FINAL REPORT

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Dashboard aimed at decision-makers and citizens in place management, within SD principles

SCIENCE FOR A SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
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FRAMEWORK OF THE RESEARCH AND RESEARCH TEAM

The final report at hand is the result of a two year research project (January 2006 – January 2009) called **Topozym** (http://www.topozym.be). This acronym was composed of 'topos' (Greek for place) and 'enzyme' (a biomolecule that catalyses chemical reactions). Indeed, Topozym wants to act as a trigger for change in the five public place management projects that were studied and supported as case studies and for other projects that will use the results of the Topozym action research.

The Topozym project was financed by the 'Science for a Sustainable Development' programme (Transversal Research) of the **Belgian Science Policy** (http://www.belspo.be/ssd).

The Topozym research was conducted by a research network of three main and one additional partner. Many academic disciplines were represented in the research team. Although all partner institutions were involved in all research tasks, each partner held the final responsibility for either the research part or the action-training part of the Topozym project.

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Additional partner – *training*:
    Because of linguistic skills (Dutch/French) the team collaborated with **VormingPlus Antwerpen**. While final responsibility remained in the hands of the IEP, the training sessions for the two Flemish case studies were prepared and conducted by trainers of VormingPlus Antwerpen (Luk Scheers, Annelies Santens, Kris Verheyen).

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

RESEARCH CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

Since the coining of the term by the Brundtland World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987, the idea of an urgent need for 'sustainable development' has received worldwide political and scientific attention. The label of 'sustainability' became known to all and Agenda 21 flourished internationally putting the idea of sustainability into practice. However, the complex concept of 'sustainable development' covers many principles. A univocal definition of the term does not exist and different interpretations have been criticised and replaced by others over time.[1] In trying to put the idea of 'sustainability' into practice, many questions have arisen. Topozym wants to bring these questions down to the small scale of (Belgian) management projects and the use of public places and spaces.[2] What does 'sustainability' mean for this particular sector and how can its principles be implemented in public place management?

During our research, we became familiar with many *public place management projects in Belgium*, which either refer to the idea of 'sustainability' as one of the projects' goals or which clearly undertake sustainable actions without explicitly labelling them as such. Efforts have been made and tools and methods invented to increase the sustainability of public place management. However, we have also noticed that the term 'sustainability' is sometimes improperly used because it seems to be a 'fashionable label'. We have also seen several projects where one single aspect of sustainability is taken into account, but others pushed aside (for example, ecological efforts without taking the socio-cultural environment into account). Although a participative approach and the involvement of citizens in these kinds of projects have been indicated as an important condition for efficient, sustainable projects, this idea seems very difficult to put into practice. We could thus state that the road to sustainable public place management is still long in some cases. The Topozym project studied possible obstacles on this road and looked for means to overcome them.

Although changing ideas on sustainability and the practices of stakeholders of public place management projects is already an ambitious project, there are stakeholders wanting to go even further and to sensitise people (through their project) in order to encourage them to adopt sustainable behaviour in all aspects of daily life. This wish to sensitise and cause *behavioural change* in favour of sustainable development – or sustainable development as an attitude – has been taken to heart by the Topozym team: the Topozym project focuses on education towards more sustainable development in and beyond public place management projects. The emphasis placed on attitudinal and behavioural change is a response to today's urgent need to define new ways of raising awareness regarding

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[1] Some authors (see, for example, Latouche, 1986, 2006; Rist, 1996; Sachs, 1996) even suggest the term should no longer be used because of its limits and dangers. In part 1.2. and in annex 1, we discuss this concept in a more detailed way.

[2] Further on in this report we will refer to management projects and the use of public places and spaces as 'public place management' projects. In this all-embracing term, 'management' should be understood as a broad term, including (re)construction, maintenance and use, and 'place' should be read as 'places and spaces'. The distinction between 'place' and 'space' has not been lost sight of. In the first chapter of this report (part 1.1.), we will elaborate further on this distinction.

everyone's responsibilities at the local and global level to manage and use public places and spaces in a sustainable way.

> The **aim of the Topozym project** can thus be summarised as follows:
>   to help evolve the concepts, practices and behaviour of stakeholders
>   of public place management projects
>   towards more sustainable development.

THE DASHBOARD AND OTHER RESEARCH TARGETS

The main research product is a user-friendly *dashboard* for people who can influence the behaviour of stakeholders (such as community animators, local development agents or people working in the educational sector). The dashboard should help them design and/or evaluate efficient and coherent participative steps for territorial, sustainable governance of public places and spaces. This tool is being disseminated to actors that can immediately use it in the field. It can be found (in French) on the Topozym website (http://www.topozym.be).

This report will not be a mere repetition of the contents of the dashboard in a different form. Whereas the dashboard is a practical, user-friendly tool, this *final report* is meant for researchers and other persons wishing to understand the methodological and theoretical background of this dashboard. In this report, we will also answer the following two research questions[3]:
1. Which principles and actions can improve the sustainability of public place management projects?
2. How can an intervention like Topozym's try to change the behaviour of stakeholders of public place management projects towards sustainability?

Because of the specific Topozym methodology, which we call "action-training-research", the research aim will not only be met via the dissemination of the dashboard, this report and other (scientific) publications, but also through *other research action* projects. It should be kept in mind that because of the choice of this specific methodology, not only do the actual results count, but also the processes that were put in motion and the behavioural changes the Topozym actions have encouraged. Of major importance was the training-action component of the Topozym research: the facilitating[4] of five actual public place management projects (case studies) aimed at (a) an improvement in the sustainability of the five projects in question, (b) a confrontation with new approaches that could change the behaviour of participants with regard to other (future) projects, and (c) the construction of a learning community in each case, which would in time become an autonomous and durable community. The training sessions certainly offered opportunities to change the ideas, practices and even the behaviour of the stakeholders of the five case studies. The goal was not only the modification of the practices and behaviour of these stakeholders, but of all persons involved in the project (trainers, researchers, follow-up committee, participants in the international seminar, users of the dashboard and readers of

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[3] See chapter three for a detailed description of these questions and their answers.

[4] The training program implies a facilitative approach and a co-production of changes and thus fits the methods and tools used during the group sessions.

this report). In this way, the perpetuation of the effects of the Topozym research in the future should be ensured, 'sustainability' being the background and overall target of all actions.

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

The aim of this report will be to retrace the Topozym project and to answer a series of specific research questions. A short *first introductory chapter* will present the theoretical convictions that form the background of the methodology and of the contents of this report. The methodology of the different research and training actions, especially that of the case studies, will be discussed in detail in the *second methodological chapter*. Reflections on the search for a balance between action and research and on the position of all parties involved in action research on public place management are integrated into this methodological chapter. In the *third results chapter* we will answer the two research questions raised in this report. Because not all results of the Topozym project can be inserted into this written report, six special *boxes* throughout the report will focus on other important actions/products of the Topozym project, specifically details of the five case studies and the dashboard. These boxes are inserted respectively in the methodological and in the results chapter. The aim of the *annexes* of this report is not only to illustrate or explain arguments of this report, but because most of them are extracts from the dashboard, they also illustrate the style and philosophy of that dashboard.[5]

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[5] The annexes consisting of files from the dashboard are in French. The position of these files in the dashboard will always be indicated in a footnote.

Chapter 1
POSITIONING WITH REGARD TO KEY CONCEPTS

Looking at the Topozym research objective – to help evolve the concepts, practices and behaviour of stakeholders of public place management projects towards more sustainable development – different concepts need clarifying. Because these key concepts can be defined in many ways, positioning oneself in relation to these concepts is a necessary first step. Indeed, terminological choices specify the way these concepts are interrelated and thus also determined the way the Topozym research was conducted. In this first chapter, we will not go as far as defining these key concepts, but we will present our epistemological position during the research.

1.1.   MANAGEMENT AND USE OF PUBLIC PLACES AND SPACES

The Topozym project focused on *public* space. This is space that belongs to the public domain and that has been assigned a public use (Merlin & Choay, 1988). This space is often managed by public authorities. The public space thus comes to represent an area where the government capacity for taking care of the 'common good' is demonstrated (when they manage it in a correct and sustainable way and when they create a sound framework for its use). However, the government or other organisations or persons in charge of the space or a certain project in the space, are not the only actors in these spaces. The public nature of a space generally leads to the involvement of a variety of users who become participants in the production of this space through the use they make of it.[6] The public nature of the space also allows for meeting 'the Other' (Schmitz, 2007). An important factor in maintaining the public profile of that space is the construction of a network of all stakeholders, including the weakest users who might not be heard automatically, at all stages of the existence of the public space and during any project relating to it.

These stakeholders need to recognise the public *space* in question as a public *place*, a 'place' being a particular 'space' that is overlaid with meaning by a group or individuals. In other words, a place is more than its material characteristics, it is also a site of intersecting social relations, meanings and collective memory (Johnston et al., 2005; see also Tuan, 1977). In summary, "place = space + meaning" (Harrison & Dourish, 1996). The different significations and meanings of a place can be based on the materiality of the place, its functions, the people occupying it, its historical and mythical events and/or the personal experience of its stakeholders (see Schmitz, 2003). In this approach to and via the place we must not be blind to the different – sometimes dangerous – ways of appropriating and using public places. In some cases, public places can become 'territories' of certain groups or stakeholders, when the public nature of these places is threatened. When working on the sustainability

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[6] Several groups of persons involved in public place management projects can be enumerated. In this report, when talking about '*actors*' we mean: people in charge, having a certain responsibility in that public space. The group of '*stakeholders*' consists of all actors, users (residents or visitors) and other persons involved in or influenced by the project or place in question. This notion of 'stakeholder' can be used for either an individual or a collective actor/user that has a legitimate interest in the (space of the) project. Note that each stakeholder's role can evolve throughout the project.

of public place management, we need to be careful that these places do not become 'exclusive' and that the public nature of the place, with its co-presence of 'Others', is maintained.

1.2.   SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

'Sustainable development' is more of a quest than it is a well-defined concept. Indeed, the notion is in perpetual construction: it is a subject of debate, presents various limits[7] and should be adapted to the place, public and context it is applied to. Possible definitions are often determined by the experience and area of interest of the author of the definition. Within Topozym, the focus on the management and use of public places and spaces helped delimit the possible meanings of the concept, but an extensive literature search and several workshops within the Topozym team discussing different concepts related to sustainability have not led to a Topozym definition. Instead, this study clearly showed that different definitions may be equally interesting and complementary. What should thus be avoided at all costs when trying to formulate an interpretation of 'sustainable development' is dogmatism or a normative stance. Nevertheless, 'sustainable development' can be useful as a reference framework: positioning oneself vis-à-vis principles that characterise sustainability can help to reflect upon personal practices or practices within a collective project.

In order to facilitate a shared understanding of the concept within the Topozym team, a (self-assessment) grid retaining five main principles of sustainability was created. As already stated, avoiding a normative stance towards the concept has always been a major concern for the Topozym team, but the grid's principles and criteria have been judged useful by several experts and stakeholders for enriching visions and drawing out paths towards more sustainable public place management. These principles and criteria will be described in the third chapter (part 3.1.1). In short, 'development' could be defined as a 'positive evolution'. In most cases, this translates as the maintenance or the improvement of the qualities of the public place in question. Starting from the idea that public space transforms anyway – being the object of an intervention or not, being used or not – it is important not to leave this transformation prey to the risks of time and men, but to agree upon a pro-active vision for the place. Basic ideas behind 'sustainability' are, for example, a holistic and ethically sound attitude; not acting rashly; searching for coherence (for example, between the social, cultural, ecological and economic dimensions of development); and a multidisciplinary approach, involving a multitude of stakeholders.

In this report, it will become clear that much attention was directed towards this multitude of stakeholders – in other words (**citizen**) **participation** – as an important principle of sustainable public place management. This focus was based on the facts that the main expertise of the Topozym team members lies in this field and that participation appeared to be one of the main concerns of most of

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[7] The goal of this report is not to analyse the notion in detail or to synthesise the different debates it has evoked. Topozym has used the concept, which is well-known and has a great communicational value, as a reference framework, taking notice of and being warned by the different limits and dangers discussed in the literature. In the first annex of this report, one view on the limits of this concept is given. Examples of limits of the concept are (1) the equation of 'development' and (economic) growth; (2) the danger of the three pillar model as support for an autonomic and dominant economical sphere; (3) the hegemonic nature of the notion of 'sustainable development'. See, for example, Bouvier (2008) and Centre of Sustainable Development (2006).

the stakeholders involved in the case studies.[8] Opportunities for participative action by citizens do not only allow appropriation by the participants of the public place in question, enhancement of the quality of plans and projects and facilitation of the implementation of decisions. They can also lead to the taking of responsibility as such action educates people with regard to *participation* (taking part in activities, but also wanting and being able to co-decide and take up responsibilities) and *citizenship* (as a status, according rights and duties to each citizen, but also as a social role, the responsibilities of each citizen being the centre). This enables the *empowerment* (strengthening their position and developing their capacities) and *emancipation* (improving their independence and equity) of individuals, groups, organisations and communities. As such, citizen participation is a safeguard for sustainability as a catalyst for the future engagement of citizens in mutual confidence and for the perpetuation of the public place management project. In the Topozym facilitating, participative tools and methods were used and trainers insisted on working towards new forms of 'governance' in all sessions, even when participation was not the key subject of the workshop. However, the idea of 'participation' has its risks, as it can be applied in many ways, not all of them leading towards greater sustainability.[9]

1.3. HELPING EVOLVE CONCEPTS, PRACTICES AND BEHAVIOUR

'Behavioural change[10]' is the aim of community animators or others involved in public place management projects and this was the ideal of the Topozym interventions in the case studies. This is an ambitious goal. In this section, we will succinctly describe the Topozym basic premises on this subject. However, since one of the main goals of this research report is to answer questions with regard to the focus, philosophy, tools, methods and evaluation of interventions aiming at changing behaviour, this subject will be dealt with in detail in the third chapter (part 3.2).

The objective of training sessions such as the Topozym training program can exist on one or more of three levels of knowledge: plain knowledge (*savoir*), know-how (*savoir-faire*) and life skills/attitude (*savoir-être*). It is the third level of 'savoir-être' that was the ideal of the Topozym workshops. Trainers should go beyond the mere giving of information (savoir) or instructions on how to act (savoir-faire). However, working on these first two levels of knowledge is easier to accept and, in some cases, even demanded by trainees. It can therefore be rewarding to work on concepts and practices, without losing sight of the ideal of behavioural change. In general, the idea is to change the representations of participants, which will lead to changes in the behaviour of these participants, as they will use these newly constructed representations as a new reference framework with which to understand reality and act. This idea is based on a social constructivist paradigm, which holds that all knowledge and meaning is (socially) constructed (see part 3.2.2.2).

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[8] During the first workshop session, a stakeholder of the Charleroi case study even stated that participation is a condition of sustainability, because "rien n'est durable tant qu'il n'y a pas d'appropriation par les citoyens, les usagers et les habitants."

[9] We discuss the principle of 'participation' in detail in part 3.1.1.

[10] Note that the term 'change' is a quite strong, radical term. It might give people the idea that how they were acting before was wrong and using this term could therefore cause resistance. Admitting you have changed your behaviour because you were wrong before is for many persons difficult. To avoid this, one might prefer talking of 'evolution' or 'adaptation'. Within the Topozym framework we did use the term 'change', but we made sure to use "changing behaviour" instead of "changing your behaviour".

This theoretical vision can be put into practice using a social constructivist, humanist approach, inspired by the pedagogical design of Environmental Education[11] (Sauvé, 1994). In this sense, 'environment' has to be understood as a dynamical system defined by interactions between the non-living environment and living creatures (individuals and groups) and between living creatures themselves. In order to emphasise this idea of the environment being more than nature, one could use the term 'ecosociosystem'. Environmental Education tries to combine two goals: 'education via the environment' (the environment being a source of motivation for the personal development and socialisation of the trainee) and 'education for the environment' (the trainee becoming concerned and taking action for the protection of the environment). These goals can be seen as two ends of a continuum, with the centre of attention of the training sessions going from the individual, to cognitive abilities, to the group or society, to the pragmatic side of undertaking action (as shown in Figure 1). Different objectives are thus combined in Environmental Education: affective, cognitive, moral and action objectives.

Figure 1. Continuum of Environmental Education

education via the environment   **education for the environment**

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the student	*knowledge/understanding*	*the society*	*action in favour of …*
personal development	knowledge of ecosociosystems	social change	useful competences
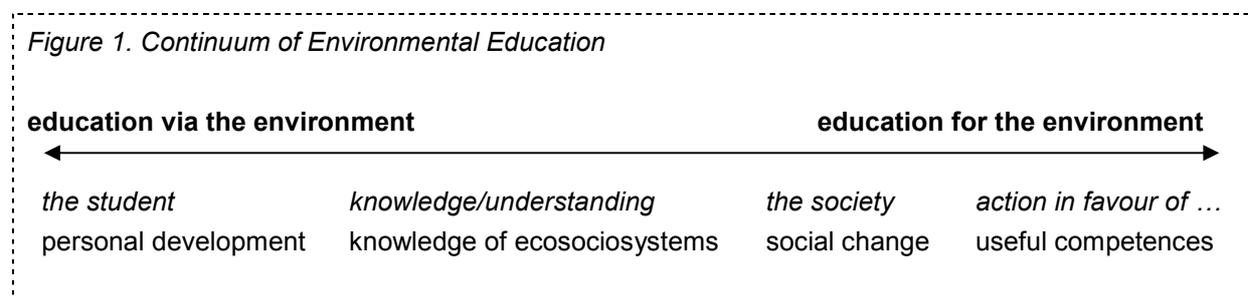
Applied to the context of training, focusing on the sustainability of public place management projects, different purposes, corresponding to the different places in the continuum, can be distinguished:

(1) to focus on the personal development of the participants, boosting for instance their confidence, a feeling of group identity and their sense of place, as well as the ability to express themselves or clarify their values;

(2) to broaden visions and learn from others with regard to the environment or the 'ecosociosystem' studied;

(3) to develop a critical perspective, aiming at the group's socialisation and emancipation, as well as 'ecocipation'[12];

(4) to acquire new competences, tools and methods aiming at the sustainable management of the public place in question.

These four objectives are of course interlinked and the distinction might seem artificial, but listing them separately prompted the trainers not to lose sight of any of them. The objectives also illustrate the different areas of action of the Topozym project as a whole.

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[11] The French expression 'éducation relative à l'environnement (ErE)' is well-known in specialised professional environments. It combines 'éducation pour/à l'environnement' and 'éducation par l'environnement'.

[12] The term 'ecocipation' was formed by the prefix 'eco' referring to the environment and the Latin verb 'capere' which means 'to take, seize'. Etymologically the term means 'appropriating his or her environment'. Learning from a perspective of ecocipation is 'learning in context' or situated learning: the constructed knowledge and developed competences in the chosen context are significant; it is not abstract learning, but learning-in-action in real and authentic situations. The specificity of 'ecocipation', as opposed to socialisation or emancipation, is that the environmental framework is not only taken into account, but that the environment becomes a real action territory for the participants. The goal thus far is that the participants become involved and engaged with regard to their environment. See also Cockx (2007).

Chapter 2

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1.   ACTION-TRAINING-RESEARCH

2.1.1.   Action research in theory

Action research methodology bridges the divide between research and practice by rejecting the concept of a two-stage process in which research is carried out first by researchers, and then, in a separate second stage, the knowledge generated from the research is applied by practitioners. Instead, the two processes of research and action are integrated (Somekh, 1995: 340). The application of this basic idea can take many different forms. Several useful books discuss the theory of action research, but analyses of real applications show the great diversity of approaches and philosophies (Resweber, 1995; Barbier, 1996; Liu, 1997; Reason & Bradbury, 2001; Christen-Gueissaz et al., 2006). This is the right and proper consequence of action research being grounded in the values of the individuals or group who are carrying it out (Somekh, 1995: 339). Visions of action research vary according to the researchers, their background, their experiences and the academic environment. When researchers join a network for a research project, differences in definition, philosophy and scientific culture challenge the co-construction of the action research.

Many pressing questions regarding this methodology, in particular regarding the role of the research and 'expertise' in these kinds of research projects cannot today be answered univocally. The rare literature that does exist on the role of the researcher in action research encourages him/her to have a self-reflective stance. This suggestion has been taken to heart by the Topozym team during the whole project. In this chapter of the report, we will thus elaborate on the methodological choices we have made and discuss some of the difficulties we encountered and the solutions we found.

