and a more action and implementation-oriented experiment (as originally suggested in phase 4) were started simultaneously. Based on the interviews, the preservation and re-opening of the local community centre surged as an important topic. Several residents and professionals had already undertaken initiatives aimed at preventing a closure of the community centre. The community centre, which ultimately closed in January 2012 due to the bankruptcy of the welfare-organization running it, served as a clear symbol for the changing landscape and context of Carnisse (cost reductions, dismantling of old welfare structures and an experienced lack of social cohesion). Because of the importance, the mobilizing energy, and symbolic meaning of the community centre a more practical and tangible process was started (i.e. the Action Arena) around this topic.

3.2.3 Phase 2: Problem structuring & Envisioning

During the first Community Arena meeting, held in February 2012, the participants were given ample time to introduce themselves, and tell about their ties with the neighbourhood as well as their personal reasons for preserving the community centre. The start of the practice-oriented process (i.e. Action Arena) focusing on the community centre earlier the same month, allowed the transition team to frame the Community Arena as a process that puts the developments concerning the community centre in the broader context of the neighbourhood. It was the understanding of the transition team – based on the interviews and the first meetings – that the community centre was a symbol for the state of the neighbourhood and this frame was used in the interaction during the arena meeting. The problem analysis (i.e. system analysis) was presented and the main topics of interests were identified through a group discussion. These were as follows: powerful/-less policy, rich and turbulent history, government cuts, diversity, connections, and maintenance of housing.

The second Community Arena meeting was held in March 2013. The intention of the transition team was to start formulating a vision. Next to the invited frontrunners another eight inhabitants interested in the preservation of the community centre were present. They had heard about this meeting and assumed that it would focus on the community centre (thus being the more practice-oriented process). This showed the great interest in the neighbourhood regarding the preservation of the community centre. The transition team decided to shift the focus of the meeting towards exploring the needs and motivations of the people present in preserving the community centre including actions and activities that could be employed in reopening it. This was one of the attempts to explore the inner context of the participants (see also Section 3.2.6). Also, during this meeting and in the aftermath when sending out the minutes, the transition team explained the differences in the two processes (deliberative versus practical) so as to allow for more transparency with regard to the kinds of meetings that were organized.

Figure 2: Impression of the Community Arena vision of Carnisse

The third Community Arena meeting was held in April 2013 and focused on developing a vision in small group work along the topics agreed upon in the first arena-meeting (i.e. powerful/less policy, history, government cuts, diversity, connection, and maintenance of housing). Two groups were facilitated by a member of the transition team and worked on three topics. After having worked in small groups, each group reported back their elements of a vision within each topic to the plenary. After the session, the transition team was consolidating these elements and was writing up a vision which was send out to the frontrunners before the next arena meeting.

3.2.4 Phase 3: Backcasting, Pathways & Agenda Building

In May 2012, a forth Community Arena meeting was held with a focus on backcasting and developing pathways from the future vision back to the present. The meeting started with a presentation of the vision as send out after the second meeting. The vision was written up along six topics, which were briefly described. These topics were: 1) From living alongside each other… to living with each other, 2) From grey and dirty streets… to a green sustainable oasis, 3) From uniform housing supply… to a varied and multi-functional supply, 4) From a place-less place… to places for everybody, and 5) From planning approaches on the short term… to an integral cooperation approach. All the participants gave feedback and comments. After having reached an agreement on the vision, three small groups worked on exploring pathways for the six topics of the vision. Under guidance of a facilitator, their task was to come up with change elements, specific activities and key actors, which were written down in a scheme (see Table 5).

Table 5: Overview of backcasting-scheme used in Carnisse

What is necessary to achieve this topic? (change elements)	How can this change be realised? (activities)	Who can perform the activity and/or who can support it?	What can be done in short term (2012-2016)?	What must be done on the long term (2016-2030)?
…				
…				

Towards the end, the transition team asked the frontrunners what they would like to do with the presented and developed ideas, vision and pathways. The idea of a neighbourhood conference emerged in a group discussion. All initiatives, residents, entrepreneurs and professionals of the neighbourhood were to be invited to discuss and extend on the vision and the pathways developed so far and to collaboratively come up with a neighbourhood agenda. The intention was spoken out to schedule this event after the summer. A fifth Community Arena meeting is planned in September 2012 which is aimed at preparing the broadening and experimentation phase.

3.2.5 Phase 4: Experimenting & Implementing

As outlined earlier, a more practice-centred process was started in parallel with the deliberative meetings of the Community Arena. In order to contextualise the Community Arena approach as much as possible, on-going policy programs, inhabitant or business initiatives as well as professional efforts in the neighbourhood have been recorded. At the same time, a first analysis of the interviews showed that there was willingness and commitment in the neighbourhood with regard to preventing the closure of the local community centre. This gave the transition team an opportunity to follow up the recommendations of the local frontrunners from the initial process design meeting: accompanying the deliberative process with a more practical one.

During a first Action Arena Meeting, which took place at the beginning of February 2012, the transition team tested the hypothesis of the importance of the community centre and the wish for a reopening. This first meeting resulted in setting up a local action group searching for ways to preserve and re-open the community centre under the control and supervision of the community itself. In a second Action Arena Meeting end of February first activities were employed and research into the financial, institutional and property relations were shared among the participants. In a third Action Arena Meeting at the beginning of March 2012, the group members were updating each other regarding current developments: signature collections, contacts with possible tenants, contact with politicians and the development of a business plan. In a fourth Action Arena Meeting at the end of March 2012, the members of the local action group updated each other again on developments and ongoing actions. Also, a draft version of the business plan was shared and discussed. The group shared insights on the difficulties that the institutional and financial structures of the centre posed.