2.1.2.   The Topozym action-training-research project[13]

The basic premise of our action research was the explicit recognition of the *transforming effect* the research could and should have on reality (see the research goals described in the introduction). From this wish to transform reality, follows the explicit goal of producing knowledge on these transformations. The objective of transformation also implies that the studied subjects become partners of the research. Action research focuses on the transformation of the partners of the research network (see Reason & Bradbury, 2001). The creation of a *partnership* implies the need for participative processes and methodology from the beginning of the research. The fact that the research contract was written without these stakeholders – because at that time there was not enough

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[13] Because Topozym is an action research project applied to sustainable development for the promotion of good territorial governance, the guiding principles as listed by the coordination action of the European Network of Territorial Intelligence (caENTI) with regard to this subject (Miedes-Ugarte, 2007) have greatly influenced our positioning. The nine qualities put forward by Miedes-Ugarte (2007: 11) are: transformation, multidimensionality, partnership, participation, sustainability, transparency, co-responsibility, co-evaluation and co-learning.

time or resources to co-write a research proposal – may have caused distortions with regard to the research agenda. A deeper and earlier collaboration between the different actors involved in the research (the researchers, the trainers and the stakeholders) would probably have improved the quality of the action research. As a partial solution to this problem, the team decided to organise synchronisation meetings (see part 2.2.1.2.). Other guidelines underlying the partnership are firstly, the need for *transparency* in the methodology and results of the action research and secondly, the principle of *co-responsibility*, meaning that researchers, trainers and stakeholders each hold a shared responsibility for the progress of the project. The final characteristics of action research are that it deals with the *present* (Chandler & Torbert, 2003) and with *complexity*, focusing on multi-dimensionality, trying to ensure that the participation of the different disciplines and sectors involved is balanced, that it corresponds to the characteristics of the problem researched and that it helps to achieve a global vision.[14]

In our research project, the action part of the project consisted of a training programme organised for each of the five case studies. It is this aspect, the pedagogical approach applied in the research, that differentiates action-training-research from other forms of action research. Action-training-research focuses on the conception and testing of innovative tools and methods (or the conception of a global model for innovative interventions). According to Barbier (1993, 2001), this type of research corresponds to a situational approach to training, looking at the training as being based on the relationship between the subject and the situations he or she is engaged in (including the context of his of her own training). Actors and researchers are focused on the knowledge processes and not on the knowledge itself.[15]

2.2. METHODOLOGY

According to the project contract (Schmitz et al., 2006), four main task groups structured the research project. The first task group was that of project *coordination*. The second was called '*information and analysis*' and consisted of two main tasks: a survey (the creation of an inventory and typology of tools and methods able to improve the sustainability of public place management projects) and the analysis of the case studies (based on an assessment grid developed by the researchers and on in depth interviews with stakeholders of the cases concerned). The *training* or facilitating, as we referred to the workshops[16] was the subject of the third task group (and the second step of the case studies). The fourth task group focused on the *dissemination* of the research. Because of the strong connection between the second task of TG2 and the task of TG3, we will not follow this division in this report, but will discuss the case studies as a whole first, specifically their selection process. We will describe their methodological phases and analyse the changes in the methodology we have made throughout the

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[14] Note that many of these guidelines, such as transparency, participation of all actors from the beginning and co-responsibility are also considered as important criteria of sustainable public place management (see part 3.1.1.).

[15] "Elle correspond à une approche situationnelle de la formation, c'est-à-dire à une problématique de la formation fondée sur la relation du sujet aux situations dans lesquelles il est engagé, y compris la situation de sa propre formation. Elle oppose à une pédagogie de la maîtrise, une pédagogie du mouvement et de l'innovation. Acteurs et chercheurs sont centrés sur le processus de connaissance et les avatars (comment on connaît ou méconnaît) plus que sur les connaissances elles-mêmes." (J.M. Barbier).

[16] We chose not to use the word 'training' in our communication with the stakeholders of the case studies. We judged the concepts of 'facilitating' to be more suited to the methods used during these sessions.

course of the research. The first five boxes describe the five case studies.[17] Afterwards, we will discuss the other main tasks contributing to the Topozym results and products.

2.2.1. Case studies

2.2.1.1. Selection of the case studies

'Diversity' was the guiding principle in the process of selecting the projects that would become 'case studies'. To guarantee diversity, the cases were not chosen simultaneously but at different stages of the research. By selecting three cases in Wallonia and two in Flanders, with three cases being in an urban area, one at the margin of an urban area and one in a rural area, geographical diversity was guaranteed. The project involved different kinds of public place: a park, a square, a street, a river bank and a bike and pedestrian path. We also tried to involve as many different types of stakeholder as possible (public, private, civil society) and to make sure that the different cases focused on different themes and domains of sustainability (social, cultural, environmental and economical). The cases also differ with regard to the timing of the Topozym intervention (phase of initiation, planning or finalisation). In the description of the cases, it will become clear that we have succeeded in our intention of ensuring diversity, although a decisive factor in the selection of the case studies was of course the willingness of the project leaders to collaborate and to allow changes in their project.

The first contacts with potential case studies could be said to represent a *pre-exploration* phase. A contact protocol was followed in this phase, based on two documents to be filled in after first contact by means of telephone and/or a face-to-face meeting with the coordinator of the project in question. These 'structured' contacts marked the start of the action research process. The questions asked during these first contacts aimed at assessing the feasibility of and interest in building up a partnership with the project in question and the potential for mobilising the stakeholders of the project. One of the clear goals of this pre-exploration phase was the obtaining of a written or oral (depending on the project in question) agreement with the person(s) in charge.[18] More than five projects were 'pre-explored' in this way, but for some it became clear that collaboration between the project in question and Topozym was not possible. The difficulties the team encountered often had to do firstly, with contacting the right person, responsible for making the decision regarding whether or not to collaborate with Topozym, secondly, with finding an environment favourable to the success of an action research project and thirdly, with mobilising all stakeholders on the basis of a telephone call or meeting with one of the persons in charge.

2.2.1.2. Basic methodology of the case studies

The researchers obtained an agreement from five projects: the construction of a park in the urban area of Antwerp (Park Spoor Noord), the construction of a bike and pedestrian path in Charleroi (RAVeL), the reoccurring event of Village de Noël in Liège, the initialisation of a project for a swimming

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[17] For each case, the context, the points of interest and the training program will be described. We will not discuss the sustainability of each case in detail, as we will synthesise these data in a comparison when we discuss the results of the Topozym research (part 3.1.2.).

[18] Besides this agreement on the part of one of the persons in charge, no contracts were signed with interviewees or participants to the training sessions. The participation of the stakeholders in the Topozym workshop sessions was based on a pact of confidence and voluntary engagement. During each session, participants thus had to be motivated to keep coming and to engage further.

zone in the river Ourthe (Noiseux) and the reconstruction of a street in the city centre of Leuven (Muntstraat). These projects became the subject of a two-stage process of analysis and training[19]: (1) an analysis of each case from the point of view of sustainability, and (2) a training programme for some stakeholders of the projects in question aiming at changing the practices of these stakeholders and focusing on one or more principles of sustainability. During the analysis, training and follow-up of each of the case studies, two main goals were kept in mind: (1) to improve the sustainability of the projects in question in a participative way and to encourage stakeholders towards behavioural change, and (2) to learn lessons from these examples, both feeding into the dashboard[20] and answering the specific research questions that will be answered in this report.

During the research process, the methodology of the case studies was adjusted several times. We had to take into account the specificities of each case and fit our research project into the timing of the partner projects. In addition, we used the fact that the cases followed one after the other as an opportunity to learn from our 'mistakes'. Another element playing an important role when changing the methodology was the challenge of combining or reconciling research and training-action and – connected to this challenge – the reconciling of different visions of action research within the Topozym team.[21] We will now describe the different phases of the case studies, but it should be kept in mind that we were not always able or willing to follow this ideal scheme. We will assess the changes in the methodology after this presentation of our ideal.

- *Exploration*

Once an agreement for collaboration with the right person in charge was established, an exploration phase started. Methods used during this phase were desk-based research (literature, websites, internal reports), field visits and informal conversations with stakeholders. The result of this exploration was a document (called 'exploration protocol') with thorough information on the context of the project, its objectives, functioning, participative actions, stakeholders and first impressions on its sustainability. This overview gave a first idea on elements that needed further study and often proved interesting in helping to decide upon the content of the training program. Another important result of this exploration phase was a list of stakeholders of the project in question. This list was used by researchers when deciding who to interview and to assemble the group of participants for the workshop sessions.

- *Synchronisation*

In order to integrate the stakeholders from the beginning of the Topozym intervention, a synchronisation phase was inserted into the research. This phase consisted of a meeting of two or three hours between all project stakeholders and the Topozym team members. This meeting could in fact be seen as the first training contact and was as such led by the trainers. The meeting aimed at cross-informing all those

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[19] These parts of the research were clearly interlinked. Analysis did not stop when the trainers took over, and during the phase of analysis, there was already some influence of the Topozym research on the stakeholders. Indeed, taking part in the Topozym research made stakeholders reflect on the sustainability of their project, be it superficially (by being interviewed once) or in depth (by taking part in the workshops). The clear connection was reflected in the involvement of a trainer from the beginning of each case study and in the presence of researchers during the training phase.

[20] The philosophy, tools and methods appearing in the dashboard were tested during the workshop sessions of the case studies. The stories of the five cases have also been added into the dashboard as illustrations or 'case-files'. These examples may serve as a source of inspiration for collaborators of other projects.

[21] See Schmitz & De Graef (2008).

involved in both the Topozym project and their own project and at identifying possible missing stakeholders (validation of the construction of the list of stakeholders). It allowed everybody to get to know each other (participants did not always know each other, as we sometimes assembled heterogeneous, new groups), to understand everyone's expectations, to identify the most relevant aspects for cooperation and to detect where and how possibilities for change could be created.

   ▪ *Interviews*

Subsequently, 20 to 25 in-depth individual (or, exceptionally, double) *interviews* were carried out.[22] Two groups of interviewees were listed for each project: actors and other stakeholders. 'Actors' are key players, such as, for example, the project staff or heads of agencies of the city administration involved in the project. 'Other stakeholders' could be (representatives of) (future) users of the place of the project or other people that came or could come into contact with the project but were not involved in its design or implementation. Making this theoretical division was helpful in the process of selecting the interviewees, but we have to note that sometimes users also appeared to be actors and vice versa. In addition, sometimes people did not categorise themselves in the same way as the researchers did. Two groups of themes were discussed with these interviewees: (1) objectives, functioning, participative actions, qualities and challenges of the project, and (2) the different principles of sustainability. The aim of the interviews was the gathering of all the necessary information in order to assess the sustainability of the project in question and to help define the content of the workshop sessions.[23]

   ▪ *Facilitating*

The training phase included several contact moments spread over a period of one or two months, depending on the nature of the projects and the availability of the participating stakeholders. Because of the particular goals and theoretical background of the training program (described in detail in part 1.3), the methodology of the workshops had to be 'tailor-made', taking into account the project's specificities, the context of the action and the (expectations of the) participants. For some cases, a heterogeneous group of participants was created, whereas in others, stakeholders with an equal amount of power and similar positions in the project were assembled.[24] However, because the humanist and social constructivist position of the Topozym team was maintained in each training programme, the basic approach of the five series of workshops was comparable:

Trainers (with the exception of the case of Leuven) decided not to make common to all participants the search for a definition of the key concept of 'sustainable development'. Looking for a shared definition might have been an interesting exercise, but because of a lack of time to properly construct a common representation of this term and wanting to avoid limiting its meanings by imposing a normative Topozym definition, training program focused on action and on one or several particular aspect(s) of sustainability to deal with during the workshops.

- The group of stakeholders decided on the focus of the sessions, on what kind of objectives could be reasonably aspired to and on what would be the best strategy to attain them. This discussion

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[22] All interviews were transcribed.

[23] Different documents were disseminated to the trainers at the end of the analysis phase, notably a transcription of each interview, a synthesis of the interviews, and an assessment of the sustainability of the project on the basis of the interviews (informed expert view). It was the overview of the concerns most often cited by interviewees (part of the synthesis of the interviews) that appeared to be of most use to the trainers. In three cases, this overview (in the form of a histogram) was used as a strategic tool in the workshop sessions.

[24] The question of heterogeneous versus homogeneous groups, together with other methodological choices and recommendations for similar interventions, will be discussed further in part 3.2

included a questioning of how to facilitate some necessary behavioural changes inside and outside the stakeholders' group in order to attain these objectives.

- The basic idea was to help each group design, set up or strengthen a partnership in order to improve the management of their public place in a sustainable way. The global methodology of the training program was based on the stakeholders' personal experience and on their capacity to define their needs step by step ("everyone is an expert"). Based on the sharing of ideas and points of view, the training sessions included fieldwork and various exercises such as those involving simulation and decision making. In the groups that were set up (to become learning communities), original training systems, which should help actors improve their project via the development of a permanent, collective, shared intelligence, were tested. The tools and methods proposed were cooperative in nature and aimed at empowering each stakeholder.

▪ *Follow-up*

The case study did not end with the last workshop session. Instead, a *follow-up* phase closed the case studies. The trainers and the researchers who attended the workshop sessions remained available to the participants for questions. Where possible, they were present during special activities in the light of the project in question, such as the festive opening of the RAVeL-road in Charleroi. In some of the cases, the participants received a synthesising document, which listed elements discussed during the sessions, depending on the objectives of the training program and the wishes of the participants. In addition, all participants were invited to participate in the final workshop, a closing event of the Topozym research project, which will be discussed in part 2.2.2.3.

Box 1

Case study 1: Park Spoor Noord (Antwerpen)

An autonomous cell of the Antwerp city administration is creating a park in the northern urban area of Antwerp, called 'Park Spoor Noord'. An area of 24 hectares had been used by the national railway company of Belgium (NMBS/SNCB) for more than 130 years. This railway site had always constituted a barrier between the Antwerp districts of Stuivenberg/Seefhoek and Dam. By the end of 1990s, the NMBS/SNCB decided to leave the site and the discussion regarding a new function for the area was initiated. Both citizens and (city) experts were consulted. In 2001, the city decided to create a green and public zone of 17 hectares on the site and agreed to the commercial development of the other part. After an international design competition and different actions of citizen participation, a design for the park was chosen and construction works began. From the beginning, the goal was to create a sustainable park to bring light, air, space and green into the city and especially into the neighbourhoods surrounding the park, where quality of life was quite poor. The western part of the park opened in May 2008. The eastern part will follow in 2009. Topozym was asked to focus on the sustainable management of the park, in particular on the involvement of volunteers (residents and users) in this management.

Points of interest:
  - analysing tools and methods to involve citizens in the management of a park;
  - finding ways to deal with the main challenges of the park (cited by stakeholders during the interviews): waste, insecurity related to drugs, misbehaviour of dog owners, vandalism;
  - integrating the idea of continuing improvement (evaluations and adaptations) into the process.

Facilitating:

As Antwerp was the first case and we had at that time not yet inserted a synchronisation phase into the methodology, we did not organise a synchronisation meeting before starting the interviews. The public authorities in charge expressed the clear wish to focus on the involvement of citizens (users and residents) in the management of the park. Four sessions were thus organised, once the interviews were completed for two parallel groups: one in the afternoon (with an average of 6 participants per session) and one in the evening (on average 14 participants). Both groups were mixed, consisting of some key actors (namely the park coordinator and the staff member in charge of social programming in the park), but mostly random users (residents from neighbouring streets). Discussions facilitated by the trainers and supported by notes on the blackboard and synthesising documents focused on the management of the park in all its different aspects. Different subjects discussed were, for instance, establishing clear park regulations, groups of volunteers advising the city administration, and the potential for social control against vandalism, the misbehaviour of dog owners and waste. The participants prioritised these subjects and tried to think of concrete ways to develop the most important or urgent ideas further.

The Topozym intervention created a certain dynamic and resulted in spoken promises at the end of the sessions for involvement on the part of the participants, the city and VormingPlus. A synthesis of concerns and potential solutions, discussed during the sessions and written down by VormingPlus, was handed over to the persons in charge as a piece of advice from the citizens to the city administration.

Box 2

Case study 2: Bike and pedestrian path RAVeL (Charleroi)

RAVeL is a French acronym referring to an autonomous network for slow traffic (bike and pedestrian paths). Since 1995, RAVeL-roads have been developed throughout the Walloon region by the Walloon government, wanting to respond to mobility needs (among other things providing safe infrastructure for 'weak users'), as well as fostering the economic, social and environmental development of certain areas, linking important tourist sites and preserving natural, hydraulic and rail heritage. Charleroi's RAVeL (formerly an old railway line called line 112) is a suburban network of paths between two neighbourhoods that were not linked in a structural way due to rapid urbanisation in Charleroi. Topozym studied one particular part of this line 112, which is 2.9 km long and located in the north-western part of Charleroi. It starts in Monceau-sur-Sambre, goes through Goutroux wood (a Natura 2000 zone) and crosses the motorway via a bridge. Topozym intervened when the construction of that part of line 112 was being finished and the non-appropriation by residents and the issue of waste seemed to be the main problems for that new path.

Points of interest:
- increasing citizen participation and appropriation of the project by users and residents;
- identifying resources and possibilities for the management of such an infrastructure (among other things through the creation of an 'autonomous management group' and with special attention to the problem of waste);
- reflecting on the notion of 'good use' (its meaning, values and potential ways of achieving it).

Facilitating:
Of the 20 persons interviewed, 12 attended the synchronisation meeting and the following four workshop sessions with great enthusiasm. Because the participants could all attend the sessions within the framework of their jobs, the sessions took place during four weekday afternoons. Each session was 'hosted' by a different participant, changing the location at each session. Three subjects for the training program were put forward by the participants during the synchronisation session: (1) the appropriation of the road by residents and users; (2) the practicability and durability of the road; and (3) the establishment of a permanent group. Different kinds of tools and methods were used during the workshop sessions: a field visit, documents on the analysis on basis of the interviews by the researchers, question and answer rounds where participants asked each other questions (as 'experts'), and the 'creativity matrix' (a tool aiming at a creative process by 'forcing' the search for links between different items to find a maximum number of new ideas; see annex 6).

By the end of the four sessions, different results were acknowledged by the newly constituted community of participants: cordial relations between the stakeholders (for example, between the aldermen of the two city administrations involved, who had not been in contact before) and the creation of a permanent 'RAVeL 112 follow-up committee'; a common belief in the importance of the involvement of volunteers (users and residents); and the modification of the previous planning for the opening festivities, specifically delaying the inauguration until 'Mobility Week' in order to accord enough time to organise socio-cultural work supporting citizen participation. A discovery tour on the RAVeL was also put in place for parents and friends of the neighbourhood's primary school.

Box 3
Case study 3: Christmas market - Village de Noël (Liège)

The case of Liège differs from the other cases in its temporality, it being a reoccurring event that does not involve permanent changes to the public place. The Liège Christmas Village (called 'Village de Noël') is the oldest and biggest Christmas market in Belgium. It takes place during the month of December in three public squares in Liège (Place Saint Lambert, Place du Marché and Espace Tivoli). It attracts about 2 million (Belgian and foreign) visitors. In contrast with other Christmas markets in Belgium, 'Village de Noël' is not organised by the town administration, but is initiated and coordinated by the non-profit association Enjeu (in charge of the Village) in collaboration with the non-profit association Tournevent (in charge of the chalets rented out to craftsmen). The Village is divided into streets and squares surrounding a church and a town hall in order to create a sociable and living atmosphere. The Village has its own Mayor and Council, giving a folkloric feel to the event. The organisers would like to include even more socio-cultural aspects in the event to keep the centre of Liège lively. They also expressed the wish to integrate more ecological aspects into their event.

Points of interest:
- integrating environmental and socio-cultural aspects into a mainly economically oriented event;
- opening up the (organisation of the) Village to the rest of the town and to local stakeholders;
- improving the pro-active attitude of the organisation (as opposed to working one year at a time).

Facilitating:
In Liège, the group of participants was small: 4 persons in charge of the project were present during the four sessions. The participants were disappointed not to see more representatives of the public authorities and traders. Their principal concerns were energy, the valorisation of the cultural activities and the spread of the sphere of influence of the Village to the rest of the town.

Supported by several tools and methods, such as question/answer rounds (see annex 7), the 'creativity matrix' and a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis, some good ideas and new input to improve the project did appear during the workshop sessions. The participants established a timetable and a 10-year action plan (2008-2017). Actions involved, for instance, the promotion of Liège culture and folklore, the development of a sustainability label, the promotion of alternative means of transport and the improvement of information on the Christmas Village.

Box 4
Case study 4: Swimming zone in the river Ourthe (Noiseux)

The village of Noiseux (Somme-Leuze) is an attractive tourist place, with the river Ourthe nearby and five caravan parks. The swimming zone or 'Beach of Noiseux' studied within the framework of Topozym is situated on the right bank of the river Ourthe, 300 metres from the village of Noiseux. Access to the swimming zone from the busy main road is difficult: there is no secured access for pedestrians and no bus stop nearby. Further down, a car park has been constructed but it is muddy and not signposted. There is a landing stage for kayaks and a poster giving information through pictograms regarding the authorised hours of access to the river for kayaks. The water in the zone does not conform to the level of quality water standards, but this should soon improve with the construction of the Noiseux purification station on the other side of the river. Topozym intervened in the framework of the programme for the city of Somme-Leuze, wanting to reflect on the proper installation of the swimming zone and access to it. The intervention was thus timed to take place before the start of an actual project. At that time, the municipality wanted to organise citizen reflection and participation regarding this future project, integrating the concerns of all stakeholders and different principles of sustainable development.