The centre is built on ground that is owned by the Municipality of Rotterdam, but is also part of the sub-municipality of Charlois. It is the latter who decides on the development plan of the parcel. The building itself is owned by the welfare organisation which went bankrupt end of 2011. The result of these juridical and financial ownership structures (also referred to as the 'Rotterdam construction') is that the building does not currently exist in the administrative books of accountants and nobody takes responsibility of a neglected building that has little financial value.

After the fourth meeting, the core of the local action group stayed in contact through mail and telephone. The main work done was lobbying with different representatives of the sub-municipality, welfare-organizations as well as the municipality. Due to the ownership structure it proved difficult to find the appropriate contact person. The group also concentrated on finding tenants for the long term. Two possible tenants are a kindergarten and a day-care centre, who are currently using the community centre without a clear contract due to the unclear legal situation. In the process of the last 8 months, these organizations have changed owner twice, which complicates the drawing up of a consolidated business plan.

The broader group is also kept up to date via mail but also via the website of Veerkracht Carnisse (see e.g. http://www.veerkrachtcarnisse.nl/read/antenne_item/id/175740/az-update).

Table 6: Overview of physical meetings in Carnisse (until 10.9.2012)

	Date	Meeting	# of participants	Goal	Main facilitation methods	Results
pre-arena	15.11.2011	Process design (phase 1)	5 (1 female, 4 male; from 40 to 65 years)	- Test preliminary problem analysis and collect feedback, comments and input - Discuss local adaptation to process design	Presentation Group discussion	- Recommendations for adaptation of process to local context - Commitment from five frontrunners to the process
AA1	1.2.2012	Initial meeting	4 (4 female, 0 male; from 31 to 40)	- Test hypothesis regarding the preservation of the community centre		- Setting up of a local action group for preservation of the community centre
AA2	22.2.2012	Meeting local action group	2 (2 female; from 31 to 40)	- Employ first activities - Research into background of the community centre		- First insights into financial and institutional structures
A1	22.2.2012	Problem description (phase 2)	10 (4 female, 6 male; from 31 to 74)	- Put developments concerning the community centre into the broader context of the neighbourhood - Test problem description and collect feedback, comments and input - Broaden network	Presentation Group discussion	- Getting to know each other - Agreement on main change topics
AA3	6.3.2012	Meeting local action group	7 (4 female, 3 male; ; from 31 to 50)	- Updating each other on developments - Signature collection - Contacts with possible 'tenants' as well as politicians		- Broadening public support and spreading the word - More insights into financial and institutional structures
A2	15.3.2012	Future vision (phase 2)	10 invited + 8 uninvited	Initially: - Develop future vision	Presentation Group discussion	- Individual needs and motivations with regard to preserving the community

			(9 female, 9 male; from 31 to 74)	*Due to high presence of "uninvited" people interested in the developments regarding the community centre, changed to:* - Explore individual needs and motivations in preserving the community centre	Brainstorming	centre elicited - Connection of the community centre to the main change topics established
AA4	28.3.2012	Meeting local action group	10 (5 female, 5 male; from 31 to 72)	- Updating each other on developments - Discussing first version of business plan		- Broadening network, spreading the word - Exploring first difficulties due to financial and institutional structures
A3	4.4.2012	Future vision (phase 2)	8 (2 female, 6 male; from 31 to 74)	- Develop future vision - Broaden network	Small group work	- Shared vision with regard to the established change topics
A4	16.5.2012	Backcasting (phase 3)	8 (2 female, 6 male; from 31 to 74)	- Test and enrich vision - Develop pathways	Group discussion Prioritisation exercise Small group work	- Shared vision - Linkage of vision and individual priorities for the neighbourhood - Pathways for each of the change topics
A5	6.9.2012	Consolidation and Agenda setting (phase 3)	8 (3 female, 5 male; from 31 to 74)	- Test and enrich final version of vision and pathways - Develop ideas for further broadening and connection to on-going activities - Prioritizing activities	Group discussion	- Vision and pathways shared - Ideas for connection to ongoing activities shared and tasks divided

3.2.6 Reflections on methodology in local context

Local context & policy making

The Community Arena process took place in a turbulent time for Carnisse: not only was the municipal budget cut down, the sub-municipality also invited several tenders for the welfare work. A new welfare-organisation was selected to deliver the services, which caused the existing organisation to go bankrupt. Also the budgets of traditional citizen structures such as inhabitant organisation were cut severely. However, due to its status as a deprived neighbourhood, additional national money was cleared for Carnisse. From these extra funds the Veerkracht-coalition (the additional funding for the InContext activities within Carnisse) is financed.

The extra time that we could invest by having the additional funding, also put us in the spotlights in Carnisse. Why did we receive money while the inhabitants are confronted with budget cuts everywhere and had just seen that two of their community centres were being closed down and several of their welfare and youth workers were being laid-off? Expectations with regard to our work and those of the other members of the Veerkracht-coalition (which were members of the transition team) was critically scrutinized.

Next to the changes mentioned above and due to its status as a deprived neighbourhood, Carnisse has seen a number of participatory processes over the course of the last few years. At the time of writing, next to the Community Arena, there are at least two other participatory processes (apart from a large number of smaller initiatives). One initiated by the sub-municipality with regard to the future of Carnisse with the aim to activate citizens and a second one initiated by a local church in collaboration with a Rotterdam-wide initiative focusing on matching citizens with a direct assistance request to professionals in the neighbourhood (i.e. solving problems that stretch across different domains through an integrated approach). There are clear signals from the participants of the transition arena that they are overwhelmed and frustrated by all the initiatives, processes and activities that are happening in their neighbourhood. For them, most of these initiatives are not connected to each other and are seemingly unrelated. The Community Arena is now working towards bridging different initiatives through connecting these to the new vision for the neighbourhood. For this contact with the municipality has been sought.

Deviation from methodology: Local adaptations

The process in Carnisse deviated from the Community Arena methodology in a number of ways: 1) through introducing a pre-arena, the process was designed collaboratively with the participants, 2) through not introducing 'sustainability' as the word is very value-laden, and 3) through starting with the experimentation phase in parallel with the visioning and backcasting phase.

With regard to the second point, we decided not to use the term sustainability but rather to focus on what we understand as dimensions of sustainability (time, place, variety of actors

and domains). As regards the latter, starting experimentation in parallel was very helpful for the process, as it allowed a shift in levels of abstractness: from the experiment (i.e. the preservation of the community centre) to what it meant for the neighbourhood (i.e. being a symbol for the state of the neighbourhood) and back to what a vision on neighbourhood level meant for the future of the community centre (i.e. is it still relevant?).

Trust & Inner context

Gaining trust of citizens and professionals as well as gaining their commitment to a process that was as open as the Community Arena (i.e. not having a pre-defined goal) was challenging, especially because of the turbulent local context described earlier. As researchers we used several strategies to deal with this. Next to being present (i.e. at official meetings, spending time in the neighbourhood), we also invested time in interviewing a wide range of people and used a collaborative approach to process design (i.e. an exploratory pre-arena meeting). Supportive in this endeavour was the frame of 'action researcher'. Researchers engaging in action, was something previously not known in Carnisse and was a welcomed concept. The fact that we engaged with them in their life worlds made us trustworthy in this environment of suspicion and uncertainty.

Our assumption was that an exploration of the inner context could only be meaningful if the participants had sufficient trust in the process and in the group. We therefore introduced the inner context dimension only step by step during the process. As the open character of the Community Arena was already so different from what inhabitants and professionals were used to, we decided in the beginning to use the community centre as a symbol for the wider neighbourhood. For most of the participants, it was much easier to talk about needs and motivations in relation to a concrete issue (i.e. the community centre) than in relation to the wider neighbourhood. It was during the second arena meeting, focusing more on the community centre, that the inner context of the participants was most explicitly being explored. Not only the facilitators asked laddering-questions, but also the participants asked such questions to other participants (e.g. but why is this important to you?). Once the group had met several times and its members got acquainted with each other and the facilitators (i.e. researchers), the inner context and such laddering-questions became more and more part of the group discussions.

Frontrunners

We performed some 45 interviews with actors in the neighbourhood. Throughout the interviewing process we noticed that we found it rather challenging to define what a frontrunner was in Carnisse. Most of the people are working long hours for their income and do not have or are not willing to spend their spare time participating in a participatory process – for some it was enough to tell their story during the interview. Again others are more concerned with the practical issues: setting up market stalls for the yearly 'summer terrace' or volunteering weekly at the children's playground. Yet another group could be termed 'participation professionals'. They are also sometimes referred to as 'the usual suspects' – inhabitants that have time, know their way in the neighbourhood politics, take their role as citizen seriously and are present at a majority of the participatory processes. In addition, there are those that have interesting ideas for the neighbourhood but have not yet found a

way to channel these. While people from the first category are hard or merely accidental to involve, we have invited people from all other categories to join in the Community Arena process. This diversity causes problems in time management: while some frontrunners are willing to spend a lot of time in the process (e.g. because they find it important, or because they are used to these kind of processes), most have little spare time in their lives and even less time to invest in these processes. It remains challenging to estimate the amount of time that is reasonable for most. On the one hand such a process needs time, but at the same time asking a considerable amount of time may cause participants to abandon the process prematurely. Coping with the time balance had also been an issue in a previous version of the Community Arena in Oud-Charlois (see the case description in deliverable 4.1 appendix, pp. 33).

As stated in paragraph 3.2.2. the selection of participants was based on the actor analysis from the preparation phase (for the identification and selection criteria see paragraph 3.2.2). This step in the process has also been crucial to gain a certain degree of diversity in the group of participants. When we look at this diversity some characteristics of the group are noteworthy. First, there is a mix in different backgrounds; it included welfare-professionals, a primary school teacher, a creative entrepreneur and an artist, while others are first and foremost residents who have interesting ideas and or practices. Of course, all of the participants have a multitude of identities, e.g. being a teacher, a resident, a mother and part of the Muslim community all at the same time. Not every participant lives in Carnisse or even near Carnisse, but all participants share a certain passion for the neighbourhood and are actively involved in improving it. With regard to gender, the group of frontrunners is rather well balanced (slightly more males). However, the group is not that diverse on every characteristic. For example, ethnically the group shows limited diversity, as the large majority were white Dutch persons. With regard to age, this ranged from 30 to 70 years, which is broad but lacks teens and people in their twenties.

Facilitation & Documentation

There was no external facilitator hired for the process. All the sessions were facilitated by the Drift researchers, with exception of the backcasting session, which was facilitated by a researcher from the TUDelft (who is also part of the InContext-project and the transition team). It was a conscious decision not to engage an external professional facilitator, which is due to the issue of trust outlined above. This at the same time meant, that the knowledge of facilitation techniques was diverse but limited.

The sessions were taped and the participants received concise minutes of what has been discussed (i.e. the problem definition, or the elaboration of the vision). These minutes were on the one hand demanded by the participants and on the other very much appreciated. Internal documentation was done by the researchers involved and included activities like updating a reflexive diary, working out the recordings of the sessions and making concise summaries and minutes of the meetings. The same was done for the interviews conducted in the preparation phase. Reports of the interviews were also verified with the respondents and summaries of the interviews were subsequently posted on the Veerkracht-website (for an example, see: http://www.veerkrachtcarnisse.nl/read/antenne_item/id/175156/mensen-moeten-het-gevoel-krijgen-van%3A-%E2%80%98dit-is-mijn-wijk%E2%80%99).