Points of interest:
- helping actors to agree upon a common and sustainable vision for the swimming zone;
- preparatory reflection on a project from the phase of initiation onwards and with participative actions;
- broadening the scale of reflection, looking not only at the swimming zone, but also at the road leading to this zone and its embedding within the project.

Facilitating:
The synchronisation meeting took place without preliminary interviews with stakeholders, but the trainers did have the information from the 'exploration document' established by a researcher to draw upon. The synchronisation meeting, attended by 19 actors including the mayor of Somme-Leuze, showed the need to address the 'non-management' of the swimming zone to date. Focusing on the problems with regard to the swimming zone appeared to have the ability to open up minds to other ways of solving problems, including citizen participation. The four sessions were attended by an average of 9 actors, but the composition changed during the sessions (some new arrivals and others not returning). The tool that proved most useful during the sessions in Noiseux was that of the 'hyperlandscape' (a scenario of discoveries of the environment, starting from observations in the field, the collection of information and displaying the relationship between the elements of a landscape). The participants chose the places to photograph and each wrote a page on their choice starting from a different perspective.

One advantage of the Topozym intervention was that it brought together people who do not usually have many opportunities to consult. By the end of the sessions, the group was convinced that reconstructing does not necessarily mean demolishing everything and starting all over again. In addition, they pointed out that the involvement of citizens is a pre-requisite for a well-managed project. Based on these convictions, they decided to first focus on the accessibility and the security of the swimming zone. They established a scenario for a future project for the swimming zone, which consisted, among other things, of ideas aiming at the integration of citizens into the project.

Box 5
Case study 5: Muntstraat (Leuven)

The Muntstraat is a much-frequented street in the Leuven city centre. In this pedestrian zone, the many restaurants and bars have terraces on the street. The city of Leuven planned (in dialogue with restaurant owners and public utility companies) the modernisation of this street and small adjacent streets. The work on the public utilities was carried out in March-May 2008. The work on the sewage system and the construction of the new street started in the autumn of 2008. Topozym followed the entire process of planning, design, citizen consultation and construction work. Because decisions were made more quickly than had been foreseen and the speed of the project was accelerated, Topozym could only intervene concerning certain details, mostly related to citizen participation. This sudden acceleration also left no possibility for the organisation to have a real synchronisation meeting. Instead, the Topozym project was presented to many stakeholders during an information meeting organised for citizens by the city administration.

Because there was no longer any room for change in the Muntstraat project, a training programme for that specific case was no longer of interest for the stakeholders or for Topozym. The training in Leuven has therefore not focused on the case of the Muntstraat; instead this case was used as one example when talking about the sustainability of projects of (re)construction of public places in Leuven in general.

Points of interest:
- schematising and improving (in)formal procedures of collaboration (or better yet transversal integration) between agencies of the city administration with regard to public place management;
- increasing the possibilities of citizen participation (even when time pressure is great);
- defining 'sustainability' within the sector of public place management.

Facilitating:
The training program in Leuven took place during three workshop sessions on weekday afternoons. Ten heads and staff members from the city administration services involved participated. The focus of these three sessions were (1) the collaboration of the different services of the city administration in public place management projects (interdisciplinary, transversal work), (2) defining sustainable public place management, and (3) citizen participation in the processes of the (re)construction of public places. Because of the homogeneous nature of the group of participants, there was a very friendly and conciliatory atmosphere during reflections and discussions from the first session onwards. To feed the discussion on sustainability, the trainer presented some input from the literature and worked by means of a process overview on a blackboard to discuss the procedures of the city administration.
By the end of the discussions on 'sustainability', 'sustainability' was described as "an attentive attitude", and this served as a reference framework for transversal action between the city administration services. After these three sessions of interesting discussions between 'colleagues', a synthesising document (see annex 2) was sent to the participants, reiterating all the challenges and solutions found with regard to the three themes discussed during the workshops.

2.2.1.3. Reflections on the changes in the methodology

Wanting to test research hypotheses with regard to processes that need to be put in motion in order to promote behavioural changes and to answer to the needs of the five selected projects with regard to behavioural changes, the methodology had to be adapted to the different case studies and to the needs of the stakeholders. Changes in the methodology often appear during the process of action research. In the Topozym case, the initial scheme of first selecting the case studies, carrying out three interviews with key stakeholders in order to comprehend the feasibility and the context of the case, bringing all of the stakeholders together in focus groups in order to understand their needs, and finally supporting them during several training sessions, was never put into practice.

A first important decision concerning the methodology was not to work by means of focus groups. It soon became clear that dissociating the phase of training and that of research did not correspond with the participative principles of the Topozym intervention. There was the fear of influencing the dynamics of the learning communities in a negative way during the focus groups, because the researchers conducting those groups would want to gather as much information as possible, without taking into account the necessity of setting up a constructive dynamic that would guarantee the success of the training phase. Another element playing an important role in the decision not to work with focus groups had to do with the current methodological debate on the composition of focus groups (Morgan, Krueger, 1998): is it preferable to form homogeneous groups (groups composed of persons with equal amounts of power or comparable positions in relation to the project) in order to support the free speech of persons that would be intimidated by dominant people or is it possible to confront people with different opinions and positions in order to enrich the exchanges between them?[25] The fear of disturbing good group dynamics during the training phase led to the decision to change the methodology of focus groups to that of individual interviews with stakeholders.

These individual interviews in the cases of Antwerp, Charleroi, Liège, and Leuven did put a finger on a series of individual problems, challenges and needs, but they did not really make it possible to put together a list of aspirations shared by the future group of participants in the workshop sessions. This is why a synchronisation meeting was judged necessary to determine the axes of the training programme and its practical methods, and to provide all participants with an identical foundation of information. In the case of Charleroi, where interviews were already had already been carried out when the insertion of a synchronisation phase was decided upon, this meeting mostly served to make practical decisions, such as the time and place of the workshop sessions. The other objectives of the synchronisation meeting (cross-information and validation of the list of stakeholders) were already had already been attained during the individual interviews in that case. In retrospect, this insertion of a synchronisation meeting was judged useful. However, it did not redress the situation of not having co-written the research contract with the stakeholders of the partner projects or make the stakeholders of the case studies full partners in the Topozym project, because too many factors (such as the strict timing of two years) were already determined in the Topozym research contract.

The last case study (Noiseux) was different from the rest, in the sense that the interviewing phase and the training phase did not follow one after the other. Wanting to avoid a top-down approach and wanting to test the usability of preliminary individual interviews, the researchers did not carry out any

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[25] By working with both heterogeneous groups and homogeneous groups during the training sessions, Topozym tried to test and compare these two approaches. We will come back to this methodological choice in part 3.2.

interviews unless the trainers or participants of the workshops asked for specific information that could only be obtained through interviews. Interviewing is a time and money consuming method. Because the Topozym aim was to look for effective, accessible (thus preferably non expensive) tools, interviewing did not really fit this philosophy. Because the cases were very different in other respects too, we cannot really compare them in stating whether or not a phase of interviewing was necessary. The clearest result of these interviews was that the 'expert view', constructed by the interviewers on the basis of the interviews they carried out, was questioned by the learning communities in Charleroi and Liège. During one of the workshop sessions, the 'expert view' on their case was presented to these participants, who reacted rather strongly against it. This reaction to an external audit on a topic, which was not a priority of the project, *in casu* sustainable development, was foreseeable. While the discussion based on this expert view with the participants did point out some interesting elements, this expert analysis based on the interviews may thus seem unnecessary.

The question is, then, whether the original focus group methodology allowing discussions and co-construction of an assessment with the stakeholders would have served our goal better. The workshops in Noiseux revealed several difficulties when starting the Topozym intervention without information gained from interviewing stakeholders. Preliminary knowledge of the project and of the relationships between stakeholders allowed for a better management of debates and a clear understanding of the inter-personal difficulties in the cases of Antwerp, Charleroi, Liège and Leuven. During private interviews between the researcher and the individual stakeholders, the goal of the Topozym intervention could clearly be explained and a climate of trust was easily created. Several focus groups – with the same participants and preferably led by or in the presence of the trainer of the training program – would have to be organised in a very careful manner in order to gather all the information obtained during the individual interviews and to create a climate of trust and a constructive group dynamics.

2.2.2.   Other research tasks

Besides the case studies, four other tasks contributed to the final results of the Topozym research: the development of a common vocabulary list and the self-assessment grid, the elaboration of a database and a typology of tools and methods, a final workshop for the stakeholders of the case studies (who had participated in the workshop sessions), and an international seminar on participation and action research with regard to public places. These first two tasks were carried out before the start of the case studies. The preliminary results of these tasks were adapted and completed based on the experiences of the case studies. The workshop and the seminar were organised in the final months of the Topozym research, answering some basic questions that arose in the course of the research and finalising some of the processes put in motion.

2.2.2.1. Common vocabulary list and self-assessment grid

The development of a list with concepts related to sustainable development was put in motion at the beginning of the research. The words that, according to the team, needed a definition or description,

were listed in the collaborative work section, called Wiki[26], after which comments on the definitions of these concepts could be made by team members, culminating in a Topozym vision of each concept. Based on this vocabulary list and further discussions between six Topozym team members, originating from different academic disciplines, an analytical framework or self-assessment grid was elaborated. Two obstacles made the discussions on this grid difficult, but all the more interesting: (1) finding existing concepts and definitions that were acceptable for all researchers coming from different disciplines and (2) adapting these concepts and principles to small local public place management projects.

By the end of these discussions, the researchers agreed upon the five main principles that organise the grid: transversality, participation of all stakeholders, pro-activity, suitability to the (local) context and solidarity. For each of the five main principles, a number of specifying criteria (a total of 26) were indicated. For each criterion, one to four indicative questions (a total of 36) were formulated. The questions aim at positioning the projects and the actions with regard to diverse principles of sustainability and at showing potential alternative ways of acting. Open indicative questions, instead of indicators, were formulated for each principle, wanting to avoid a normative approach and the increasing trend by many managers of meeting indicators instead of target aims (Bernard, 2005). The questions had to induce self-reflection in relation to the project and to personal practices with regard to sustainable development. The grid was used as a basic instrument for the analysis by the researchers of the sustainability of each case study. The grid has also been presented to different experts and was adapted several times throughout the Topozym project.

2.2.2.2. Database and typology of tools and methods

A database of 121 tools and methods, aiming at promoting sustainable development practices, increasing awareness or promoting participatory attitudes, was set up at the beginning of the research. The objective of the database was to collect and disseminate tools, methods and practices, as well as to demonstrate their benefits and challenges and the context in which they work best. For each tool or method, a standard form (with the following structure: general presentation, context, functioning, qualities and weaknesses, potential alternatives and references) was filled in. Each of the research partners used their internal resources as a starting point for the collection of these tools and methods. The inventory was then enlarged based on a literature research and surveys of certain stakeholders. The criteria for choosing the tools and methods were that they should be as follows: (a) participatory tools and methods (b) linked to the management of public places and/or linked to environmental education, (c) used within a context of sustainability, and (d) transferable to other projects. Diversity was sought in the type of action, the phase of project and the kind of public place in which the tools or methods were used. In the existing inventory,

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[26] This Wiki-type internet page – protected by passwords and thus only accessible by team members – allowed the team to share documents and to co-write texts easily. The ergonomics and management of the Wiki tool was based on research carried out within the framework of the Anchora project (see http://www.anchora.be/). This action research project ('Rooting of a collaborative platform of actors in education towards a sustainable development') was undertaken within the framework of the Belgian Science Policy's 'Multiannual information society support programme'. One of the goals of Anchora was to develop with and among actors, such as the Topozym team, a collaborative dynamic via the creation of an Internet platform (dynamic website developed on the basis of the adaptation of freeware) equipped with tools that facilitate exchange, collaboration and co-construction. A member of the Topozym team, who also participated in the Anchora project, introduced Wiki to the team in a collective training session and was able to assist in case of difficulty.

the tools and methods were participatory in nature.[27] Three typologies were then established by the researchers, classifying the tools and methods according to (1) the processes they create (focus on participation or on education), (2) their professed aims (domains of sustainable development, temporal and geographical dimensions), and (3) the phase(s) of the project they can be used in. These typologies served as an extra criterion in the selection process of tools and methods: they showed what kind of tools and methods were missing from the database, so that it could be completed.

The creation of the database enabled the researchers to become acquainted with the research field of public place management and the existing literature on tools and methods aiming at sustainability and participation.[28] A certain number of files created for the inventory were adapted and tested in the light of the training programmes for the case studies. Other tools and methods created by the trainers for the workshop sessions were later added to the database. The different tools and methods that were created and/or tested became elements of the dashboard (see box 6 and the annexes for some examples).

2.2.2.3. Final workshop

The final workshop for all the participants from the five training programmes was the closing part of the interventions. The aims of this day were further reflection on the Topozym interventions in the five cases and the integration of the principles of sustainability into public place management projects in general. In the morning, participants were given time to exchange ideas on their project and other projects with the participants from the other case studies and members of the Topozym team. In the afternoon, two language groups, each supported by an expert in participation process (non-members of the Topozym team), were to formulate answers to the question: which recommendations could be made towards different actors involved in public place management to improve citizen participation within a context of sustainable development? The recommendations were aimed at six types of actor: politicians, civil servants, design and planning offices, researchers, civil society and contractors. After the group discussions, the experts presented a synthesis of the reflections of both groups in a plenary session. Afterwards, a written version of this synthesis was delivered to each participant. These recommendations both influenced in an important way and completed the Topozym reflections on this matter (see part 3.1.3.).

2.2.2.4. International seminar

The international seminar (November 2008, Brussels) entitled 'Action research and a participatory approach in public place management' was attended by forty persons with different profiles (research, educational sector, private sector and design and planning offices, civil services, all specialists in public space and/or participation) and coming from Belgium, the Netherlands, France and Spain,

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[27] Most of the tools and methods can be of inspiration when aiming at integrating the principle of 'participation' into a project. For the other five principles of sustainability (of the (self-)assessment grid), fewer tools and methods were found.

[28] In our search for tools and methods, it became clear that many interesting tools and methods are mentioned, but not described in detail. Some sources do give outstanding, detailed information about the tools and methods they have tested (see for example the Koning Boudewijnstichting/Fondation Roi Baudoin and websites of cities such as Lausanne, Switzerland). In most of the sources, however, a detailed description of the functioning of the tool or method – let alone a critical stance on its application – is missing. Stakeholders do not seem to take the time to formalise and communicate regarding the tools and methods they have used in their projects. The ones who do so, often insist on the importance of taking the time to reflect upon and talk about the approach chosen.

participated in this seminar. The purpose of the seminar was to question the epistemological position of the different partners in a piece of action research related to public space. The basic questioning of the seminar focused on the integration of participation into scientific approaches linked to the management of public places and spaces. The reflection focused on the following features: the position of all the actors, the relationships between the partners, the methods, the relationship of the partners with the place and the surroundings and the evaluation and dissemination of the results. The methods used were question/answer rounds between participants (each having expertise in one field or another), a field visit and plenary discussions. Some members of the Topozym team were responsible for taking notes throughout the day. A synthesis of these notes was put together and will be sent to the participants with an invitation to read the report and use the dashboard on the Topozym website. These results were also used as an important basis of information for the formulation of the Topozym recommendations (see part 3.1.3).

Chapter 3

RESULTS

As explained in the introduction of this report, the dashboard for community animators and the different processes put in motion in the thinking, acting and future behaviour of all parties involved in the Topozym research are important results of the project. Other scientific knowledge with regard to the sustainable development of public places and spaces was also gathered, notably regarding the 'definition' of sustainable public place management and recommendations that can be made towards actors involved in public place management projects. In addition, a reflection on the putting into motion of processes of behavioural change seems necessary. Two groups of research questions will thus be answered in this third chapter. Whereas the first group focuses on the subject of sustainability, offering reflections and recommendations on steps that can be taken to improve public place management, the second group focuses on the methodological choices that have to be made when wanting to educate a group of stakeholders to organise similar opportunities for reflection and actions.

1. Which principles and actions improve the sustainability of public place management projects?
Topozym has tried to answer this question from two different perspectives. The first is a more theoretical starting point. As explained in the previous chapter, the Topozym team has elaborated a self-assessment grid, based upon the literature and internal discussions, which retains five basic principles of sustainable development. Analysing the application of these principles 'in real life', specifically in the five case studies, shows some of the obstacles facing the actors involved in these projects and which principles are the most difficult to apply. The second approach to answering this question is based on experience. Based on the experience of the case studies and that of external experts consulted during the workshop and the international seminar, four recommendations for actions to improve the sustainability of public place management projects will be formulated. These recommendations deal with aspects of sustainability that are judged most urgent and necessary today by experts. In summary, the sub questions of this first group of research questions are:

- *What are the important principles of sustainability in public place management projects?* (3.1.1.)
- *How are these principles applied in Belgian projects or public place management?* (3.1.2.)
- *What recommendations can be made towards the actors involved in public place management projects wanting to improve the sustainability of their project?* (3.1.3.)

2. How can an intervention like Topozym's try to change the behaviour of stakeholders of public place management projects?
With this question on interventions aiming at behavioural change, we reach the heart of the Topozym action-training-research approach. Three sub questions will be answered:

- *What is the difference between exogenous and endogenous interventions?* (3.2.1.)
- *What philosophy, methods and tools can support these interventions?* (3.2.2.)

## 3.1. WHICH PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS IMPROVE THE SUSTAINABILITY OF PUBLIC PLACE MANAGEMENT PROJECTS ?

3.1.1. Principles of sustainability

How could the interesting notion of 'sustainable development' be described or interpreted within the framework of public place management? The Topozym team indicated important principles and criteria of 'sustainable development' in a self-assessment grid for use by stakeholders of public place management projects wishing to enrich their ideas and improve their practices regarding sustainability. This grid can be found in the first annex of this report. The five basic principles of sustainability of public place management are: transversality, participation, pro-activity, suitability and solidarity.

3.1.1.1 Transversality

A first aspect that is often cited in the literature is the principle of transversality.[29] This principle is often defined as the taking into account or the mutual reinforcement[30] of the three pillars of sustainable development: an economical pillar, a social pillar and an environmental pillar. The Venn diagram (presented in Figure 2) is often drawn to illustrate this three pillar model.

Figure 2. Venn diagram: three pillar model of sustainable development
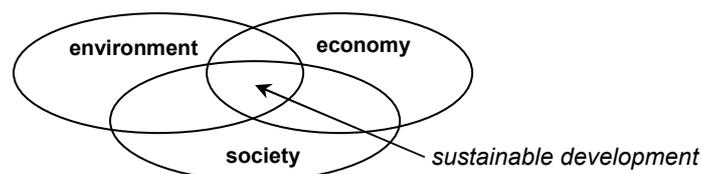
Since these first representations of 'sustainable development', there has of course been movement towards greater sophistication of understanding, as demonstrated by a move from a simple Venn diagram to show the interactions between the economic, environmental and social pillars towards an embedded 'Russian doll' model of understanding (O'Riordan, 1998; see Figure 3), which "upholds the basic principle that all economic activity should be directed towards social progress and that this must be achieved within environmental limits." (Centre for Sustainable Development, 2006: 25-26).

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[29] The idea of transversality has been developed starting from the fourth principle of the Rio Declaration (United Nations, 1992): "In order to achieve sustainable development, environmental protection shall constitute an integral part of the development process and cannot be considered in isolation from it." The EU summit of Copenhagen (1995) enshrined a third pillar of social development. According to this three pillar model, sustainable development rests on an ecological, an economic and a social pillar: if one of the pillars gives way, the 'sustainability building' will collapse.

[30] Note that this idea of mutual reinforcement is sometimes described as over-simplistic or practicably unattainable. "The dream of a 'win-win-win' scenario - of achieving progress within the economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development, the three supposedly being mutually beneficial - is increasingly being seen as unrealistic. The argument that perhaps the developed world is overly preoccupied with environmental protection, at the expense of social and economic improvement in the developing world, remains prominent, as it has done since the early debates on environmental protection and international development since the 1950s and sixties." (Centre for Sustainable Development, 2006: 2). Although mutual reinforcement, in our view, remains an ideal worthwhile striving for, a simple 'peaceful co-existence' between the stakes, objectives and effects of the different dimensions has perhaps the most potential to succeed.

Figure 3. Russian doll model of sustainable development (O'Riordan, 1998)
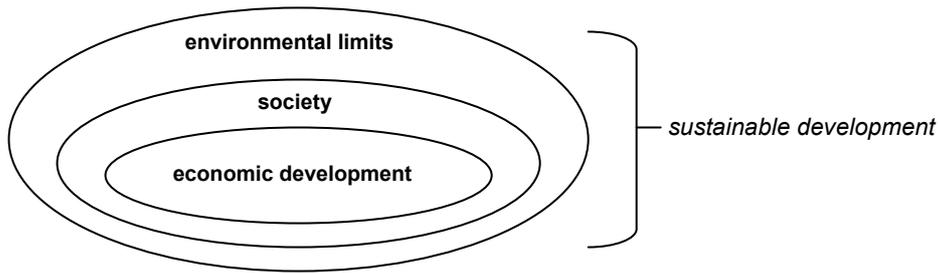
This well-known idea of three dimensions of sustainable development, interacting in one way or another, invites the addition of other dimensions, issues, sectors or spheres of interest. One example would be the incorporation of a cultural dimension. One could then opt to talk of a "socio-cultural dimension" instead of adding a new and separate fourth dimension, seeing that the social and the cultural are highly linked, but not the same. In more recent years, there have also been arguments for the incorporation of a fourth 'institutional' dimension or imperative (for example, by Spangenberg, 2003). This dimension is sometimes called the 'governance pillar'. Figure 4 gives an example of how such an institutional dimension aiming at the strengthening of participation and articulating the different links between the four dimensions in an interesting way, can be incorporated.[31] "This diagram demonstrates that more sophisticated theoretical understandings are beginning to emerge, with greater emphasis on the social equity and participative aspects of delivery and the democratic and political processes for achieving this." (Centre for Sustainable Development, 2006: 30).

Figure 4. A multi-dimensional understanding of sustainable development
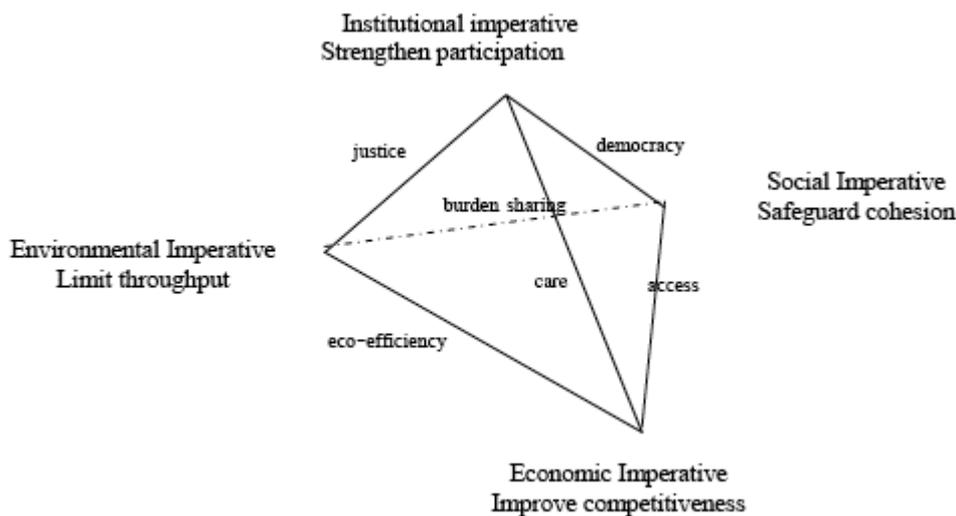
Source: Centre for Sustainable Development (2006: 30)

Other possible dimensions could be added to these kinds of models, such as patrimonial, aesthetical, symbolical or spiritual dimensions. It is important to note that most stakeholders seldom cite these

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[31] For another example of an interesting view based on the three pillar model, see Gido Stichting (2002: 11-16). The Gido Stichting approach distinguishes five qualities for the sustainable development of living areas: environmental quality, spatial quality, social quality, economic quality and process quality.

abstract dimensions spontaneously.[32] When talking about their preoccupations with regard to public places, stakeholders mostly refer to the following themes: security, health, economy, nature, mobility, participation, social cohesion, waste management, maintenance. The list of the possible dimensions of sustainable development or themes of preoccupations should thus be kept open-ended. Whereas there were previously only three 'lobbies' drawing attention to the economy, the environment and society, nowadays one has to remain open-minded and also in order to integrate these additional possible dimensions into a project. However, taking the three known dimensions of sustainable development as a starting point could already open up people's minds to take into account at least the consequences of their actions in these dimensions.

The position, function and personal interests of those stakeholders that have decisive power on the project actions often determine which of these dimensions are judged most important and which ones do not deserve attention or are even disadvantaged vis-à-vis others. Taking into account as many dimensions as possible can thus often be facilitated by an interdisciplinary approach. People with different kinds of expertise – gained through study or through experience (for example, by living there and 'knowing the place') – should thus be assembled and together they should try to integrate their different visions, objectives and ideas for action. Projects led by a city administration can, for example, make a lot of progress towards sustainability by working in an integrated way, exchanging visions between the different services of the administration. In addition, working in an interdisciplinary way also means encouraging all stakeholders to exceed their own function and position and to try to think from other perspectives too. In other words, pigeon-holing stakeholders into their own 'category' should be avoided.

> The principle of transversality can be split up into two criteria:
> (1) *transversality in the objectives and stakes of the project* or the taking into account of different dimensions (economic, socio-cultural, environment, governance,…) of sustainable development;
> (2) *transversality in the operation modes and stakeholders* or the cooperation of stakeholders coming from different positions and perspectives (interdisciplinarity).

3.1.1.2. Participation [33]

Within the framework of public place management projects, 'participation' can be defined as the democratic integration of the different parties involved in or affected by the project (stakeholders), at

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[32] This was not only the case during the Topozym in-depth interviews with the stakeholders of the case studies, but also when the exercise of naming the most important themes of preoccupations was undertaken in a joint effort by the stakeholders during the workshop sessions.

[33] This principle – with a very strong insistence on the environmental dimension of development – was also put forward in the Rio Declaration (United Nations, 1992: art. 10): "Environmental issues are best handled with the participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level. At the national level, each individual shall have appropriate access to information concerning the environment that is held by public authorities, including information on hazardous materials and activities in their communities, and the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes. States shall facilitate and encourage public awareness and participation by making information widely available. Effective access to judicial and administrative proceedings, including redress and remedy, shall be provided." The Topozym reflection on (citizen) participation was inspired by discussions during the Topozym final workshop and the international seminar and by the literature on citizen participation (see for example Loyens & Van de Walle, 2006 (where a list of handbooks or toolkits for citizen participation is cited); Ridder et al., 2005; Santens, 1998; Santens et al., 1983; Scheers, 1997; Verhoeven, 2008).

all stages of the project (reflection, formulation, conceptualisation, implementation and evaluation of the project). Today many methods and approaches to participation, all having different objectives and levels of complexity, are known and have been tested. When it comes to citizen participation, the question of what form should be applied in what situation should always be answered before rushing into participative actions. In order to motivate participants, a combination of adapted, varied and negotiable methods and tailor-made approaches seems necessary.[34] In order to understand the different possibilities, four levels of participation can be distinguished[35]:

(1) *information* or 'communication in one direction': citizens receive objective information necessary for the understanding of problems, alternatives and/or solutions;

(2) *consultation*: citizens give advice on the analyses, alternatives and/or solutions;

(3) *commitment*: citizens are integrated into the different phases of the project and participate in the work and decision making, establishing a partnership with the public;

(4) *empowerment*: citizens are supported in progressively moving towards taking charge of the project, notably via training aiming at enabling the public to feel capable of taking the initiative in the future.[36]

The first two levels do not involve a conversation about the positions of partners or the possibilities of decision making. They may be based on so-called equality between the partners but a real sharing of responsibilities or the construction of a responsible partnership is not their goal. The last two levels are sometimes called 'active participation'.[37]

Actions of citizen participation are most likely to be rewarding for participants as well as for organisers of the participation (often city administrations or design and planning offices) when they involve active participation and when their main goal is 'participation by and for the people'. On that basis, a true and permanent culture of participation can be created. The ideal is thus a real dialogue, being more than a confrontation of opinions or visions on a subject[38], and the construction of a permanent partnership between these different stakeholders. Each participant needs to be treated correctly and deserves an equal amount of attention in being listened too. Non-participation in the form of manipulation (biased information used to 'educate' citizens by creating the illusion that they are involved in the process) or therapy (so-called treatment of the problems citizens are faced with to keep up appearances but without addressing the actual stakes) must be avoided. In these cases, neither the participants nor the organisers will stay motivated. Too often participative actions serve as a front for passing ideas already

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[34] Or as Goris (2004) puts it: "Participatie moet, maar de vraag blijft: waar en hoe? Al te vaak luidt hier het automatische antwoord: altijd en overal. Niet alleen om praktische redenen, zou ik willen pleiten voor: gericht en specifiek." For an overview of different approaches for different situations, see Loyens & Van de Walle (2006).

[35] This distinction is based on the steps distinguished by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) (see http://www.iap2.org/associations/4748/files/Spectrum.pdf, last consulted on 12/01/09) and S.R. Arnsteins 'Ladder of participation' (1969).

[36] Another possible distinction is that of "planner-centred" (project-oriented) versus "people-centred" (people-oriented) participation (Twyman, 2005). Whereas the objective of the first kind is the administrative and financial efficiency of the project (as the subject of the participation), for the second kind it is the emancipation of the participants and their learning process with regard to democratic values that counts.

[37] In the glossary of Ridder et al. (2005) 'active participation' is defined as "Alle niveaus van publieke participatie boven dat van raadpleging. Actieve participatie houdt in dat de geïnteresseerde partijen in het planningproces bepaalde kwesties bespreken en bijdragen aan de oplossing daarvan. Essentieel is de mogelijkheid voor participanten om het proces te beïnvloeden. Dit houdt niet noodzakelijkerwijs in dat zij ook verantwoordelijk worden voor [de uitvoering van het project in kwestie]. Raadpleging [als publieke-participatieniveau] houdt in dat de overheid documenten beschikbaar stelt voor schriftelijke opmerkingen, een openbare hoorzitting organiseert of actief opmerkingen en meningen van het publiek verzamelt via bijvoorbeeld enquêtes en interviews."

[38] Or as Eberhard (cited in Brandeleer 2008) puts it: "un véritable dialogue ce qui est plus qu'une confrontation d'opinions, de points de vue, à propos d'un objet, c'est un véritable dévoilement de soi pour appréhender son vis-à-vis, en tant que source de connaissance et pas simple objet de connaissance."

decided upon by, for example, the city administration. By instrumentalising the participation in that way, it is no longer an action 'for the people'. There needs to be a true possibility of change through participation. Only by experiencing positive participation, will the confidence citizens have in their government or the design and planning office grow and can a true partnership be created. Because the reality is often different from this ideal, participation should be seen as a learning process for organisers as well as for citizens. Authorities as well as citizens often lack some necessary competences for organising and efficiently taking part in participative processes. Of essential importance is thus the development of knowledge, communication skills, confidence, and a willingness to take on responsibility for jointly-made decisions. This element of participation is often referred to as 'capacity-building'.

The starting point of participation should be the search for and the taking on of legitimate tasks and responsibilities of the different partners, be they government officials, architects or citizens. Each partner has his or her own capabilities and expertise, thus different tasks and responsibilities.[39] The idea of 'relative autonomy' can serve as a basic premise for the organisation of participation: each societal actor has specific knowledge and specific responsibilities, but these are relative because input from other actors is necessary. Citizens do not have the amount of expertise a landscape architect has when it comes to drawing up plans for a specific place. On the other hand, that architect does not have the same amount of information on how the place was used in the past and how inhabitants would like to see it used in the future, as do the inhabitants do themselves. When powerful partners take on tasks and responsibilities that are not theirs, active citizenship is mortgaged. Making decisions with regard to the forms, set-up and structuring of participative actions thus becomes a question of committing the right kinds of expertise and responsibilities at the right stage in the process and for the right objectives.

Understanding this basic philosophy regarding the importance and the different possible types of citizen participation, three points of interest seem most important:
- A basic condition for sound participation is transparency and openness. The participation process and the structuring of tasks and responsibilities should be clarified. Information on the project should be accessible, comprehensible and trustworthy. Once citizens have, for example, given their opinion on designs or plans, they should be able to easily find out how their suggestions have been taken into account.
- In order to make sure all parties involved or stakeholders have been invited to participate, one may need to take special measures to facilitate the effective participation of all groups of the population, including those who are usually not heard. Those special measures could include thinking about the accessibility of the time and place of the participative actions for mothers with children, working persons, older persons, children and adolescents, people speaking foreign languages, persons with a disability. When listing who to invite, one should consider also inviting people who are 'only' indirectly influenced by the project.
- Within this varied group of participants, the existence of different views and opinions should be recognised and become appreciated by all. One should have an idea of how to manage

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[39] This is where the Rio principles of co-responsibility (or shared responsibility) and differentiated responsibility come in: "States shall cooperate [....] In view of the different contributions to global environmental degradation, States have common but differentiated responsibilities. The developed countries acknowledge the responsibility that they bear in the international pursuit to sustainable development in view of the pressures their societies place on the global environment and of the technologies and financial resources they command." (United Nations, 1992: art. 7). In this article, the focus is on the cooperation between states founded on these principles, but these principles can equally be used on the level of stakeholders or partners in projects.

potential conflicts that arise during participative actions (those that either existed before or were caused by the project).

> The following criteria describe the principle of participation:
>
> (1) attention to the choice of *degree and form of participation*;
>
> (2) in *different phases of the project*;
>
> (3) *existence of awareness-raising actions* (education and capacity-building actions);
>
> (4) (financial and personal) *investment* in participative actions;
>
> (5) a *large base of participants*;
>
> (6) the *reduction of obstacles* for the participation of different groups;
>
> (7) *shared* but *differentiated responsibility;*
>
> (8) *transparency* of the process and the information;
>
> (9) the recognition of different opinions and *conflict management*.

3.1.1.3 Pro-activity

A pro-active vision is an attitude that consists of anticipating potential consequences, problems and changes and undertaking measures to cope with these facts. It goes hand in hand with a vision over different timescales: the short, medium and long term. It contrasts with a reactive attitude that often comes down to a constant 'running behind'. This principle goes back to but also beyond the famous idea of the Brundtland report (1987, art. 3) that development should meet the needs of present but also of future generations. A first possible step to facilitate the pro-activity of public place management projects can be impact or incidence studies. A contemporary strategic planning method used in this approach is called 'backcasting'. In this method, a successful future is envisioned first. Afterwards the current reality is assessed against this vision. That way, direct and indirect effects and consequences over the short, medium and long term can be taken into account. The means and methods used depend on the (financial) possibilities and requirements of the project in question.

In one way or another, every project should establish a vision and an idea of what the effects of the project might be in the future (with regard to the different dimensions over which a project can have an influence). Once these are known or can be predicted, the damage and negative consequences of the project can be limited, either by preventing them or by incorporating redressing measures into the project. These two possibilities are based on the Rio principles of prevention and the 'polluter pays'. Prevention is the taking of action to avoid potentially serious or irreversible harm occurring in one of the dimensions or spheres of influence. The principle of precaution goes a step further and states that a lack of scientific certainty is no reason to postpone preventive actions.[40] The 'polluter pays' principle – in its original, limited meaning – holds that it is important that the (environmental) costs of (economic) activities, including costs of prevention and precaution, be internalised or redressed by the

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[40] The prevention and precaution principles are based on the 15th, 18th, and 19th articles of the Rio Declaration (United Nations, 1992): "Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation."

managers of the action, rather than being imposed on society as a whole.[41] Opening this idea up to other sectors (broadening the idea of transversality between dimensions other than economy, society and environment), the 'polluter pays' principle means asking the question as to which contingency measures can be planned for and 'paid for' by project managers in case of damage caused by their project.

According to the principle of adaptability, there should be alternative scenarios or solutions available in case of evolutions in time, space or use of the place after the project is finished. Changes are most likely to happen at one time or another. In neighbourhoods where there are a lot of little children living in the area at the time of the construction of a playground in a public square, one should not forget that these children are likely to grow old in that neighbourhood and might some years later want another use for their square. By organising evaluations (by project collaborators and external stakeholders) throughout the project, the project can be improved at all its stages. Assessments should not stop once the project is under construction but should also address the management and use of the public place in question afterwards. A follow-up long term is also necessary. These evaluations can but do not need to be written or well-organised at specific times in the process. With the adoption of a constant listening attitude by the project collaborators or the installation of a clearly indicated 'sounding board' where citizens can leave their suggestions regarding the project or the place in question, one might already have come a long way. This idea of continuous improvement (meaning both evaluation and adaptation throughout the whole process) allows a constant positive evolution.

> Pro-activity is sometimes described as "Prevention, not reaction." In our view, it is more than preventing potential risks and problems. Four criteria form the bases of this principle of pro-activity:
> (1) *prevention* and precaution;
> (2) the *polluter pays*;
> (3) *adaptability*;
> (4) *continuous improvement* (evaluation and adaptation).

3.1.1.4 Suitability

For public place management projects, the principle of suitability or concordance between the project and its context becomes a very important principle. Because no project exists in isolation, project managers need to take its environment (or ecosociosystem) into account and even use this as a starting point when planning a project or organising action. 'Context' has to be understood broadly here: the context of other initiatives and projects, the political and juridical context, the space or place (and its meanings) that the project is located in, local competences and knowledge and available means, space and other resources. Because of these specificities of the context, a project or action that worked very well in a certain time and place, may have a completely different outcome in another.

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[41] The principle was originally developed by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development to ensure that firms paid the full costs of controlling pollution. Article 16 of the Rio Declaration (United Nations, 1992) brings the 'polluter pays' approach beyond a strictly developed country context: "National authorities should endeavour to promote the internalisation of environmental costs and the use of economic instruments, taking into account the approach that the polluter should, in principle, bear the cost of pollution, with due regard to the public interest and without distorting international trade and investment."

On the organisational level, a first step is to organise coordination between the project and other actions on the local, regional and global level. Often projects are only thought of at a specific geographical level, but the interaction between the different spatial scales should not be ignored. One should make sure the objectives of actions influencing the same space are not contradictory, but the search for coordinated actions can go further than not damaging other actions. Examples of possible coordinated actions can include the organisation of participative, informative actions for citizens or the putting in place of a system to share knowledge and expertise between the different projects. The project also needs to be adapted to the norms, standards and recommendations on the administrative, technical and legal level, if it wants to be sustainable. A last organisational criterion is to ensure the responsibilities for certain actions are allocated to the units, stakeholders or organisations most appropriate to deal with the problem or to organise the action. This is the principle of subsidiarity.[42]

Another important element of the context of the project is the people living near or using and thus 'knowing' the place. Because we are focusing on public places, the diversity of these residents and users can be great. Starting a project with a detailed assessment of the place, its connection to other places and of the stakeholders of the project – as is proscribed by the principle of pro-activity – should take into account the values and functions the place has in the eyes of residents and other users.[43] Participative actions can help in elaborating such an assessment, but one should be very careful to also take into account the interests, needs, expectations and concerns of those persons that – for one reason or another – were not present or not represented in the participation process (persons 'without voice'). Residents and users may not only give information on their meaning and use of the place, but may also be an important source both of knowledge – knowing, for example, the history of the place – and of competences. By validating and using local knowledge, expertise and competences, the project, as well as the local population, may benefit. Indeed, the population may not only improve the sustainability of their place or project, but may, for example, also acquire new competences and a better understanding or better relations with the (local) government.

A third series of criteria have to do with the environmental limits and available means of the project. The principle of proportionality can be defined as the suitability of or correspondence between the means and aims of a project: the means used for the project need to be adapted to the project's goals.[44] Following the same line of thought, the space or place where the actions are undertaken should be adapted to the pursued goals. Indeed, there is a limited amount of space available, so the use of it should be studied carefully. A prudent use of other natural resources, such as energy and water, should also be encouraged: this use should not endanger the resource or cause serious damage or pollution.

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[42] Our definition of subsidiarity is based on that of the European Union, as introduced in the Treaty of Amsterdam, establishing the European Community (1997; Protocol on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality). In the EU definition, subsidiarity is the idea that a central authority should have a subsidiary function, performing only those tasks that cannot be performed effectively at a more immediate or local level.

[43] In part 1.1. the difference between space and place was explained. Place was defined as "space+meaning."

[44] The principle of proportionality was also introduced by the EU Treaty establishing the European Community (1997; Protocol on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality). In the EU sense, proportionality is defined as a fundamental principle of European law stating that the EU may only act to the extent that is needed to achieve its objectives, and no further.

> The suitability of or correspondence between the project and its context, can thus be split up into six criteria:
>
> (1) the *integration within existing structures and processes*;
>
> (2) the principle of *subsidiarity* (or the allocation of responsibilities to the most apt units or stakeholders);
>
> (3) the taking into account of the *local specificities*;
>
> (4) the making use and stimulating of *local expertise*;
>
> (5) the principle of *proportionality* (or the suitability of means and pursued goals);
>
> (6) the *reasonable use of* space and other natural *resources*.