Empowerment & learning

Through being engaged with the Community Arena process, the participants have developed another picture of how engagement and participation can look like. The feedback received from participants was that people had the feeling that they could put items on the agenda through this process as opposed to other participatory processes where they can only give input to existing pre-determined agendas. Setting the agenda was what the participants found motivating and rewarding. Also, there are indications that learning and empowerment took place among individual participants.. Through monitoring interviews and an evaluation meeting the research team hopes to learn more about these kinds of learning and emancipatory insights from the different participants.

3.3 Wolfhagen, Germany

3.3.1 Overview Community Arena process

The Community Arena in the German pilot study is conducted in the city of Wolfhagen, Northern Hesse. Wolfhagen is a small town 30 km west from Kassel. The city area of Wolfhagen is subdivided into a core city with a historical city centre and eleven rural districts. About 13,840 inhabitants are living in the city, about 7,620 of them in the core city. The population in Wolfhagen is declining. It is expected that the town will lose about 6% of its current population by 2020.

A large percentage of the employed persons travel to work – mainly to Kassel or to Baunatal (the site of a VW factory). In the city of Wolfhagen the economy is diverse: retail trade, crafts, car dealers, fragmented trade, traditional and medium-sized industry, and with tendency to rise: innovative small enterprises especially in the energy sector, like energy technology, wood gasification, thermal power stations and energy saving window glass. Studies about prospective economic sectors in Wolfhagen designate the tourism, education and renewable energies sectors as most promising. Wolfhagen is well equipped with public facilities (kindergartens, schools, trade schools, hospital, a retirement home and senior citizen centre, a rural district office, and a police station). Similar to other small towns in Germany, the historic town centre suffers from rising vacancy rates, which is an unsustainable city development. The reasons for the vacancy could be traced back to job losses, demographic change, conflicting monumental protection and changing consumption behaviour. Another reason is a change in space requirements of local citizens, who often prefer to build bigger houses in the surrounding areas than moving to the (inherited or vacant) buildings in the inner city.

The Community Arena process focuses on sustainable inner city development, mainly on vitalizing the historical city centre as a communicative space for all generations. The arena phases 0 – 3 are completed and will be described in the following. Currently, the German arena process is in phase 4 – the experimenting and implementing phase. For an overview of the meetings, see table 8.

3.3.2 Phase 0 & 1 short summary from D4.2

In the pre-preparation phase, the pilot could largely benefit from already existing networks and the cooperation with other scientific projects in the region. The transition team consists of the regional energy consultancy Energie 2000 e.V. and the regional adaptation to climate change project KLIMZUG-Northern Hesse. The pilot also benefits from the support of Wolfhagen's mayor and the local administration.

In the pre-preparation phase, it was planned to focus the pilot on energy issues, especially on energy consumption in private households because a) Wolfhagen is already a frontrunner community in the field of renewable energy production and b) a local parallel project focussing on energy efficiency was seen as a particularly suitable cooperation partner.

Because of a delayed start of the energy efficiency project, the WP4 pilot shifted its focus to sustainable inner city development.

The identification of potential participants for the Community Arena was conducted with the help of the local transition team members and the mayor of Wolfhagen. The selected participants have been interviewed to gather information about perceptions of the community, the quality of live, current and upcoming local issues (e.g. decline of population, demographic change) and also to receive information about other potential participants. In total, 10 interviews have been conducted in the preparation phase. Most of the selected actors are members of non-profit associations on different topics, like associations for environmental protection, social services, etc. In small communities and rural areas, non-profit organisations as well as engaged citizens are often lacking time resources for engaging in new and additional projects. Partly different than in metropolitan areas, engaged citizens in small communities are mainly active in institutionalized structures, like charity organizations. Very often this engagement is quite time consuming and leaves hardly any time for new or other social non-profit activities, especially if they are not in the focus of their own engagement. Most of the potential participants work or are voluntary engaged in such kind of local organisations or initiatives.

The system analysis revealed a varied picture of Wolfhagen. In the actor interviews, a positive view on Wolfhagen was dominant. The interviewees reported a high standard of living and emphasised its central location, closeness to nature, good social, cultural and shopping facilities for basic consumables and the relaxing atmosphere of a small town, which also facilitates communication. During the last ten years, Wolfhagen had to face a number of structural changes, which influenced its inner city development. This included the closing of the local Bundeswehr barracks and the following conversion of the area, the dislocation of the regional registry office and county court in the course of restructuring the regional administration bodies. This led to a decrease in the number of jobs and customers in the inner city. Together with the consequences of demographic change and changing consumption behaviour, this has led to a decreasing attractiveness of the historic city centre, because of vacancies in both residential and commercial premises.

The interviewees reported problematic developments in the city, like a lack of meeting facilities especially for young people, the decay of the historic city centre (caused by vacancies), demographic changes and a lack of good gastronomic facilities (which also were seen as important meeting points both for private and business purposes). The vitalisation of the inner city was seen as a crucial future task. Other tasks which were mentioned during the interviews focused on job creation, the development of a specific local image (e.g. family friendly city Wolfhagen), preserving the high standard of living (which includes also the infrastructure) and the development of services for young people.

3.3.3 Phase 2: Problem structuring &envisioning

All interviewees were invited to a first meeting in Wolfhagen. The meeting took place 17 November 2011 with nine participants (six male and three female, ages 20-78). The meeting started with a round of introduction, a short presentation of the InContext project, its focus on sustainability and the outcomes of the interviews. Some of the participants already knew

each other, but not all of them had met before. After this introduction, the participants discussed about their perceptions of their community, how living in Wolfhagen meets their and others personal needs and also focussed on current and future desires. For the future, participants mentioned the wish for more environmental friendly mobility, e.g. cycle tracks between the city centre and the districts and improved public transport services. Others reported their attempts to maintaining non-industrial farming in the surroundings. Additionally, critiques on the gap between own attitudes and behaviour were mentioned, for example concerning positive attitudes about a regional food market versus their own consumption behaviour. The creation and maintaining of jobs in the region was seen as an important aspect of the regional development. After an intensive debate about the differentiation of wishes, the group agrees on focussing on the topic sustainable living in the inner city in the following meetings.