3.1.1.5. Solidarity

The fifth principle improving the sustainability of projects in public places is that of solidarity: the development must be undertaken in a spirit of intra- and intergenerational solidarity or equity and social ethics. The well-known principle of intergenerational solidarity or solidarity in time implies that the present generation owes a duty to future generations to leave the earth in no worse a condition than the one in which they received it.45 Intergenerational solidarity thus comes down to the principle of pro-activity: a forward-looking approach. According to the principle of intragenerational solidarity, there must also be solidarity or equity within generations. Intragenerational solidarity is concerned with the distribution of the benefits of the development activities and the distribution of its costs.46 Two kinds of intragenerational solidarity can be distinguished: spatial and interpersonal solidarity. The first kind implies that solidarity must be sought from other places than that of the project: multiplying the positive consequences of the project onto other areas and avoiding negative consequences of the project in these other areas. Interpersonal solidarity implies taking measures to promote an equitable division of benefits, profit and potential damage of the project between all members of the population. The project should also strive to promote the inclusion of vulnerable people and the strengthening of social bonds between people inhabiting or using the public place in question, but also between people from other places. An important basis for this important social cohesion is the recognition of diversity and differences between people in the public place in question and in other places of the world. Differences may, for example, lie in the area of appropriating or using the public place. Adaptation of the project to different possible rhythms of development may be a good starting point to sensitise people through the project regarding the necessity of recognising diversity.

> The following criteria describe the principle of solidarity:
>
> (1) *the taking into account of diversity*;
>
> (2) *interpersonal solidarity*;
>
> (3) *solidarity in space*;
>
> (4) *solidarity in time.*

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45 See the third article of the Rio Declaration (United Nations, 1992): "The right to development must be fulfilled so as to equitably meet developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations." The most often heard criticism against this principle is of it being 'eco-centric' (see Tladi 2007: 40-47 for an overview of this criticism). However, the vision of the future does not need to be focused on the environmental dimension of development but can be broadened to other dimensions.

46 The same argument applies here: this principle should not be limited to the environmental dimension of development. See footnote 39 and Tladi (2007: 48-57).

3.1.2. Synthesis of the sustainability of the five case studies

Inspired by the principles and questions of the self-assessment grid and based on the interviews conducted and information obtained during the workshop sessions, the researchers assessed each of the case studies from what was called "an expert view". In order to illustrate potential problems and challenges encountered in public place management projects in Belgium, we present a succinct comparison of these five expert views in the description that follows.

A. Transversality

With regard to transversality, one of the three basic dimensions of sustainable development – economical, socio-cultural, or environmental – seems to prevail in most cases. In Antwerp, the three domains were explicitly taken into account. In Liège and in Leuven, the economical dimension dominated the project. The project leaders of Village de Noël insist that in their project, actions were undertaken in the other dimensions too. However, these actions in other dimensions could be developed much further and might even be considered as functioning as an accessory, rather than being the core of the project. In Charleroi and in Noiseux, by contrast, the economical dimension was not taken into account from the beginning of the project. The focus in Charleroi lay on the social aspects and, with attention paid to soft mobility, on the environment. In Noiseux, attention was paid to the environmental and social domains. When comparing the cases, the economical dimension seemed to prevail in the projects in city centres, while it was left out or integrated late into the projects in green zones. There is still a cultural reservation regarding joining an economic dimension to an environmental project. In green zones, it has to be borne in mind that the environmental dimension would be restricted to the green context of the project. The dominating stakeholder influences the choice of the domain of sustainability. In Leuven, for example, the city was highly influenced by the restaurant owners, and thus focused on economical aspects. It might be interesting to develop a new kind of partnership between the private and the public sector, where the collaboration is not limited to joint actions by the two kinds of partner, but emerges out of a common action with a shared intelligence between the two kinds of partner; this is a rather new practice in Belgium. These partnerships might exhort public actors to engage in economical activities and private actors to engage in the other domains of development. One might, for example, think of a drinks stand on the RAVeL road.

B. Participation

Participation appears to be a principle that all stakeholders are in favour of and want to engage in. However, defining and implementing this idea seems a major problem. 'Sacrificing' means and time to citizen participation proved crucial. Despite knowing what participation could and should be and how it could and should be implemented, the means, budget and competences are often lacking. This makes the implementation of this principle in a project often difficult. In Antwerp, much effort and finance were put into citizen participation. This was possible because the project had a big enough budget to invest in staff and special participation activities. Other projects did not have these means and lacked a 'guide for citizen participation'. In Charleroi, citizen participation was organised after the planning and construction of the project was finished. This participation *a posteriori*, aiming at an appropriation on the part of the citizens, was quite hard to achieve. In Liège, the 'council of villagers' in which the different neighbourhoods are represented was the only form of participative action. It does not include traders and users and is thus

rather a folk aspect. In Leuven, the lack of time was often used as a reason for not organising more (in-depth) meetings with citizens (residents and restaurant owners). All citizens were informed about the project, but only one interlocutor (the representative of the restaurant owners) was consulted. The project leaders wanted to avoid the questioning of the project and exceeding the deadline.[47] In general, informing all stakeholders seems a feasible task, but taking further steps than this on the participative ladder was considered difficult. The participative actions were in all cases project-oriented instead of aiming at an empowerment of the participants.

C. Pro-activity

All cases showed a strong wish for a development that would be durable over time, in which case a pro-active vision seemed crucial. For example, the goal of the Charleroi project was the extension of the RAVeL network, which would be completed by the linking up with other roads, in order to encourage soft mobility. However, other different aspects of pro-activity were not taken into account in Charleroi. For example, they could have organised meetings with citizens to draw up a map of actual needs and wishes of the users and tried to get a better idea of future use of the road. The top down approach of the network may explain these omissions. The plan of the park in Antwerp was conceived as an adaptable one, enabling possible changes to fit the actual use of the park. However, no concrete steps for evaluation and detection of necessary adaptations were planned. The project leaders started making a management plan for the park when one part of the park was about to open. Starting to think about management at this stage of the process is too late. In the other cases, the idea of a management plan or a manager in charge of the public place was not even considered. Liège was the only project where a yearly evaluation was planned. However, this evaluation was above all for financial reasons. The evaluations of the place at the beginning of the project were often incomplete. The continuous improvement of the project has been more due to a solving of problems than a real anticipation of them.

D. Suitability

Projects are often thought of and designed for a specific space without regard for how the plans will fit in with the surrounding places and the different spatial scales. In the studied projects, several local actors did not take part in the decision making process or in the implementation of those decisions. Sometimes, these actors were not contacted; often, they had no interest or no means (money, time, and persons) available to take part in the project. In order to promote the suitability of the project to be implemented, the sharing of the information is necessary. This requires a networking approach between the stakeholders of a place and their openness considering other spaces. A lack of links between the project leader and the local actors is problematic.

E. Solidarity

This principle seems to be embodied in the public place. It is certainly well represented by the studied projects; however, this is not always intentional. The projects are open to all users whatever their origins or their socio-economic level. Nevertheless, there is no integration within place management of concepts emerging from other cultures. Some areas are less accessible to elderly or disabled people, and this would require minor adaptation of the project.

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[47] More problems related to participation in Leuven are described in the third annex of this report.

The reflection on spatial, and temporal, solidarity (with other areas/regions/countries and with future generations) seems to go further in urban areas. Maybe this is due to the integration of the project into large policy programmes. The actors may wish for a stronger level of solidarity. However, they have to act within a context that they are not always able to change.

3.1.3. Recommendations to actors involved in public place management projects

Four groups of recommendations to actors involved in public place management projects are explained in detail in the description that follows. Two categories of stakeholders were targeted by these recommendations: (1) citizens and (2) community animators. We have concentrated here on the actors involved in public place management projects, but the relationship with citizens and the role of citizens will become clear throughout the recommendations (and citizens can thus equally learn something from these recommendations). The dashboard – described in box 6 – is in fact an elaborated set of recommendations to the second group of community animators. In the last recommendation, we will elaborate further on this special group of actors. The target groups of the following recommendations belong to the following potential categories of actors involved in public place management projects: politicians, civil servants, employees of design and planning offices, contractors and associations. During the workshops leading to these recommendations, we elaborated different sets of recommendations for each target group. However, the four recommendations that follow are directed towards each one of these actors in order to encourage understanding, cooperation and dialogue between these different actors.

3.1.3.1. The fight against time: not succumbing to the pressure of deadlines and the need for instant results

When wanting to adapt all the principles described in the previous section, time pressure (and the wish to quickly see concrete results), is often a major obstacle. The Topozym experiences have clearly shown that an evolution towards more sustainable practices is urgent, but that rushing into such an evolution might not be the most sustainable way to handle this. Wanting to move too quickly often proves counter-productive in the long run.[48] Actors involved in public place management projects should thus re-examine the value of time and try to think in terms of different time scales. Actions, objectives and results should not be thought of only in the short term, but also in the medium and long term. By not taking enough time to really think decisions through, the decision making process sometimes comes down to 'a game of darts', which is by no means sustainable. The underlying problem of time pressure is often the orientation towards products and results, forgetting the importance of the recognition of value to the processes that are put in motion. Indeed, by focusing on

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[48] Because two years is a short period for a piece of action research like Topozym's, team members also fell into the trap of deadlines. In the case of Antwerp, for example, greater negotiation regarding the workshop sessions during the exploration phase, could have avoided a difficult start up of the sessions once the interviews had been carried out. A positive Topozym example, in which actors did not succumb to time pressure, can be found in the case of Charleroi. During the workshop sessions, the Charleroi actors decided to postpone the inauguration of their new RAVeL-road, to allow enough time for the creation of a better basis of appropriation by residents and users (for example by working closely with neighbouring schools in the preparation of the inauguration). In Leuven, Topozym postponed the workshop sessions till September, when it became clear that there would not be a lot of civil servants available to participate in sessions in June. The progress made by the group of civil servants in Leuven would not have been so great if crucial city administration services had not been represented during the workshop sessions.

the processes put in motion by public place management projects, intelligence and (social) bonds are created. Those will probably last longer than the actual products of the project.

Time is sometimes, for example, presented as an enemy of participation, because project managers and collaborators see no other option than to inscribe the participative actions into the temporality of their project, which seems to be non negotiable in most cases. This 'obstacle of time' emerges, because in most cases true participation needs to be integrated into the project once the project has already taken off and participation is not considered as one of the basic principles of the project. The difficulty of reconciling time pressure and the organisation of participation goes further than its timing in the project and the duration of these participative actions, but there is also the lack of follow-up or permanent nature of such actions. Orienting the project and the participative actions towards the processes would allow for better perpetuation of participation with the construction of a particular dynamics between the different stakeholders participating and would as such represent a clear gain in the long run.[49] One might object by insisting that citizens want to see results and will not be satisfied just by knowing that a process has been put in motion. Through clear communication regarding the objectives of the participative actions and by marking the different stages in the participation process, the confidence between all persons involved in the participation process can be raised and the idea of each participative action being a final goal in its own right avoided.

Another difficulty related to time is the variety in temporal thinking between different stakeholders. A contractor thinking of time in relation to his contract will have a totally different view of the project from that of a citizen wishing for his or her children to benefit from the project. An obvious difference is the one between politicians and the civil servants working under the authority of those politicians. Political time is limited by the fixed term of politicians' time in office (often four or six years), while administrative time is continuous. A clear and long term vision of sustainable development does not correspond to short term politics. One might thus suggest that the centre of gravity (concerning planning, implementation and follow-up) of projects in public places should rest with civil servants and not with politicians. It is true that the administration is the guardian of continuation, but politicians should also try to avoid short term thinking limited by the period of their mandate. The different views of time suggest that true cooperation and dialogue between the different stakeholders can only be beneficial, as this allows, for example, a complementary view of time and a vision for the future.

3.1.3.2. True dialogue: a permanent listening attitude and the recognition of different kinds of expertise

By participating and engaging in dialogue, stakeholders should be encouraged not only understand to and validate the opinions and views of other stakeholders, but also to learn to look at the project and the place from the perspective of others. A true dialogue between stakeholders implies accepting a position of humility, which is for some stakeholders one that is not easy to adopt. However, all parties can benefit from an open dialogue, as it avoids hidden agendas or frustration resulting from opinions and views not even being asked for. For persons in charge of the public place project, it is, for example, important to work with local citizens (residents and users) from the beginning of their project. They can count on these resources to bring essential elements to the design and thus make it a viable and liveable project, in harmony with the spirit of the place. Another example of open dialogue is sound communication between contractors and associations representing disabled persons who might have to get across the place

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[49] Or, as a participant to the Topozym workshop in Brussels stated: "Les politiciens doivent envisager les projets selon une vision à long terme, qui permet d'organiser la consultation et la vraie participation de tous. La démocratie est stimulé par et implique des processus sur le long terme et non une participation ad hoc."

during the construction works. A partnership between all stakeholders can not only avoid double the work or superfluous mistakes, but can create a better living atmosphere even after the project has finished. For a better understanding of each other's perspectives, stakeholders should try to discuss their aspirations, instead of focusing on details or on the anecdotic. By doing this, the interests of all stakeholders can be clarified and the search for a reconciliation between these aspirations can begin. Organisers of participation and dialogue should thus not only set in motion the participative actions sufficiently early on in the project (in preference to during the phase of initialisation) and throughout the whole process but should also try to initiate a discussion on the basic principles. From this point of view, starting the participation process with the presentation of a 'pre-design' (or preliminary draft) to guide discussion on a new design for a certain public place, might limit the possibilities of constructive participation and partnership – even if the 'pre-design' can be criticised and will be adapted to the wishes of all stakeholders – because it will not lead to a discussion on values, aspirations and basic principles. On the contrary, too specific a presentation without a preceding, sound basis of 'thinking together' might create resistance on the part of the persons who do not feel involved in this pre-design.

From the phase of initialisation onwards, two main kinds of expertise have to be recognised by all stakeholders, and the two camps should be encouraged to cooperate: (1) expertise gathered in the field (for example, by residents and users) and (2) professional expertise (for example, architects and urban planners). Education or training dealing with the question "how am I an expert in this matter?" has to play a major role in convincing all stakeholders that different kinds of expertise, knowledge and competences are equally interesting and complementary. Coming into contact with other kinds of expertise and other opinions will improve the cooperation between these different categories of stakeholders and might enhance creativity and lead to the breaking away from routine tasks or routine approaches of projects. When raising ideas or organising dialogue, the first concern should not be to arrive at a consensus of all existing opinions and views, but the gathering of all these perspectives. In the search for consensus, values are to often overlooked and these values thus escape all possibilities for negotiation. When there is disagreement between the opinions and views of different stakeholders, it is important to have a common understanding and an acceptance of this disagreement.

3.1.3.3. *Understanding the place and its stakeholders as a starting point*

When working on public places, we recommend starting the work with an analysis of the project's place and location and its stakeholders. This step should influence the focus of the project and its objectives and the organisation of participative actions. Indeed, the suitability of the project to its context is of major importance (as was explained in part 3.1.1.D). The first important elements of the context that need to be understood are the meanings people accord to the place, the different kinds of use people make of the place and its integration into the neighbouring spatial structure. Understanding this complexity is a pre-requisite for a sound and sustainable project. These elements are only partly visible, which necessitates engaging in dialogue about this subject with experts in this matter, in relation to residents and (future) users. Taken in this light, the organisation of field visits appears to be an interesting exercise for all stakeholders. Field visits can renew views and perceptions of that place, not only for the persons in charge of the project but also for people who are convinced they already 'know' the place. One has to dare to experience the place in a new way to discover its essential nature, on the level of the social appropriation of the place as well as on the level of its physical appropriation. Field visits and discussions with other stakeholders can help people understand the subjectivity and diversity of perceptions regarding a specific place. Thus, a new bond with the place can be established by every stakeholder. Some people

may become 'blind' to certain elements of the place in question because it has become their habit to see and do these things there in a certain way. By varying representations and by bringing together insider and outsider perspectives, these 'blind spots' can be taken into account.

Other crucial elements of the context are the stakeholders that 'live' the place or that are influenced by the project. According to the stakeholder theory of Freeman (1984), a variety of views and opinions must be taken into account in order to be able to grasp the complexity of a public place. A project initiator could start by listing all the city services, private actors and associations involved in the process and then try to list all possible types of user by looking at the different functions of the place (internal brainstorming session). In a second step, the initiator could consult others in a (synchronisation) meeting or during informal conversation with stakeholders to make sure that the list is complete.[50] A stakeholder analysis should not only answer the question of who the stakeholders are, but also what the state of the internal relationships is, whether there are conflicts, how these stakeholders perceive the problem, what is important to these stakeholders and how they can be motivated to take part in the project. The analysis should clarify which stakeholders will stay within the margins of participative processes, so that specific measures can be undertaken to redress any imbalance.[51] The efforts to involve these 'weaker' groups of the population should benefit their emancipation and potentially improve existing power relations. Care should be taken not to go too far in categorising the stakeholders, as people are of course complex beings with multiple social identities and attitudes.

3.1.3.4. A particular function to facilitate participative processes: the community animator

Nowadays, a certain evolution in public place management projects can already be distinguished: whereas before public place management projects were seen as purely administrative business, with, for example, one city service running the project, this is no longer the case today. An important element of this evolution is the wish for or conviction regarding the need for citizen participation. When trying to implement this wish for participation, a new perspective on time pressure, true dialogue between all stakeholders and a sound context and stakeholder analysis to improve the sustainability of a project in a public place, particular competences are needed. While a context analysis can still be carried out by a civil servant or architect from a design and planning office, guiding groups in debates, working on constructive group dynamics and enabling the establishment of a partnership between stakeholders needs to be undertaken by a qualified, reliable, credible and legitimate ('neutral') person. We recommend engaging a (professional, external) 'community animator' to facilitate the participation process, especially when the stakeholder situation is complex. This particular function and the characteristics of such a community

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[50] In order to draw up a list of stakeholders that should be interviewed and invited to participate in the workshop sessions, Topozym researchers worked in an empirical way: based on personal experience and on (informal) conversations with stakeholders identifying other persons involved. Starting from a list of the formal members of the project's staff, researchers looked for other stakeholders based on the type of public place in question. A field visit often helped in drawing up this list. To make the list as exhaustive as possible, the research methodology of the triangulation of researchers was used: lists with agencies of the city administration that could possibly be involved, kinds of user and other collaborators, drawn up by different researchers, were compared, culminating in a complete overview of all partners and (types of) person involved in or concerned by the project.

[51] Examples of measures to reduce the obstacles that keep these people – in particular weaker groups of the population – from participating are the reimbursement of (transport and babysitting) costs to enable participation and the organisation of the actions in an accessible (open, inviting to all, easy to find, accessible by public transport, accessible for people with reduced mobility) place.

animator will now be described in detail.[52] The function of the community animator – with regard to improving the sustainability of public place management projects – can be split up into three tasks:

(1) to intervene in complex and multi-stakeholder contexts;
(2) to not only deal with specific problems or conflicts, but also to bring about the conditions to make a group of stakeholders want to take on a certain issue together and permanently;
(3) to conceive (an) elaborated process(es) to support the stakeholders in taking on that issue.

Besides being reliable and credible, three qualities of such a community animator would seem to be necessary.[53] These will be discussed below. The way the community animator should proceed is the subject of the dashboard (see box 6) and will be described in part 3.2.

- *Legitimate – deontologically neutral:*

As suggested earlier, the use of an external community animator is to be recommended, as he or she can act autonomously and thus have 'moral authority'. When the community animator is not thought of as 'independent' and legitimate by the stakeholders, he or she will not be trusted. Without trust, the participation of important stakeholders cannot be guaranteed, as they may step out of the process at one point or another. This does not mean the community animator should not be embedded in a clear structure, such as a socio-cultural movement, a non-profit organisation, even local administration, but the community animator must be free to formulate his or her own conclusions and to have a critical spirit. He or she must not be an instrument of the project initiators and must be able to set up his or her own set of objectives, as negotiated with the stakeholders. On the other hand, he or she must not become an instrument of the citizens, even of the weakest groups of the population. After making sure every stakeholder is (re)present(ed) in the participation process, the community animator should remain neutral and should set up methodologies in which every opinion is treated equally. In order to be a legitimate actor in the process, the community animator should obtain a clear mandate from the project initiators and/or owners of the public place, ensuring his or her deontological autonomy.

- *Basic knowledge of the subject:*

A 'learning attitude' on the part of the community animator ("I do not know a lot about this project, so I am here to listen to you") is almost always appreciated by stakeholders and is often a trigger to encourage dialogue. However, the community animator should have a basic knowledge of the project, the public place in question and its stakeholders. He or she should also have some ideas on the themes that could be addressed in the participative process in question (be they waste management, social cohesion or design processes). Without this knowledge, choosing which methods and tools should be used, which stakeholders should be invited to which actions and where these meetings or activities should take place can be difficult (and the community animator may become dependent on one stakeholder to make these important decisions). Without a basic knowledge of the subject, he or she will also encounter difficulties trying to understand what is said during the process (and may thus lose his/her legitimacy in the face of 'expert' stakeholders). In addition, the community animator should have the capacity to quickly learn more, both from and with the participants.

- *Facilitative and training competences:*

Last but not least, the community animator should be experienced in facilitative participative processes in order to be able to understand the social dynamics within the group of stakeholders, their

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[52] Many names could be suggested for this particular function in public place management projects. Other possibilities would be '(strategic) facilitator', 'mediator', 'companion', 'trainer'. In French, we prefer to speak of an 'animateur territorial' as this term is already in use to describe such a function.

[53] See also Ridder et al. (2006, pp. 31-33).

interests and their perspectives.54 Indeed, community animators need to assess, implement and adapt possible tools, methods and approaches. Based on his or her experience and contact with the stakeholders, the community animator should be able to work with the stakeholders and with the different kinds of expertise gathered during the participative process. He or she should also be flexible enough to adapt to the differences between the stakeholders with regard to competences, the possibility of making decisions, the issue of authority, and communicational and language skills. When certain stakeholders do not seem to be able to express their own opinion, the community animator may try, for example, to take on board this opinion during an informal conversation and then inject the idea anonymously in a later meeting.

Box 6
Philosophy, content and form of the dashboard

Associated with the piloting of a complex system, a dashboard ('tableau de bord') is often conceived as a tool consisting of indicators and measures to help make operational decisions. The Topozym dashboard has not been conceived as such a tool that predicts the success or failure of an action or project. What it does want to be is a *'stop and go' instrument* to direct and encourage a permanent questioning of the objectives of a project and the methods and tools used (stop) and to inspire the user to try to find (alternative) ways of thinking and acting (go). The dashboard should be an instrument at the service of persons that can influence the behavioural change of stakeholders of a certain place or space, in particular community animators (see the above 4th recommendation), from a perspective of a better integration of the principles of sustainability. The dashboard is entitled: "*Participation and public space. Dashboard for a concerted development and management.*" ("Participation et espace public. Tableau de bord pour un développement et une gestion concertée.") The objective of the dashboard is thus to help community animators in evaluating and/or inventing effective and coherent participative approaches and methods supporting the territorial governance of public places and spaces.

The dashboard is an *online instrument*, consisting of a principal text with many links to detailed files of concepts, tools or case studies (with bibliographic references leading to more information on the concept or tool in question). The dashboard has not been conceived as a booklet that should be read as a whole, but one to be used by zapping through the different parts according to the needs of the community animator. The concept-, tool- and case-files can be read and used separately in searching for specific information at whatever stage of the project, or as an illustration of the contents of the principal text.

The dashboard consists of three main parts. The first part is an *introductory chapter*, explaining the philosophy, objectives and context of the instrument, as well as some basic concepts such as 'public space', 'development', 'stakeholders' and 'training programme'

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[54] To learn which tools, methods and approaches function in which groups and situations (and thus gain experience as a community animator) persons could take part in participative processes as an observer and later as an animator-assistant. Useful manuals on the subject do now exist, but guiding participative processes is of course something that has to be learned in practice.

The two parts that follow each focus on two different groups of processes within public place management projects:

(1) *participative processes* ("Processus de participation");

(2) *processes of (re)construction and management* ("Processus d'aménagement et de gestion").

In the *principal text* of the dashboard, Topozym presents an itinerary that can be followed throughout these processes. The structure of these two parts is not the same, but they do both include testimonies from the case studies (referring to the case-files), lists of questions to be posed throughout the processes, courses of action, descriptions of concepts (referring to the concept-files) and references to tools and methods that can be used in these processes (referring to the tool-files).

The *concept-files* consist of reflections on the notion in question as well as the perspective from which the concept was approached in the Topozym action research project. An introductory comment in each of these concept-files always clarifies the way the concept is dealt with in the file in question. The *tool-files* discuss "tailor-made" tools and methods used in the workshop sessions of the Topozym case studies (sometimes based on the conception or use of these tools elsewhere). The *case-files* discuss the five Topozym case studies. They are briefly presented according to the following model: context (description of the place, initiation of the project, time line), stakes (preoccupations of the stakeholders, points of interest), progress of the workshop sessions, and 'results'.

The following overview of the dashboard will give an idea of the different subjects dealt with in the dashboard. In the (French) annexes of this report several concept-files and tool-files have been added to illustrate the form of these files in the dashboard. The full version of the dashboard is available online on the Topozym website: http://www.topozym.be/tableaudebord.

3.2.   HOW CAN AN INTERVENTION LIKE TOPOZYM'S TRY TO CHANGE THE BEHAVIOUR OF STAKEHOLDERS OF PUBLIC PLACE MANAGEMENT PROJECTS ?

Topozym intervened in five public place management projects to encourage changes leading to the (better) integration of principles of sustainability into those projects. The Topozym intervention consisted of a series of workshops facilitated by one or more trainers (supported by one or more researchers) with a limited group of stakeholders for a rather short period of time. In this second part of the results chapter, we will reflect on these kinds of interventions aimed at the behavioural change of stakeholders of public place management projects.[55] Topozym offered an exogenous or external intervention to groups of stakeholders. Before discussing the pedagogical approach of the intervention, we will therefore present the basic characteristics of an exogenous as opposed to an endogenous

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[55] The basic assumptions behind this kind of 'education' were explained in part 1.3. The dashboard presents potential ways for community animators to proceed with this goal in mind.

intervention. Afterwards, the philosophy, methods and tools of the intervention will be presented. Finally, we will discuss possible evaluative steps for interventions such as Topozym's.

3.2.1. Exogenous versus endogenous interventions

There are important differences between exogenous interventions (interventions by institutions or persons not involved in the project beforehand) and endogenous (internal) interventions. The difference between these kinds of interventions is reflected in the kind of trainer/animator that leads the intervention, notably a functional as opposed to a natural animator. A continuum of interventions and the animator's closeness to the project in which he or she intervenes is presented in Figure 5

Figure 5. Examples of exogenous and endogenous interventions

(1) Stakeholders are obliged to follow an existing training programme.
(2) Stakeholders are facilitated in a tailor-made way by external animators.
(3) Stakeholders call in the help of an external trainer.
(4) Within the group of stakeholders, one or more persons emerge as 'animators' and organise training to trigger change within the group.

endogenous intervention   **exogenous intervention**
(natural animator)   (functional animator)

$\longrightarrow$

(4)   **(3)**   **(2)**   **(1)**

In the third example (Stakeholders call in the help of an external trainer), there is an endogenous catalyst or an endogenous wish for change, but – most often because of the necessary competences of an animator organising this change – the group feels the need for a professional (community) animator. The similarity of such an intervention to the type of intervention in the second example (Stakeholders are facilitated in a tailor-made way by external animators, for example the Topozym intervention) depends on the agreement that is made between the stakeholders (especially those in charge of the project) and the animator in question. A condition for triggering 'change' (in the case of an evolution towards something better), be it by an endogenous or an exogenous animator, is the sense of dissatisfaction felt by the person and/or group of participants. If the participants are not in one way or another the 'demanding party', all kinds of interventions would be useless.

Because of the importance of the independent position vis-à-vis all stakeholders or the deontological neutrality of the animator (see part 3.1.3.4.), the initial agreement (or contract of intervention) is very determinative. In the Topozym case, we proposed a tailor-made intervention (of interviews and workshop sessions) to different projects (selected based on the diversity criterion, as was explained in part 2.2.1.1.). After a Topozym selection of the cases, an important number of decisions were made in negotiation between Topozym researchers and some persons in charge or the initiators of the project. While these negotiations guided the Topozym intervention on a certain level, during the synchronisation phase and the workshop sessions, there was enough freedom to co-decide with the participants of these meetings what the focus of these sessions would be. However, these subjects

were determined by the Topozym research topic: sustainability in public place management projects. When agreeing to cooperate, persons in charge of the case studies thus decided whether or not they found this subject interesting enough and could allow changes with regard to this subject. Topozym thus served as an exogenous catalyst for change towards more sustainability.

The question is, then, whether or not the same kind of change would have been possible without the Topozym exogenous intervention. In most of the case studies, one or more persons could have served as an endogenous or natural animator and a trigger of change. However, they did not organise activities or dialogue in order to trigger change. When these same persons were offered the opportunity to participate in the Topozym intervention, they were happy to accept this proposition for external support.[56] They then counted on the professional competences of the Topozym animator to lead the workshops. We will now discuss three main advantages of an exogenous intervention. The most striking disadvantage of such an intervention is its temporality. Topozym intervened for a very short period of time and with only three or four workshops sessions. This hampers the construction of a climate of trust and true dialogue and makes sound evaluations (with adaptations throughout the process) difficult if not impossible. Endogenous interventions might be offered more time as they might – in contrast with exogenous interventions – be seen as a part of the project and not as an extra opportunity or burden.[57] For exogenous interventions that are limited in time, the emancipation and capacity-building of the stakeholders is of major importance: a permanent bond of dependence on the animator must be avoided, as he or she will at some point no longer be part of the (learning) community. In a way, exogenous interventions should be able to create endogenous catalysers and possibilities for endogenously led interventions.

The advantage that was most often cited by participants in the Topozym workshops was the fact that Topozym encouraged dialogue between stakeholders who were not used to working with each other (and were sometimes not even aware of the existence of a project).[58] As an endogenous animator, it can be more difficult to get members of an existing group to open up to new stakeholders, but in the Topozym intervention this responsibility lay with 'an outsider'. Such an outsider can also bring experience and ideas from other projects and, as a new source of information, initiate reflections that will incite creativity in the group of stakeholders. It might also be easier for an outsider to collect all the different opinions and visions from the group of stakeholders, because he or she is seen as a neutral actor. The fact that an exogenous intervention might come across as 'artificial' can be an advantage, as it may be a catalyst for dialogue and reflection on a subject that is not of great importance to the group of stakeholders. The intervention of an external person can thus help stakeholders to leave old habits behind, to express what has always previously been taken for granted and to discuss details they thought the other stakeholders were already aware of.

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[56] In most cases, the gathering together of stakeholders to participate in the Topozym workshop sessions was quite easy, even though the timing of the Topozym project forced a strict schedule and the calling of meetings at short notice. The stakeholders that chose to participate did so mostly because of their curiosity about the subject of sustainability and/or because of the wish to improve the project or place with which they have a special bond.

[57] This condition of having enough time to intervene (to allow evaluation and evolution of the intervention) should be stressed during negotiations on a sound agreement regarding the intervention. See also part 3.1.3.1. on the importance of time.

[58] This fact was most cited by the stakeholders of the case of Charleroi, where participants eventually succeeded in establishing a permanent committee to organise the inauguration festivities.

3.2.2. Philosophy, methods and tools of the intervention

Each intervention or training programme needs to be adapted to the place, stakeholders, project and timing of the project in which one intervenes.[59] In other words, an intervention or training programme has to be tailor-made. Making recommendations on the philosophy, methods and tools of such an intervention should thus not be too specific. We will therefore describe different possible scenarios and characteristics, always using the Topozym interventions in the five case studies as illustrations. While reading these basic characteristics and convictions, the four recommendations explained in part 3.1.3. should be kept in mind, as they can also serve as basic recommendations regarding the intervention:

(1) to try not to succumb to the pressure of time and the perceived need for instant, short term results;

(2) to establish true dialogue with all stakeholders, recognising the different kinds of expertise and responsibilities of everyone;

(3) to start from the context of the place and its stakeholders in setting up a project;

(4) to appoint a community animator (who is reliable and credible, deontologically neutral, has basic knowledge of the subject and the necessary training competences) to support participative processes.

Different steps in the process of an intervention can be distinguished. The starting point is the obtaining of a clear *agreement* on the objectives, possibilities and limits of the exogenous intervention between the (community) animators and all or some of the stakeholders of a certain public place (or project). Note that such an agreement can only be reached if there is a sense of dissatisfaction or wish to change within the group of stakeholders. The subsequent step is then the *collection* of all available, 'objective' *information* on the place or project in question in order to grasp possible subjects and to encourage participants to attend the workshop sessions. In the Topozym case, this first step was undertaken by means of interviews in four of the five cases. The advantages and difficulties of this strategy were discussed in part 2.2.1.3. Another step is the *invitation* of a number of *stakeholders* to participate. This step raises the need for networking or for the joining and stimulating of stakeholders to work together to become a learning community (see also Schmitz et al., 2008). Ethically acceptable and efficient networking strategies from the very beginning of the intervention are of major importance. The question of who to include in the partnership and process implies making a choice between working with heterogeneous (with regard to position, function, level of education,..), groups, with homogeneous groups or establishing a training model that combines both homogeneous and heterogeneous groups. In the Topozym case, different recruiting strategies were followed. Once the recruiting was done, the *workshop sessions* could then take off. A follow-up and evaluation had to then be undertaken.

We will now focus on the steps taken in the recruitment of participants and the actual training program sessions. First, we will discuss recruitment strategies.[60] Secondly, we will present the two basic

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[59] The timing of the intervention is an important decision to take. If possible, we would recommend starting as early in the process as possible. At that stage, practical changes in the project, appropriation of the project by all stakeholders and participation that focuses on aspirations and basic principles are easier. However, an existing project as a starting point may for some stakeholders facilitate discussion. While this timing of the intervention does influence the setting up of the workshop sessions, the presented philosophy and approach can be applied at all stages of the process. Note that the goal is to create a community of stakeholders of indefinite duration, which means that an intervention can never come too late.

[60] When thinking about recruitment strategies, one should also think of the incentives that can be offered to the participants when they are invited to be part of the process. The introduction of a penalty in the case of non

theoretical frameworks that have appeared to be sound basic principles for exogenous interventions aiming at behavioural change: the social constructivist approach and the theory of learning communities. Finally, we will present rules and tools that support such an exogenous intervention and thus apply the theoretical perspectives to learning.

3.2.2.1. Recruitment strategies

Three basic theoretical recommendations regarding recruitment and networking can be put forward.

(1) A first point to focus on is the *composition of the group* one wants to establish and turn into a 'learning community'[61]. In order to be able to grasp the complexity of the public place in question and to take into account a variety of visions and opinions (Freeman, 1984), stakeholders of varied functions, competences and intelligences[62] (Gardner, 2006) should be offered the opportunity to take part in training and participative processes.[63] An exogenous intervention should thus try to go beyond improving the group dynamics of existing teams, and try to create bridges (Gittel & Vidal, 1998) and inspire people, who do not usually work together, to cooperate. Having a varied group allows for rich exchanges going beyond expert discussion on a specific topic. These basic convictions would thus plead for heterogeneous groups. However, to be able to constitute a learning community, the group should be able to have shared aspirations and there has to be a common will to engage in the search for ways to achieve these aspirations together. In some cases, it might thus not be possible to start the training process with heterogeneous groups. Instead, one might, for example, benefit from splitting up (homogeneous) work groups to reassemble them at a later stage to become a heterogeneous learning community.[64] An important limit to the possibilities of inviting all the stakeholders involved is of course that the group of participants should not be too big. In the case of big projects, a possible solution could be the working with (elected) representatives of different groups of stakeholders (possibly with meetings of these representatives with their group to inform and receive feedback to take back to the group of representatives).

(2) Paying attention to *practical issues* also appears to be crucial for recruitment and networking. Participation must, in the first place, be possible for all persons invited. Choosing the timing and location of the meetings or activities must thus be done with care. The possibility of organising parallel groups during different periods of the day (for example, an afternoon and an evening

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attendance of a participant, for example, would encourage persons to be present, but does not necessarily incite real engagement.

[61] The exact meaning of 'learning community' will be discussed in part 3.2.2.2.

[62] We will not discuss Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences in detail here. A concept-file of the dashboard does discuss this theory and has been added in annex 5. In short, Gardner's theory argues that the traditional definition of 'intelligence' does not sufficiently encompass the wide variety of abilities humans display. He distinguishes eight core intelligences: linguistic, logical-mathematical, visual-spatial, bodily-kinaesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal and naturalist intelligence. Other intelligences have been suggested or explored, such as spiritual, existential and moral intelligence. The recognition of multiple intelligences within each learning community should be promoted, valuing each form of intelligence and trying to develop them further. Each kind of intelligence requires a different learning style (Kolb, 1984). See also Armstrong (1999).

[63] The importance for the sustainable development of public places of encompassing both a broad series of vocational experts, as well as (representatives of) users, including those who are usually forgotten or ignored, has been discussed in depth on several occasions in this report.

[64] For one of the concept-files of the dashboard, the choice to work with heterogeneous or with homogeneous groups in different stages of the project was analysed according to the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) method. This analysis has been added in annex 6. We will come back to the subject of managing heterogeneity or diversity in part 3.2.2.3.

group) should certainly be considered a possibility. The choice of location should show respect for the participants: being well set up, accessible and preferably on 'neutral ground'. Another possibility is to organise a 'rotating host' system: for every meeting or activity, one group of stakeholders invites the others to their building. Close proximity between the location for the meetings and the public place in question is recommended, as it allows for the maintenance of a link with the place.

(3) Of major importance for a good start to network building and the setting up of a learning community are *sound communication and trust* between the members of the group of participants (see Ruuskanen 2004). From the start of the training programme – even from the first contact – there has to be clarity and negotiation concerning the rules of functioning (with the focus on equal opportunity to express opinions and influence the group's decisions) and transparency and access to the necessary information for all stakeholders.

These theoretical ideals were of course not always applicable in the Topozym cases. Five similar recruitment strategies were applied, following a common protocol. As a first step, a key stakeholder[65] was asked to list the other stakeholders, indicating who – according to him or her – should participate in the workshop sessions. Based on a snowballing process, a core group was set up by the researchers. To enrich this core group, the researchers defined missing stakeholders based on the exploration of the project and field visits.[66] Despite this common protocol, the results were five very different groups of participants. The eventual decisions on who to invite to the workshop sessions were based on the objectives and possibilities of each case, but were, in the Topozym case, heavily limited by the time constraints and, in some cases, by the wishes of persons in charge of the project.[67]

3.2.2.2. Theoretical bases: social constructivism and learning communities

- *Social constructivism* [68]

The constructivist theory holds that humans construct knowledge and meaning from their experiences. Knowledge is something created, discovered and experienced. It is non objective, internally

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[65] Looking at the Topozym experience, we can conclude that the choice of this key person is crucial. It is important that this person is relatively stable in his/her position, knows the field (by working on a level that allows closeness with the field) and is open to accepting the listing of stakeholders who do not seem to share the same aspirations as he or she does. Note that an agreement for an intervention from the authorities is necessary, but the contacts directing the establishment of a list of stakeholders appear to be more interesting with persons on a lower level in the hierarchy.

[66] Enriching the group with new people, new points of view and new competences and intelligences or this inclusion of 'non-obvious' stakeholders in the workshop sessions has to be done with care. Transparency on how every stakeholder was chosen seems to be crucial. In the case of Noiseux, several people were invited to a synchronisation meeting without preceding interviews. As long as they were questioning the utility of their presence in the meeting, they were not able to focus on understanding the goal of the Topozym intervention.

[67] In the case of Antwerp, for example, negotiations with the person in charge of the project had first led to the decision to bring together a heterogeneous group of citizens as well as civil servants. To ensure a safe learning environment for all participants, a model was proposed in which the two categories of participants would first meet separately (as two homogenous groups) and would in a later stage be brought together to exchange ideas and perspectives. Unfortunately at the time of these negotiations, the project's dynamics were not halted, and parallel to the Topozym intervention, meetings were set up with civil servants. The person in charge then decided that assembling these same civil servants within the Topozym framework would no longer be convenient. The Antwerp workshop sessions were thus for citizens, in the presence of two civil servants in charge of the project. In this case, an endogenous intervention (fully incorporated into the project) would have implied a better coordination with other project dynamics and processes and would thus have been awarded more time and opportunities to assemble a heterogeneous group.