3.3.4 Phase 3: Backcasting, Pathways & Agenda Building

The second meeting took place on 26 January 2012 and focused on developing a positive perception of the future and its pathways to fulfil this idea (backcasting and the definition of transition paths). Eleven participants (five male / six female, age: ~17-78) joined the meeting.

After a short round of introduction for welcoming the new participants, card techniques were used for collecting requirements and needs for a more sustainable inner city. The cards revealed a greatly differentiated picture of needs and requirements, e.g. strengthening of regional awareness combined with regional consumption, vitalizing of the inner city (more places for communication and meeting) etc. Some of the different needs and requirements can be explained by the age range of the participants, e.g. mobility needs, appropriate housing for independent living in old age, meeting and leisure spaces for families etc.

In a second step, the participants were divided in small groups to discuss their future visions in more depth and to develop ideas about how to gain these aim(s). As described in the methodological guidelines (Deliverable 4.1, p. 35), the participatory backcasting focused on the year 2030. For facilitating the participants to focus on this year, a short introduction was given by one of the moderators. After the small group discussion, the groups presented their results in different ways, some preferred a flip chart presentation (group 1and 2), oral presentation (group 3) or through role-play (group 4).

- Group 1 presented a series of ideas focusing on leisure, mobility, gastronomy, culture and social contact by new social networks and ideas about a local car sharing system.
- Group 2 concentrated on measures to vitalize the inner city by restructuring the library (e.g. additional café), new parkways and leisure centres.
- Group 3 did not focus on the year 2030 but started to plan an indoor leisure centre for young and old in the inner city.
- Group 4 addressed the topic "vital city for all generations" which includes measures like modifying architectural conservation and reducing barriers to facilitate / enable new forms of housing in the historic city centre. Other issues included a better public transport system (more on-demand services) and expansion of the cycle paths

between the core city and the rural districts to enable environmentally friendly mobility by the year 2030.

In sum, the participants' ideas were very close to reality, which means that the future visions were not very different from the status quo but more or less focussed on some improvements regarding the infrastructure, esp. communicative and leisure spaces in the inner city. During the discussions and presentations the need for more communication and meeting places turned out to be dominant. Also the wish for an inclusive city (for young and old, singles and families), different mobility and living needs were mentioned. Sticking close to reality in the visioning process could be explained by the short time frame (2030) which on the one hand is short enough to be an imaginable time period for planning but also might be too close to imagine fundamental changes. Another reason could be seen in the great satisfaction and high standard of living, which was reported by the participants which means that there might be no need for a fundamental change. At the end of the meeting the group members reported their motivation to continue their participation.

The third meeting had to face the challenging task of putting the ideas into practice and to develop a transition agenda. The meeting was held on 29 March 2012, and was attended by five participants (three male / two female, age: ~35-70), focusing on the ranking of needs, concretization of ideas and project planning. The relatively small number of participants was due to other participatory processes which took part in the community in very close temporal relation, so some participants did not attend because of time constrains.

Firstly, the needs and wishes chart which was set up in the first meeting, was presented again and the participants had the opportunity to rank them by distributing points. Secondly, the ideas that were presented in the second workshop were presented and discussed regarding their potential to meet the needs.

Table 7: Needs and group visions in the German pilot

Needs	Group visions / ideas
Regional awareness → **1 point**	**Group 1: Networking and communicative city 2030**
Regional sustainable consumption → **2 points**	• mobility: car sharing, internet portal
	• gastronomy and culture
Vitalizing the inner city → **4points**	• reopening of a local gastronomy building plus culture →**2 points**
Housing for independent living in old age → **1 point**	
	Group 2: Vitalized inner city 2030
City image (family friendly city) → **1 point**	• library and café →**2 points**

Communication spaces for families (inside and outside) → **1 point**	• music room • leisure and sports • parkway →**1 point**
	Group 3: New indoor leisure centre plus café • for young and older →**1 point**
	Group 4: Living and housing in Wolfhagen2030 • multiple generation housing→**1 point** • modernized housing in the historic city centre (half-timbered houses and new buildings) →**2 points** • hiking trail system (districts) →**1 point** • public transport (enables car free living) • social services

Three ideas received the same score ("reopening of a gastronomy building as a cultural / social meeting point", "library and café", "modern living in the inner city") and were discussed in detail. In the selection debate about how to combine different interests and options for putting them into practice, the idea of reopening the vacant building turned out to be the favourite. The transition agenda defining process was structured by the following questions:

- What is needed for the implementation?
- Who is needed for the implementation?
- Who wants to contribute to what?
- Which needs should be addressed by the project? And whose needs?
- How does the implementation project contribute to more sustainability?

The group decided to focus on the reopening of a vacant building as a socio-cultural meeting point including gastronomy. In the further discussion, some aspects for the concretisation of the projects were addressed, e.g. cooperation with the local trading association, the municipal authority, the owner of the building, potential lessees. In the experimenting and implementing phase (see below), the needs of other local groups or associations should be inquired and considered in the planning.

All participants of the transition agenda meeting declared their willingness to contribute to the implementation of the project. Also participants from the former meetings will be invited to play an active role in the further planning. The group aims to meet regularly (every six weeks). Next step will be an appointment for viewing with the owner of the building, which will be organized by one group member, who has private contact to the owner. The next workshop is planned to take part in March 2013, unless the group feels the need for an additional meeting.