[68] See among others Bruner, 1961; Fosnot, 1996; Garnier et al. 1978; Piaget, 1950; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1985.

constructed and socio-culturally mediated. The student or the participant in a training programme should not be treated as representing a blank sheet. The new information he or she receives is handled through individual filters of perception (based on existing knowledge and experience) and socio-cultural filters of perception. The new input is treated in different ways by each participant and may be rejected, adapted or integrated, allowing an enrichment of the representations each participant had before this information was added to his or her knowledge. Learning thus becomes a constant adaptation of our representations, notably the way we think about our environment, about others and about ourselves. In the social (or communal) constructivist vision of education, the focus is placed on how knowledge and meaning are socially constructed. Social interactions represent an ideal opportunity to compare our own representations with those of others. This permanent, unconscious dynamic process is characterised by a paradoxical combination of abilities to adapt our representations and a certain resistance to changing our representations. This resistance concerns our certitudes, our beliefs and our values, which are anchored in our personality and culture. The basic idea behind the series of workshops is working on this difference between representations, beliefs and behaviour; the starting point of the training programme is a destabilising experience and an analysis of the perception of reality in order to draw some lessons from this comparison. Doing this collectively during a workshop session may facilitate an 'awakening', as subjectivity of perceptions is likely to be demonstrated. Because this process of changing representations (and thus also of practices and behaviour, as the new representations create a new framework to understand reality) should not be sensed as being a rupture, the methods and tools used by the trainer should be carefully chosen and some basic rules concerning group dynamics are needed to create a safe and creative learning environment (see part 3.2.2.3.). In education that takes these (social) constructivist convictions into account, the trainer is not seen as a teacher or educator, but as a facilitator. Learning is not considered as the reception of exogenous information, revealed by scientific or technical experts, but as an occasion to share experiences and knowledge and as a place where every member can be considered an expert. Practical activity should thus be favoured as opposed to didactic lectures covering the subject matter. The emphasis is on the learner or participant and not on the trainer. The exogenous animator facilitates a process of change by adapting methods and his or her own position on demand, adapting to the needs of participants and the context in which the group evolves.

  ▪ *Learning communities*

A learning community is a group of people who share common values, beliefs and aspirations and are actively engaged in learning together and from each other. The aim of the training programme should be to get the group of participants (stakeholders) to sense this feeling of community.[69] McMillan & Chavis distinguish four elements that define such a feeling of community: membership (or a feeling of loyalty to the group that drives them to cooperate), influence (actions of one member affect what happens in the community), fulfilment of individual needs (by expressing personal opinions and receiving information), and shared events and emotional connections (see Bonk et al., 2004). Whereas the Piagetian form of constructivism might focus too much on the individual as 'the unit of instruction', working with learning communities allows an integration of the idea of seeing learning as a

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[69] A similar known theory is that of 'communities of practice' (Wenger, 1998). A community of practice is a group of individuals participating in communal activity and experiencing/continuously creating their shared identity through engaging in and contributing to the practices of their community. Because of the word 'practice' in the term, it seems as though it stands just for shared practice, but it was created for a larger whole. Other types of community referring to a different philosophical foundation are thus not needed (such as 'community of interests', 'community of aspirations'). What counts, is the sense of community.

cultural practice. Working with learning communities allows the granting of a central place to social and cultural interactions leading to new common visions, knowledge and competences (Vygotsky, 1978). Within the learning communities, trainers try to create a space for questioning with regard to the representations of the participants. Discussions and the comparison of ideas are used to make choices regarding solutions that are socially liveable, as well as to make socially acceptable decisions. These are strategies of co-training aiming at the transformation of persons and their environment. Working in this way stresses the importance of the cooperation of people with different knowledge and talent (see Orellana, 2005, 2006).

3.2.2.3. Rules and tools

A group of stakeholders has been gathered and has agreed to engage in a learning process together. How can the theoretical bases of social constructivism and learning communities now be put into practice? Or in other words, how can an animator create conditions that favour change?

- *Creating a secure environment*

A condition *sine qua non* for positive group dynamics and possibilities for evolution is the creation of a secure environment and a climate of trust (in each other and in the animator). The animator should introduce rules of conduct, a clear structure and objectives. He or she must be determined in where he or she is going with the group and has to appear to have control over the situation. Moments of chaos are possible, but the animator must have an idea of the aim of this chaos and must always appear to be in the position of being able to put a stop to it. The risk of dispersion, staying vague or of creating confusion must be prevented. For participants to feel secure, they must have a clear idea of what is going to happen, how they can contribute and that an animator is present so that they feel they are 'in good hands'. This important position of 'master of ceremony' can be demonstrated from the beginning of the first session by starting on time, regardless of the presence of participants at that moment. Other rules can be introduced implicitly[70] throughout the first session, such as one person talking at a time, giving every participant the chance to intervene, sticking to the subject, respecting different opinions and ways of living, not leaving the session before it is finished (with the promise of finishing on time). A framework for all rules is that the focus must always be on the group and the aim is to involve every participant in that group. The role of the arrangement of the room is not negligible in this respect: the participants are placed in a circle or square in order to be able to see each other. A typical problem – especially in rather big groups – is participants talking to their neighbours instead of the whole group. They can be asked to repeat their idea in front of everyone. Using the same line of thought, the 'silent participants' have to be(come) a part of the group too, but they have the right to be silent and should not be 'forced to have an opinion'. In summary, the animator can be described as an audacious guide who offers direction and reassuring methodological choices. He or she confirms his/her clear vision for the training programme, proposes a framework and guarantees its respect, and prepares and adapts it carefully.

- *The animator as part of the learning community*

In the social constructivist approach of learning communities, the animator is part of the community and thus not in a position of 'educator'. The animator should not present him or herself as an expert on

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[70] Note that large-scale meetings often do benefit from a formal introduction of rules of conduct at the beginning of a participation process.

the subject, but as a training expert proposing the right methodology and tools to encourage dialogue and change. He or she can show this being part of the learning community by a flexible and listening attitude and position. This does not mean that the animator can come unprepared to the sessions, but he or she must be prepared to throw these preparations overboard when necessary. When the effects of certain methods, tools or prepared series of questions are not the effects the animator was after or when the group clearly wants to go in another direction, adaptation should be possible.[71] What is important is for the animator to continue to link all the steps and parts of the process, to return to the core of the subject fast enough and to give every participant (and him or herself as an animator) the time to process new information. From this point of view, the animator must try to be a generous, sympathising companion who listens and understands, who lives and shares this period of introspection, questioning and evolution with optimism and warmth.

- *Grasping and mastering the complexity of heterogeneous groups*

The matter of managing diversity within the group is always a challenge, even in 'homogeneous groups' (such as groups consisting of civil servants). One could even say that no group is homogeneous (the perspectives of the civil servants can be very different according to the service they represent). A newly constituted group has to be 'synchronised', especially if they do not know each other and each other's position. However, for all these persons, the public place or project in question can serve as a common framework from which common aspirations can be built. The public place is thus not only the object of reflection and a support for behavioural change, but it is also the mediator that causes the emergence of the desire and need to synchronise and cooperate. The process of synchronisation should be led by an animator, trying to create a learning community from a group of stakeholders. In view of this challenge, the animator should have an overview of the complexity of perspectives and arguments as quickly as possible. He or she should also be able to synthesise and present these perspectives and arguments clearly to all participants. Furthermore, animators should be sensitive regarding the different meanings behind the words and expressions the participants use, in order to be able to identify potential misunderstanding. They must adjust their own language to that of the participants and find 'the appropriate tone'. This way, they have to contribute to the improvement of internal communication, to give central importance to what is said. In heterogeneous groups, the means of communications and methods need to be diversified and extra attention should be paid to those members of the learning community that do not feel comfortable expressing themselves verbally. The participants should also be encouraged to leave behind their personal views and interests and to join in constructing a common project. A key principle seems to be for the stakeholders to project into the future and to focus on their aspirations instead of getting bogged down in present needs.[72] The learning community is asked to engage in finding a common solution and not in finding a compromise. An important step is to agree on allowing a space for dissension within the group. Attention should also be paid to the power relations within the group.

- *Diversifying methods to support questioning and evolution*

Because of the diversity within the group of stakeholders, but also in order to offer as many opportunities as possible for being 'confronted' with new information and other representations, we recommend the use of diversifying methods and tools. The goal is a balanced intervention in which approaches, sequences and learning styles are alternated in order to create conditions for change.

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[72] This idea has already been expressed by the Antoine de Saint-Exupéry: Quand on veut construire un bateau, il ne faut pas rassembler les gens pour aller chercher le bois ou dessiner des plans. Ce sont des compétences spécifiques. Il faut d'abord leur apprendre le désir de la mer infinie.

The idea is to change behaviour without rupture. Animators should thus avoid pointing out 'mistakes' and 'misconceptions'. Special attention should be paid to emotions. Indeed, behind every rational expression regarding a place, is hidden an emotional experience (good or bad). There might also be fear present due to misconceptions and prejudices regarding other stakeholders. It is crucial to support awareness-raising regarding and the taking into account of these emotions. Of equal importance are the imaginative abilities of stakeholders. The ability to imagine alternatives for the project, the place and the relationships between the stakeholders should be developed with appropriate tools and methods that help to break with ancient representations and to arouse hope, desire and creative ideas. The animator should also encourage stakeholders to look at 'what lies behind' views and opinions (hidden meanings and basic, abstract principles). In most cases, words and discussion alone do not suffice in reaching these goals. In their model of social learning, Wildemeersch et al. (1997) describe reflection-in-action: this is learning based on acting and experiencing. The animator should try to take the actual experiences (during the training programme or elsewhere) of the participants as a starting point. Discussion and experience can cause an adaptation or rearranging of representations based on these experiences, which can again be tested and reflected upon. When working on a specific context such as a public place, visiting the field in question or other public places can be a rewarding activity, as this allows persons to discover, shape and express their knowledge regarding public places. This is the idea of situated learning: learning that takes place in the same context in which it is applied.[73] But even the simple fact of changing location can help to multiply the possibilities of seeing things from another perspective and thus of changing representations.

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[73] The idea of learning communities is often linked with that of situated learning. Indeed, learning should be considered as a social process that is embedded within a particular social and physical environment (Lave & Wenger, 1991). From that point of view, situated learning is quite logical.

CONCLUSION: PERSPECTIVES

"We can find all the technical solutions we want, something durable is above all something we love deeply"[74].

These are the words of Philippe Samyn, the architect who defended an empathic and durable approach to "good building". We can take this phrase as being aimed at expressing in a few words the conclusions of the final report of Topozym's research-learning and action project. In its intentions, this approach was centred on experimentation in teaching methods favouring rapid changes in behaviour in the development and management of public spaces. These behavioural changes are expected in two major directions: firstly, a more global and more durable approach to public spaces, including a more transversal management, and secondly, an integration of citizen participation into the development and management process.

The experiments carried out in the five cases studied highlighted that it was possible to instigate behavioural changes within a short time period by means of the intervention of a person whom we have decided to call the "community animator", even though this term remains unsatisfactory, because it is rather mild given the specific teaching competences necessary for this type of work, which involve more learning than organising.

This role of the community animator, which we have described as facilitator, highlights from the start our teaching paradigm (a socio-constructivist paradigm). This approach considers that people are actor-authors of the change processes which relate to them, that these changes are mobilised by interactions with their environment and that they are the result of a social construction. From this point of view, all people who take part in workshop meetings, including animators, constitute a learning community, all members of which involve and engage themselves in a co-development of a pluralist vision of things, validated by the context, before pursuing concrete actions in co-operation and by negotiation.

OBJECTIVES OF BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE IN THREE DIRECTIONS

The experiments within the framework of the Topozym project are related to the preconditions for engagement in action and they have highlighted the importance, for the community animator both in charge of and facilitating a group of actors concerned with a given public space, of buttressing the operation in three directions:
by being deeply committed to public spaces;
by being deeply committed to working in a learning community;
by being profoundly committed to the citizens involved.

These three directions constitute the goals of the desired behavioural changes, beginning with the working hypothesis that practices in this area can be questioned:

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[74] Interview in the 2nd Cahier of *Vif/L'Express* n°5 from 30/01 to 2/5/2009, p.14.

RETERRITORIALISING PUBLIC SPACES

Public spaces are by definition spaces that do not belong to anybody in particular, and hence spaces that are likely to be abandoned. For them to become worthy of interest and care, awareness building and appropriation is necessary.

Public spaces are very often passed through or occupied automatically, "without thinking about it". Something that nobody "looks at", a space that we "don't even see" or have ceased to see, that has become worthless: we have become accustomed to the space's disadvantages, we accept the stress, we don't even take notice of the "small" degradations; indeed, we even take part in them,… and even the small or large "treasures" of the place are hidden by other concerns.

The behavioural change hoped for through the raising of awareness is thus that each and every person will start to take notice of his or her environment, that he or she may become "present" again in a place, seeing its qualities as well as its defects, and become aware of "how this place resounds in him (or her)". This sensitising process is founded on our awakening to the importance and value of our environment, of which public spaces form a part, as a component of our being in the world (an existential function) and our identity (a social function). As its name indicates, this sensitising process raises our consciousness with regard to our emotions, to feelings of pleasure or displeasure, fear or wellbeing, confidence or distrust, etc, all experienced in a place, and through a clarification of its values. It also encourages an exploration the profound significance of a place, beyond its mere aspect: any space (and a public space in particular), is a symbolic place for many people, both today and in the past. Within a learning community, development of a shared sensitivity for public spaces starts with a stage that creates these spaces on a symbolic level. The very fact of meeting to talk about it is a way of making the place exist in the eyes of each and every one and of giving it a value.

Appropriation of a public space means by definition "becoming an owner". A paradoxical situation, since such spaces belong de facto to public authorities and there is every reason to think that the feeling of belonging to a given public space is rather fickle, depending on the places and people, or that it is even absent. However, a city's environment is something public, resulting from individual decisions. Hoped for changes in behaviour mean that everyone "worries" on a daily basis, as though "part of a family", that everyone feels concerned and to some extent responsible for the quality of a public space and its evolution.

PROMOTING CONSULTATION AND MULTI-PARTY CO-PRODUCTION OF PUBLIC SPACES

The socio-constructivist paradigm, which underlies this training work, is founded on the recognition and the taking into account of perceptions that are not only individual, but specifically social, in connection with public spaces. In our view, the hoped for behavioural change, through the socio-cultural construction of representations in connection with public spaces, must develop through a common intelligence of the territory. This common intelligence of the territory corresponds to a way of living there and to a way of living which is specifically linked to the aspect of feeling-thinking-acting-communicating in a group whose members together have the emergent skills that no one actor or group of actors could have possessed separately.

But team-work, from consultation to co-operation, emerging through dialogue, is not a widespread part of the customs and habits of our society, and few people are prepared for it, be it within the family or at

school. A change in this sense is all the more complex in that it involves working within a very mixed group of actors.

However, as regards public spaces, the actors involved are quite diverse and are not at all accustomed to meeting, or, quite simply, do not know one another. In order to build a pluralist learning community, it is thus first necessary to convene around the table all the parties involved. And, so that the operation may be long-lasting, those involved should very quickly get the feeling that "it can work". The behavioural changes aimed at here, thus rest on the possibility of establishing a pact of confidence between recipients, a goal which we have described as the synchronisation of actors. While people are hesitant in entering into this context, the community learning work can help in moderating prejudices and restoring confidence in the res publica, as long as, at the outset, political authorities respect the moral contracts binding them to the citizens and, indeed, take the citizens' opinions into account. And so that citizens, in reality, commit themselves to the project to varying degrees, on a long-term basis, or at least keep up with what is going on, the authorities should feel easy about and appreciate their participation. Civil servants, who ensure continuity from one political term to the next, must also be convinced of the need for citizens to participate and consequently opt to support this mobilisation.

The group must also recognise the importance of breaking with a system based on a rupture between those who think and those who execute, between actors (who decide) and consumers, between scientific experts and experts in the field, between "bad/good authorities" and "good/bad citizens", between leaders and followers, between silent partners and service providers, etc… This capacity for calling one's status into question is related to everyone's social emancipation as well as to group emancipation and, as such, with respect to non participating actors.

Experiments have shown how hard it is for people to change their ways. Additionally, it is up to the community animator to propose work and communication tools that help change attitudes so as to support listening and collaboration in a transparent way. He or she will also make an earnest effort to practise teaching alternatives (varying tools and methods) in order to accommodate the various styles of learning and to help everyone develop the various forms of knowledge necessary.

The training programme carried out within the framework of the Topozym project has shown that, once a certain pact of confidence has been established, everyone can more easily accept the need to distance him or herself from his/her own concerns so as to draw up a global and nuanced diagnosis with the group. As part of this process, he or she will be enabled to indicate the extent to which the dimensions of public space taken into account are interconnected and which actors support which aspects. Here the emergence and long-term maintenance of a learning community takes on its complete sense. The desire, the reality of being profoundly fond of belonging to such a community, resides in the fact of knowing by experience that none of its members, and no institution can, separately, claim to be able to identify all the qualities of a territory or to identify the problems arising within it. The actors have learned by experience that the characterisation of a territory's problems has a relative value depending on the viewpoint of the various actors; the problems are not the same, nor are they perceived with the same acuity. But at the same time the actors have been able to note that the characterisation of problems is often restricted and that differing viewpoints generally reveal shared territorial problems that each group failed to perceive or did so badly. And this allows for the building of a common basis for working together. Centred on what binds them more than on what divides them, the actors in a learning community can gradually imagine a design (abstract and

concrete components) of the territory within a "public service" vision galvanising their actions and projects in giving them considerably more meaning and a wider range.

From then on, the groups quickly manage to grasp the transversal territorial problems and the long-term stakes. Recourse to tools stimulating creativity and co-operation allow each group to make proposals for actions, allowing initially perceived problems to be seen in new contexts. Of course, the few meetings necessary represent a burden on everyone, but nevertheless, we can say that the results obtained offset the generally held idea that "all that takes a lot of time". We have been able to show that, in the space of a few meetings, it has been possible to advance rapidly in a participative process.

DEVELOPING A CITIZEN'S INTELLIGENCE FOR PUBLIC SPACES

The exercise of citizenship in daily life does not occur automatically; in fact, it is a question of citizens passing from a strictly egocentric relationship with public spaces to a "public service" approach towards them, and for elected officials to regard citizen participation as an asset rather than a threat.

This prospect is certainly one of the most ambitious objectives in the behavioural changes sought within the framework of the Topozym project, and it is unrealistic to imagine being able to achieve results within a short term working framework.

Beyond the "what" and the "how" of the development of a given public space, this indeed supposes that the actors ask themselves the question "why" and that they examine the project in terms of equity, social justice and even of eco-justice (Bowers, 2001): Who decides what in the territory? In whose name? In reference to what ideology? And why?

The group of actors thus expresses the progressive construction of a common political identity, by clarifying its representations of power and in questioning the position it imagines it occupies or would be able to occupy in managing the territory. It should be remembered that citizen participation is an asset expressing itself alongside the assets of representative democracy. A love of citizenship is thus expressed in being delighted that citizens speak up, in investing in the public domain and in wanting to be involved. But it is not an effortless task…

Even if the short term results of this citizen role are hard to evaluate, it is essential that it be presented at the beginning of the creation of a learning community. It is particularly advisable to disabuse everyone of any naive view of participation (overly high expectations, and thus a risk of frustration and disappointment at the first sign of a conflict of ideas or interests) via the recognition of individual differences and the negotiation of a possible space of interest to be shared, just the opposite of a search for hypothetical and even dangerous general interests, or a search for a hypothetical and utopian consensus. That recognition of differences and emphasis on negotiation presupposes that the time is taken to listen to the actors, in order to ensure the reality of the space of agreement, to specify its nature and measure its intensity. Moreover, the exercise taking account of a common citizen's knowledge of the territory is incarnated at the very heart of the process and implies acceptance of the function of multi-party arbitration.

Public spaces being public, it is paramount that they are not appropriated by some "dominant members of the territory" (politicians, owners, users), who would define its physiognomy and its use to

the detriment of other users. This is why development, namely the determination of a positive development of public spaces for all of us, requires that public authorities exert a function of arbitration in this respect, by granting a particular interest to groups who do not have a say. Reciprocal arbitration by citizens, in order to guarantee that love of power or money, among other concerns, does not exclusively and durably orient the development and management of public spaces.

Short term initiatives and experiments within the framework of the Topozym project have shown that participative methods supporting the emergence of a common and citizenship awareness of the territory can indeed engender a general mobilisation of the recipients to undertake a public space management project. Not only did the actors present encounter the positive learning work experience jointly and in-depth, but they were also able to create social links between themselves, which made them want to continue along the same path. The experiments also highlighted each actor's capacity to adopt at the same time a "micro" posture, centred on the public space in question and strictly local concerns, and a "macro" posture, able to consider problems in other spaces and other time frames. Thus, the work on a given public space can be seen as a beautiful opportunity to invite people who are not accustomed to such action to become fully-fledged active citizens.

In closing, let us stress that the behavioural changes of all the participants are to be considered from the point of view of continuing education. That does not mean that the new behaviours should all be put under lock and key so that the new practices become routine. Quite the contrary: ongoing education, founded on social emancipation in context, presupposes a permanent awareness and an attention to social, cultural and environmental dynamics. This pleads for a better valorisation of specialised teachers in the field of community development, something which is still very rare today.

RESEARCH PROSPECTS

In terms of research prospects, two important components emerge:
- Continuing research-formation-activities on necessary competences and forms of relevant pedagogical methods and tools, in terms of the diversity of contexts.
- Being able to implement these pedagogical methods and tools in the field within a time scale that really allows them to work.