3.3.5 Experimenting and Implementing

The implementation project focuses on the reopening of the vacant building with gastronomy and cultural offers. The project was discussed with regard to its potential to contribute to rising awareness and fostering more sustainable behaviour. From the perspective of environmental sustainability, the project offers several options, which have been mentioned in the group discussions: gastronomy with regional and mainly organic food, shop for regional and organic products. The building should be renovated to fulfil low impact standards and the operation of the building should aim to be CO_2 neutral. Additionally, it should be examined if the waste of the gastronomy could be used for producing energy (e.g. in cooperation with a local biomass plant).

Regarding social sustainability aspects, the project aims at becoming a meeting place for all generations also including family-friendly offers. The building should also be used for education activities, like exhibitions (e.g. regional food production, farming life) or discussions and cultural events. The gastronomy service might cooperate with the already existing local cultural centre and increase the attractiveness of both establishments. An additional idea was a notice board and the use of rooms for the exchange of services (non-monetary exchange). From an economic perspective, the operation of gastronomy contributes to local job creation and could also have positive effects on tourism (e.g. supporting the existing camp mobile and cycle tourism). Additionally regional farming products may be sold in the gastronomy.

The local project group started their work immediately after the transition workshop. They already visited the vacant building and had two meetings with the owner of the building to discuss the group's ideas and options of implementation.

Monitoring interviews with the group members are planned for Autumn / Winter 2012. These interviews should reveal information about the project's state of the art and also offer insights on the development of the group, social and individual learning processes, group dynamics and internal and external influencing aspects.

The Wolfhagen public was informed about the workshops by an article in the local pages of the regional newspaper (Hessische/NiedersächsischeAllgemeine, 28 January 2012).

Table 8: Overview of physical meetings in Wolfhagen

Date	Meeting	# of participants	Goal	Main facilitation methods	Results
17.11.2011	Problem structuring and Envisioning (phase 2)	9 (3 female, 6 male), age: 20-78	- Discussion about local needs and perceptions - Defining workshop focus	- Presentation (InContext) - Group discussion - Brainstorming (using cards)	- Getting to know each other - Focus on topic: sustainable inner city development - Commitment from all participants to join the process
26.1.2012	Backcasting& Transition paths (phase 3)	11 (6 female, 5 male), age: 17-78	- Discussion about needs, requirements & own behaviour - Building future visions of a more sustainable community - Ideas for implementation projects	- Group & small group discussion - Card technique - Presentation (group members): flip chart, oral presentation and role play	- Identifying needs & requirements - Future vision - Ideas for implementation projects
29.3.2012	Agenda Building (phase 3)	5 (2 female, 3 male)	- Develop a transition agenda - Agreement on implementation project - Enabling the group for implementation process	- Presentation - Group discussion - Evaluation (card rating)	- Agreement on implementation process - Agreement on group members and proceedings of group meetings

3.3.6 Reflections on methodology in local context

Local context & policy making

The community of Wolfhagen has to face severe challenges (like many other similar communities in Germany): decline of population, demographic change, shrinking communal budgets etc. But the community is also a well-known frontrunner in the field of renewable energies with ambitious aims of becoming a renewable energy community. This transformation process includes ongoing participation processes and debates. But is has led to local conflicts, especially regarding the construction of a new local wind park.

On the one hand, such a front running position in the energy sector could work as a facilitator for conducting transition management for sustainability issues. On the other hand it contains the risk of facing participation fatigue or getting involved in the existing local conflicts (which has not happened so far). Local support is a crucial aspect for any kind of research in small communities, because it usually works as an inroad for getting in contact with local citizens. Also in this case, the support by local stakeholders was important, not only for the identification of participants and their motivation to participate but also in terms of logistical support (rent-free rooms for meetings).

Methodological Remarks

The Wolfhagen case study was conducted without any additional funding from external sources. Therefore, the process was designed more condensed than the other case studies and focuses on implementing only one sustainability project in the arena.

All potential participants were contacted by email or by phone, which has led to a high response rate (only one person refused an interview due to an illness). Further participants were informed and motivated by participants of the interviews and workshops. Regarding the age range and gender distribution the pilot groups cover a broad range.

The researcher's role in the process is diverse - to a certain extend the moderator and researcher were seen as the group's evaluators and being asked for their opinion as 'experts' or for giving feedback on comments during discussions. This is a crucial point in the process because on the one hand action research aims on an equal power shift between researchers and participants but on the other hand, the researcher was seen as an expert for 'sustainability' issues which gives her a prominent status within the group. The challenge for the researcher / moderator in the process lies in fulfilling different roles by simultaneously avoiding unwillingly influences on group process e.g. by giving 'expert opinions'. Therefore, transparency is one of the most important aspects in the workshops, which include transparency about the projects' methodological and theoretical approaches to enable the participants to understand and interpret researchers' statements and actions and being able to interact in the process.

Trust & Inner Context

Beside empowering participants in the group processes, transparency is also a crucial aspect for building trust in the group process. For the workshops' development and moderation psychological and/or social scientific knowledge (ethnological, pedagogical and similar scientific fields) are essential to investigate and analyse group processes adequately.

The support of the local authorities was an important enabler for initiating the research process. The participatory approach allowed a high degree of process transparency and agenda setting power, which was another trust building aspect. In the feedback sessions at the end of the workshops participants' reported that they had the feeling to be heard and to be given the opportunity to do something new. Additionally, the atmosphere during the workshops was described as being very respectful.

The diverse interests and engagement backgrounds of the participants led to intensive discussions about how to reach sustainability in the own implementation project. Regarding the depth of debate and group behaviours (respectfulness, high interest in learning from each other, high motivation to participate), the process is characterized by a high quality of knowledge and high standard of discussion culture and transparency. This openness facilitates critical reflection of own behaviours, like the above-described gap between sustainability awareness and consumption behaviour. The monitoring interviews will reveal more information about inner context issues.

Frontrunners

Due to already existing network structures to local stakeholders it was not difficult to gain support by the community, which also facilitated the identification of potential participants. During the preparation phase ten interviews have been conducted with local citizens who were identified to be actively engaged in social, cultural issues or other fields of civil society. The crucial aspect for the selection of participants lies in the challenge not to invite "participation professionals" (like representatives from NGOs which are highly involved in local decision making processes) but to interest people who are engaged in different societal fields (e.g. member of a support group of a local school) and who have their centre of life in the city. Being connected to the local community is important for the participants' ability to work as multiplicators for sustainability ideas.

The number of interviews was kept small so that all interviewees could be invited to the workshops. Selection or rejection of potential participants was avoided to prevent the impression of being a non-transparent process. Due to ongoing conflicts in participatory processes for a new local wind park, this precautionary measure was necessary.

Facilitation & Documentation

The workshops were conducted with three people (one moderating researcher, one external moderator and 1 research assistant). The number was small enough not to give the

participants the feeling of being investigated, but it was sufficient to allow for flexibility in the methods applied (e.g. working in small groups, etc.).

During the workshops the research assistant recorded the main arguments of the discussions. Additionally, all visualization materials (card sorting posters, flip chart noticesetc.) were collected. After each workshop, the participants received a short result protocol.

Empowerment & learning

These kinds of workshops were new to all participants. In their feedback, they highlighted the good atmosphere, which enabled a rich discussion. They also reported that they have learned that more sustainability could be into practice and were looking forward to the implementation process. More information about individual learning processes etc. will be revealed by the monitoring interviews.

4 Reflections

Clearly, this deliverable focuses on the *process* rather than on the substantive outcomes of implementing a Community Arena approach in the three pilot areas.

Mirroring this, the reflection section focuses in a first part on the methodology. The second part introduces an outlook to the kind of themes that are emerging from the empirical basis that the WP4-partners aim to focus on in the coming year.

4.1 On methodology

Distinctive and structured as well as flexible and open

In general the methodology proved to be flexible and open enough to account for the context-specificity of three different settings (i.e. urban/rural setting, Dutch/German/Austrian setting).

The methodology is experienced as being distinct from other methodological approaches (i.e. regional management tools, local Agenda 21 processes) by policy stakeholders. This proved essential in gaining support for an open-ended process without pre-defined outcomes in Finkenstein. In Wolfhagen, the participants considered the transparency in selecting methodological tools (i.e. vision building process, visualisation of aims) as helpful for structuring the debate and leading to purposeful outcomes.

The pilot projects in both Finkenstein and Wolfhagen conducted the process following the five phases consecutively. This allows for a broader vision before ranking concrete ideas for implementation. At the same time, local dynamics such as concrete ideas for experimentation or a wish for quick implementation and action by participants might ask for an approach where the phases are implemented in parallel. This was the case in Carnisse, where the process started with a concrete experiment, the development of which was put into the broader context of a long-term vision for the neighbourhood. This mirrors findings from earlier action research in the long-term care sector in the Netherlands (Van den Bosch 2010, appendix of Deliverable 4.1), where experiments have been started in parallel with the more deliberative meetings.

Facilitation

Facilitation, meaning running the actual arena meeting, has been approached differently in the pilots. In both Wolfhagen and Finkenstein, the arena meetings were facilitated by the leading researcher and an external co-moderator. In Carnisse, the process was facilitated by the two leading researchers themselves. The researchers acted in all three pilots also as facilitators but other than a professional external facilitator always against the background of the research framework. In general we can conclude that having more than one person

facilitating or moderating the process enables a better focus on the content and process as well as eases working in small groups.

Starting from the viewpoint that all methods used during deliberative meetings need the participants' acceptance makes introduction of more specific methodological approaches or facilitation methods necessary. These introductions enable participants to take a decision or withdraw from the process. Feeling comfortable is a crucial aspect for enhancing open discussions.

Facilitating a Community Arena process, which includes introspection on part of the participants, asks for a number of skills. Next to moderation skills, knowledge about local conditions and developments are important assets in directing the process and gaining acceptance by the participants. Having a background in social sciences or psychology certainly enhance the aptness of the researcher in dealing with the local dynamics (power dynamics, issues of hierarchy, etc.) and may facilitate a critical self-reflection with regard to moderation style and the own influence on the outcomes. In addition being trained in different moderation techniques allows for access to a range of techniques out of which a context-sensitive selection can be made.

The actors involved: transition team and frontrunners

The role of the transition team was realized differently in the three pilot areas. In Finkenstein, a broad transition team was put together including organisational and institutional representatives that could ensure the embedding of the outcomes into the local structure. The main task of the transition team was understood as supporting the implementation phase. Due to this understanding, the eager team had a somewhat longer idle phase in the beginning of the process. In Wolfhagen, the main task of the transition team was understood as supporting the researcher in the preparation phase. Consequently, the transition team provided information about potential participants and on-going local processes. During the invitation process the cooperation with local stakeholders was important for the researcher to be taken serious and regarded as trustworthy by the potential participants. This involved that the process was meant to have positive impacts on local level, going beyond social experimentation for research purposes. In Carnisse, the transition team fulfilled both roles, supporting the preparation phase as well as the implementation phase. Important in all three processes was respect as well as trust between the researchers, the arena participants and the transition team enabling open debates. Choosing members for the transition team is a first interference with the local power balance: whom to include and whom not to include are delicate questions that need to be taken seriously.

In none of the three pilots was the term 'frontrunner' actively used. In Finkenstein, the Community Arena consisted of active citizens with great caution being taken that they had no political ties or other representative commitments. The participants were addressed as ordinary citizens, even though perceived as frontrunners by the researchers. It was assumed, that addressing the participants as 'frontrunner' would not reflect their self-perception and was therefore not adequate. In Wolfhagen active citizens from different fields of action were involved in the arena process and were not referred to as frontrunner. Some of the participants were also actively involved in politics (but only in the rural districts, not in

the core city which was in the focus of the arena process) in different parties. In Carnisse, the arena consisted of citizens, professionals and entrepreneurs. They were addressed not as frontrunners but as having an important role in the shaping of the future of Carnisse. While in earlier sector-specific transition management processes (e.g. Loorbach & Rotmans 2010), the identification and nomination of frontrunners as such helped in increasing commitment, the InContext-researchers chose to not use this designation in the context of communities. Taking into account the more intimate relations as well as the existence of a (to the outsider) hidden power structure in geographically bound living environments led the researchers to strive for more explicit criteria in selecting participants (e.g. citizens with interesting ideas for the future, entrepreneurs being active for their neighbourhood).

The early direct involvement of power representatives in the discussions, especially the vision building process, bears the risk of reducing the debate to one that focuses on budgetary and legal constraints instead of building upon the rich imagination of the participants. An involvement at a later stage (such as during the implementation phase) is important to ensure follow up (see e.g. the composition of the transition team in Finkenstein). To ensure local acceptance of the agenda as well as the experiments, linking the arena discussions to ongoing local as well as broader debates is fruitful. In the follow up, this could also lead to a wider participation of local actors.

4.2 On emerging topics

Based on the outcomes of an interactive discussion of the WP4-partners in Vienna in May 2012 as well as on the pilot-specific reporting including reflections in this deliverable, a range of topics was identified as being of interest for further research.

The topics are clustered under three themes: 1) methodology (including topics leading to an improved methodology or more critical reflections upon it), 2) process (including reflections upon the process of the Community Arena and its follow up) and 3) issues (including reflections on substantive issues surging from the empirical data).

During the project meeting in Finkenstein in September 2012, a first prioritisation crystallised. The research partners highlighted issues of particular interest, based on their empirical data, their experiences of the processes in their pilot areas as well as their theoretical interests (highlighted in blue in Table 9). These are to be developed further in the coming deliverables.

Table 9: Overview of topics to be researched further

Methodology	Process	Issues
Concept of the 'frontrunner' (identifying, selective participation, ...)	Role of funding agency (who initiates the process, co-funding, …)	Relationship individual and institutions (blurring divisions between individuals and institutions, …)
Facilitation (methods, 'facilitator', group dynamics, abstract deliberative discussions vs. practical activities,...)	Role of the researcher (legitimacy, self-reflection, power relations, intimacy, trust, normativity ...) and of the transition team	Legitimacy of the Community Arena process and its outcomes (the vision/pathways, group) (democracy, …)
Conceptualization of sustainability (use of concept/word, emerging definition, …)	Role of local politicians and local government (co-funding, part of transition team, not involved, …)	How local is local(questions of scale, …) and the role of space and time
Addressing the internal context (needs, capabilities, intrinsic processes…)	Change in behaviour and perceptions (individuals, arena group, broader society)	Social infrastructures in times of austerity (meeting places, social capital, …)
Steps of the methodology: problem description (systemic view, system analysis, …)	Arena group as actor (group formation, group identity, ...)	Critical reflections on issues of ethnicity, age, gender and class (relating to power, …)
Steps of the methodology: envisioning (dictatorship of the present, …)	Development of new perspectives leading to action as well as changes in the way of thinking (interpretive frames, system thinking, …)	Empowerment and learning
Steps of the methodology: Backcasting	Diffusion and impact (anchoring, changes in individual/group discourses, in behaviour, in activities, …)	Social work and the Community Arena methodology
Steps of the methodology: Experiments and actions (anchoring, …)		Direct results and their measurement
Steps of the methodology: Monitoring (by whom, what, how …)		
Does the methodology work in different contexts (national, urban, rural, cultural)		
Intensity of the trajectory (amount of meetings, impact with regard to participant's life, …)		
Embedding the process in institutional and cultural context (preparation phase, during implementation and with regard to follow ups, construction of legitimacy…)		

5 Looking forward

In the months to come, the partners of WP4 will concentrate on the monitoring activities as well as on the last two deliverables.

Monitoring interviews in autumn/winter 2012

Now that the facilitated process is coming to an end, the researchers concentrate on having monitoring interviews with the participants of the Community Arena meetings. The interview guide is drawn up and adapted to the local contexts, which is necessary due to the fact that the process went different in all three pilots. These interviews focus on a number of issues such as: state of affairs in the experiments, group indicators (evaluation of work, structure and process), individual indicators (motivation, satisfaction, engagement) and learning processes.

Evaluation meeting in spring 2013

Following the implementation and experimentation phase, there will be an evaluation meeting in Spring 2013 with the original Community Arena group to evaluate the process, structure, outcome and impact on different levels. The WP4-partners draw up a common framework for this workshop, which can then be adapted to the local context. Collaboration with WP2 is also sought for drawing up this framework.

Deliverable 4.4., year 3 report in May 2013

This deliverable describes the process and first insights from the monitoring interviews as well as the evaluation meeting for each pilot. Next to an evaluation of the actions on community level with regard to addressing societal challenges, it will come back to the issues defined in Section 4.2.

Deliverable 4.5, synthesis report in July 2013

This deliverable is the pilot specific synthesis report and gathers the outcomes of the pilots including drawing lessons for an improvement of the methodology. It includes a reflection of the suitability of WP2 and WP3 concepts for the analysis of WP4 outcomes.

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