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ANNEX 1

Self-assessment grid to analyse the sustainability of public place management projects [75]

Philosophy of this self-assessment grid

The target group of this grid are stakeholders of public place management projects. The grid is an instrument enabling the opening up of minds towards new perspectives, the enriching of ideas on (practices of) sustainable development. It is not a table of indicators that have to be attained at all costs. Current practices often forget the (spirit of the) real objectives behind those indicators by focusing solely on them. In other words, the grid is a working tool that can be used in the search for the continuous improvement of public place management projects. In addition, the principles and criteria retained in the grid need to be adapted to the individual project and the groups or stakeholders involved. The grid does not represent a dogma that has to be followed blindly, but is an instrument that can start a reflection on the values and dimensions that the group decides upon. Finally, the grid is meant to be a means for self-assessment or for actual assessment within the group of stakeholders, not for external evaluation. The following questions can thus be used to complete the grid, to help position the project in the light of these principles of sustainability or to facilitate discussion on sustainability within a group of stakeholders: (a) Which particular points of the questionnaire have attracted your attention?; (b) In terms of which principles does your project seem well on the way?; (c) What are the weaknesses of your project?; (d) What are the possibilities for positive change?

Principles	*Criteria*	*Indicative questions*
transversality	taking into account the different domains or imperatives	How does the project take economical, socio-cultural, environmental and other stakes and objectives into account?
		How do you intend to integrate the other domains or imperatives in the future?
	interdisciplinarity	How are the viewpoints and ideas of different experts exchanged and integrated into your project?
participation	degree and form of participation	For which form(s) of public participation did you opt?: - *information* (the public receives objective information necessary for the understanding of problems, alternatives and/or solutions) - *consultation* (the public gives its advice on the analyses, alternatives and/or solutions) - *commitment* (the public is integrated into the different phases of the project and participates in the work and the decision making) - *empowerment* (the public moves towards a progressive taking charge of the project, specifically via training aiming at the public feeling capable of taking the initiative in the future)

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[75] *Source*: Self-assessment grid developed by the Topozym team (May 2007-December 2008).

	in different phases	Is the participation "project oriented" (administrative and financial efficacy) or "people oriented" (emancipation and acquisition of knowledge about democracy)?
		In what phase(s) of the project is the intervention of participation planned for? - the taking of the initiative - the establishment of a state of the art survey - the formulation of the goals and the plan of action - the implementation - the evaluation
	existence of awareness-raising actions	Which specific means of sensitisation and/or education are set up to promote individual or collective change in behaviour or thinking?
	investment	Which human and financial means are dedicated to the participation process?
	large base of participants	Have all parties involved (stakeholders) and other persons influenced directly or indirectly by the project been invited to participate?
	reduction of obstacles for participation of different groups	Which specific measures have been envisaged to facilitate the effective participation of all groups of the population?
		How is the recognition of different viewpoints promoted?
	conflict management	How are you going to manage potential conflict?
	transparency	How do you ensure that the participation process is clearly clarified and the information is accessible, trustworthy and comprehensible?
		In what way are citizens informed about the way their opinion has or has not been taken into account?
	co-responsibility	How do you ensure a clear structure that clarifies the responsibilities (tasks and consequences) of each individual, established in the spirit of partnership?
	differentiated responsibility	How do you ensure that the actions undertaken correspond to the possibilities and means of each of the parties involved?
pro-activity	adaptability	Which alternative solution does the project provide in case of evolutions in time and space?
	prevention	What effective measures have been taken to avoid possible damage caused by the project?
	the polluter pays	Which necessary contingency measures are planned for in case of damage caused by the project?
	continuity	How will you organise continuous improvements (evaluations and potential adaptations) in each phase of the project?
		How will you organise the follow-up of the project in the long run (after it has been implemented)?
suitability	integration within existing structures and processes	In what ways is the project coordinated with other actions on a local, regional and global scale?
		In what ways is the project adapted to the effective standards and recommendations on the administrative, technical and legal level?

	subsidiarity	Is the responsibility for a certain action allocated to the units that are most appropriate to deal with the problem or to organise the action?
	local specificities	Did you undertake a detailed assessment of the place of the project, which included the different values and functions the place has in the eyes of residents and other users?
	local expertise	What do you do to account for the interests, needs, expectations and concerns of all, including those of persons who were not (re)present(ed) in the participation process? What actions did you undertake to make use of the local knowledge and competences?
	proportionality	How do you ensure that the space in which you undertake your actions is the most appropriate in the light of your pursued goals?
	reasonable use of resources	How do you ensure that the means you use in your project are adapted to the pursued goals? Are the means you use economical in terms of: - natural resources? - energy? - space?
solidarity	taking diversity into account	In what way does the project try to promote the recognition of differences?
	interpersonal solidarity	In what way does the project promote: - the inclusion of vulnerable people? - the strengthening of social bonds? Which measures have been taken to promote an equitable division of gains and damage as a consequence of the project, between all members of the population?
	solidarity in space	What do you do to multiply the positive consequences of your project into other areas and to avoid negative consequences of the project in these other areas?
	solidarity in time	In what ways does the project take into account its consequences on future generations?

ANNEX 2

An overview of the topozym dashboard[76]

MODE D'EMPLOI

▶ **TEXTE PRINCIPAL**

- **CONTEXTE**

L'espace public
▶ Le développement des espaces publics
▶ Intérêt d'une intervention extérieure
▶ Accompagnement et formation
▶ Les parties prenantes et les acteurs
▶ Un tableau de bord, pourquoi et comment ?

- Un outil de mesure ?
- Un dispositif cognitif ?
- Un comportement, un état d'esprit ?
- Un modèle métaphorique, vers une écologie de l'esprit.

- **PROCESSUS DE PARTICIPATION**

▶ L'INITIALISATION DE LA PARTICIPATION

- Difficultés pour mobiliser des acteurs divers : témoignages
    - Témoignage : l'accompagnement du projet "Village de Noël" à Liège
    - Témoignage : La petite histoire du projet de la zone de baignade de Noiseux
- Questions à se poser
- Situations favorables au déclenchement d'un processus participatif
- Les contrats d'intervention
- Installer la relation de travail
- Synchronisation dans un groupe hétérogène ou entre groupes homogènes
- Entrées et sorties de partenaires
- Recommandations

▶ LA PARTICIPATION

- La participation : à l'initiative de qui et pour quoi faire ?
- La participation citoyenne : de quoi s'agit-il ?
- Les enjeux de la participation en matière d'espaces publics
- Aménagement négocié ou arbitraire ?

▶ LA FORMATION

- Approche globale et complexe de la formation
    - Apprendre à participer
    - Apprendre en participant
    - Apprendre de la participation

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[76] The full version of the dashboard is available online in French on the Topozym website: http://www.topozym.be/tableaudebord.

- Ethique de la participation
- Alterner pour apprendre
- Construction progressive d'une intelligence citoyenne
- Développement d'une intelligence commune du territoire

- **PROCESSUS D'AMENAGEMENT ET DE GESTION**

▶ L'ACCOMPAGNEMENT DU PROCESSUS

- Questions à se poser
- Pour une écologie de l'action
- Mobiliser, motiver
- Vision positive
- Changer d'échelle
    o Témoignage : l'accompagnement à Leuven
    o Comment amener les acteurs à se dégager d'une vision limitée à l'étude de cas pour aller vers une vision à une autre échelle d'espace et de temps, vers une stratégie d'intervention plus globale ?

- Evaluation permanente
- Recommandations

▶ LA FORMATION

- Evolution de la vision de la participation
    o Témoignage : le projet "Zone de baignade de Noiseux"
- Changements de posture
- Tous experts
- La participation : outil d'amélioration de la gestion locale
    o Témoignage : l'accompagnement du projet Ravel à Charleroi
    o Témoignage : l'accompagnement du projet Park SpoorNoord à Anvers
- Perspectives de suivi

▶ **LES "FICHES" CONCEPTS**

Les Fiches concepts sont posées comme des jalons dans le texte principal et font référence à la réflexion qui a orienté la démarche suivie par l'équipe Topozym ainsi que l'angle de vue sous lequel le concept a été abordé dans la recherche-formation-action ; elles sont introduites par un commentaire.

- Concept - La référence au développement durable
- Concept - Approche systémique et complexe
- Concept - Grille d'autodiagnostic
- Concept - Typologie de la participation
- Concept - Analyse AFOM de la participation
- Concept - Approche interculturelle du territoire
- Concept - Perspectives d'éducation/formation à la participation
- Concept - Communauté d'apprentissage et conception socioconstructiviste de la formation
- Concept - Ethique de l'intervention
- Concept - Modalités d'intervention
- Concept - Induire des changements de comportements
- Concept - La motivation
- Concept - Intelligences multiples
- Concept - Synchronisation dans un groupe hétérogène
- Concept - Intelligences citoyennes
- Concept - Intelligence commune du territoire

▶ LES "FICHES" OUTILS

Les Fiches outils présentent des outils utilisés dans les études de cas ; celles-ci sont des outils développés « sur mesure » par les formateurs dans les études de cas accompagnées par Topozym et/ ou s'inspirent d'actions participatives menées par des organismes initiant des démarches participatives d'aménagement de l'espace public.

- Outil - Visite de terrain
- Outil - Photolangage
- Outil - Prise de photos par les acteurs
- Outil - Diagnostic (dé)ambulatoire
- Outil - Conversations sur les lieux
- Outil - Tour des opinions sur un projet
- Outil - Regards croisés
- Outil - Parties prenantes et acteurs
- Outil - Comprendre la logique des acteurs
- Outil - Histogramme des préoccupations des acteurs
- Outil - Emergence du commun
- Outil - Bourse d'échange
- Outil - Ligne du temps d'un projet
- Outil - Dispositifs de simulation et de modélisation
- Outil - Maquette (réalisation de)
- Outil - Matrice de créativité
- Outil - Hyperpaysage
- Outil - Budgets participatifs
- Outil - Références bibliographiques pour la phase d'aménagement

▶ LES ÉTUDES DE CAS

- Etude de cas : le RAVeL de Charleroi
- Etude de cas : Village de Noël à Liège
- Etude de cas : zone de baignade de Noiseux
- Etude de cas : Park Spoor Noord à Antwerpen
- Etude de cas : Muntstraat à Leuven

ANNEX 3

Synthesis of the training program in Leuven [77]

SYNTHESE VAN DE TOPOZYM WORKSHOPS

Kader: Het duurzaamheidperspectief

Doorheen de verschillende sessies werden verschillende definities van 'duurzame ontwikkeling' geopperd en verschillende aspecten van dit veel omvattende begrip aangehaald. Duurzaamheid werd beschreven als een houding, meerbepaald een *oplettende houding*. Er werd ook geopperd dat het duurzaamheidperspectief een basis kan vormen voor een *integrerende en interdisciplinaire aanpak* en een constructieve samenwerking tussen de verschillende betrokkenen bij een project van (her)aanleg van openbaar domein.

Het streven naar *duurzaamheid* wordt door de Dienst Ruimtelijke Planning *als heilig principe* beschouwd, een belangrijk principe bij het opstellen van het *Ruimtelijk Structuurplan*. Het Structuurplan geldt vandaag als een redelijk kader voor andere diensten, in het bijzonder de Technische Dienst (TD) – Wegen. In het Structuurplan wordt duurzame ruimtelijke ontwikkeling gedefinieerd als "spaarzaam en verstandig met de ruimte omspringen, om ervoor te zorgen dat ook toekomstige generaties in hun behoeften kunnen voorzien. Het respecteren van de draagkracht van de ruimte is hierbij een belangrijk uitgangspunt. De draagkracht bepaalt wat er op een bepaalde plek kan of niet kan. Duurzaamheid heeft niet alleen te maken met het behoud van wat vandaag waardevol is, maar ook met het inbrengen van nieuwe elementen, die in de toekomst kwaliteit en betekenis kunnen brengen. Zo moet bijvoorbeeld een kans gegeven worden aan kwalitatieve hedendaagse architectuur en stedenbouw, als verrijking van het historisch patrimonium van de stad."

Bovendien werd er tijdens het opstellen van dit plan *op een zo participatief mogelijke wijze* gewerkt, waardoor alle verschillende diensten hun belangen en zorgen zouden moeten kunnen geuit hebben. Op het niveau van ruimtelijke planning zijn de verschillende stadsdiensten ook vertegenwoordigd in de Stuurgroep Ruimtelijke Planning, waarin de verschillende projecten rond openbaar domein in Leuven besproken worden. Een probleem tijdens het overleg in deze stuurgroep is het onevenwicht: de aanwezigheid van de burgemeester en andere politici zorgt er bij momenten voor dat anderen monddood gemaakt worden. Het blijkt anderzijds wel interessant de mening van politici te kennen en het zal voor politici evenzeer interessant zijn de inhoudelijke discussies mee te maken en zo een bredere kijk op de zaak te verwerven. Op dit aandachtspunt na lijkt alles op hoger niveau goed te functioneren en heerst daar een duurzame, participatieve visie.

Op het concrete niveau van projecten van (her)aanleg van publieke ruimte, met name wanneer de TD-Wegen concrete projecten begint uit te werken, blijkt het echter vaak moeilijk deze duurzame en participatieve visie in de praktijk te brengen. In wat volgt worden deze moeilijkheden besproken en mogelijke oplossingen en alternatieve werkwijzen besproken.

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[77] This document is a synthesis elaborated by S. De Graef based on what was said during three meetings/training sessions led by L. Scheers (VormingPlus Antwerpen). To this conversations representatives of the following city administration services took part: Ruimtelijke Planning, Technische Dienst - Wegen, Welzijn, Inofhuis, Milieudienst. The sessions took place between 2 and 4 pm on 18/09/2008, 25/09/2008 and 09/10/2008. Some parts of this synthesis have been left out, being internal information of the Leuven city administration.

Samenwerking tussen diensten bij de (her)aanleg van publieke ruimte in Leuven

Welke moeilijkheden duiken op?

  1. Tijdsgebrek

De medewerkers van de TD-Wegen stellen uitdrukkelijk dat wat hun dienst nodig heeft, meer tijd is. De processen (bouwvergunning, milieurichtlijnen,…) die moeten doorlopen worden steeds langer. Het beleid verwacht producten op zeer korte termijn. Er is volgens de TD-Wegen idealiter twee jaar nodig om een plan degelijk uit te werken (in tegenstelling tot het kleine jaar dat ze nu hebben). Het is omwille van deze korte termijn dat het bijeen roepen van grote commissies op hun niveau zo goed als onmogelijk lijkt: "Wij moeten zoeken tussen wat we al hebben en op basis van informele contacten dingen uitklaren." Meer en betere participatie zou ook makkelijker gemaakt worden als de procedures over een lange termijn zouden lopen. De korte deadlines maken het werk van het Infohuis vaak gekkenwerk. Meer tijd zou andere procedures – waaronder meer feedback van burgers en collega's van andere diensten – mogelijk maken die de kwaliteit van het ontwerp en het project in zijn geheel zou verbeteren. Een ander bijkomend probleem omwille van dit tijdsgebrek is het ontbreken van een visie op lange termijn en een duidelijk overzicht: de bestaande meerjarenplannen worden momenteel regelmatig in de war gestuurd om snel een product af te leveren.

  2. Werken op basis van informele contacten

De contacten die plaats vinden tijdens de ontwerpfase zijn gebaseerd op persoonlijke kennis: de ontwerper kent de gevoeligheden van elke dienst min of meer en werkt voor de rest aan de hand van zijn of haar netwerk. Er worden verschillende diensten systematisch aangesproken en ontwerpers weten wie ze omtrent welke thema's moeten aanspreken. Sommige personen worden wel pas geconsulteerd aan het einde van de rit, als het voorontwerp eigenlijk al vast staat. Doordat zoveel gebaseerd is op informele en persoonlijke contacten, lukt het bepaalde partners makkelijk hele procedures in de war te sturen of naar hun hand te zetten. Informeel werken vergemakkelijkt lobbyen en zou er ook voor kunnen zorgen dat bepaalde besognes nooit op tafel komen. Het is bovendien precies wanneer de zaken concreter worden tijdens de uitvoering dat er meer belangen gaan spelen die tijdens het opstellen van het Structuurplan niet naar boven kwamen. Voor bepaalde diensten verloopt het contact tussen de TD-Wegen en de dienst in kwestie steeds met andere personen, wat het werken aan de hand van informele contacten bemoeilijkt. Een wissel van contactpersoon houdt immers vaak ook een verandering van visie in.

  3. Moeilijke samenwerking met bepaalde partners

Zoals in alle projecten zijn moeilijkheden vaak gedeeltelijk verklaarbaar door "moeilijke partners". Die partners kunnen zowel intern als extern zijn. […]

  4. Het ontbreken van een link tussen Planning en Uitvoering

Hoewel, zoals gezegd, de TD-Wegen het Ruimtelijk Structuurplan als een belangrijk kader gebruikt en TD-Wegen en Ruimtelijke Planning beide delen onder eenzelfde dienst (maar twee verschillende schepenen) vallen, bestaat er toch een artificieel onderscheid waardoor soms toch informatie verloren gaat. De schepenen schatten de verwevenheid tussen diensten en departementen soms niet voldoende groot in. De uitvoerende diensten, die zullen instaan voor het beheer van de plaats nadat de heraanleg heeft plaatsgevonden, zoals de Reinigingsdienst en de Groendienst, zijn nog minder of zelfs niet betrokken bij de planning, wat in het verleden al op verschillende momenten heeft gezorgd voor misverstanden.

Wat zijn mogelijke oplossingen?
   1. Een projectregisseur

Voor het project van de Vaartkom werkt men voor het eerst met een projectregisseur. Voor het project Leuven-Noord was er ook een projectregisseur. Daar waren immers verschillende partners betrokken, werd een medewerker van één van hen gedetacheerd en door de verschillende partners betaald en erkend als coördinator. De projectregie wordt nu meestal, vooral voor kleine projecten, vrijwillig en informeel opgenomen door de verantwoordelijke ambtenaar van de TD-Wegen. Daar zou meer tijd aan moeten besteed kunnen worden. Formele erkenning als projectregisseur kan daarenboven ook belangrijk blijken en meer gewicht aan de taak geven.

   2. Een agenderingscommissie / projectoverleg

In het verleden werd er een soort van synchronisatievergadering georganiseerd door de verantwoordelijke ambtenaar van de TD-Wegen aan het begin van het project. Aanwezig waren onder andere Groendienst, Milieudienst, Reinigingsdienst, Veiligheid. Soms waren ook betrokken politici aanwezig. Om verschillende redenen werd de organisatie van deze vergadering afgevoerd. Wanneer er een nieuwe lichting ambtenaren op de TD-Wegen is begonnen, werd de traditie van deze vergadering vervangen door het werken aan de hand van informele contacten.

Het opnieuw instellen van een dergelijke vergadering lijkt een goed idee, maar er moet dan wel gezocht worden naar oplossingen voor de obstakels die deze vergadering in het verleden niet effectief maakten. De belangrijkste reden – naast een gebrek aan tijd – daarvoor was dat beslissingen die tijdens de vergadering genomen werden later toch vaak teruggedraaid of aangepast werden, waardoor de effectiviteit en rendabiliteit van de vergadering in het gedrang kwam en men het eerder als extra vergaderlast is gaan zien. Er werd nochtans wel een verslag van de vergadering gemaakt, wat tot op zekere hoogte hielp om te kunnen aantonen wat er toen beloofd en gepland was, maar toch niet voldoende bleek om alles echt hard te maken. De agenderingscommissies waren dus niet bindend genoeg. De aanwezigen waren op het moment van de vergadering niet genoeg betrokken op het project en beschouwden de beslissingen die daar genomen werden als te vrijblijvend. Het invoeren van een agenderingscommissie zonder meer blijkt dus niet te volstaan om de betrokkenheid en het engagement van de verschillende diensten te garanderen.

Het samenroepen van zulke projectgroep zou eventueel meer impact kunnen hebben als dat gebeurde door een erkend projectregisseur. Idealiter zou het projectoverleg moeten leiden tot een principeverklaring "ondertekend" door alle aanwezigen. Om hiertoe te komen zou de discussie tijdens deze vergadering moeten draaien rond doelen: "Wat is ieders doel en hoe situeren al die doelen zich tegenover elkaar?" Zo kan men vermijden dat iedere dienst zijn eigen belang gaat verdedigen. Men kan dus zelfs stellen dat er een consensus moet bereikt worden rond ieders (verborgen) agenda's, die in de intentieverklaring samengevoegd zijn tot één doel, één idee.

Burgerparticipatie bij projecten van (her)aanleg van publieke ruimte in Leuven

Welke moeilijkheden duiken op?
   1. Te grote tijdsdruk om participatie en communicatie te organiseren

Het gebrek aan tijd voor het gehele proces dat bij de TD – Wegen moet doorlopen worden, zorgt er meestal voor dat inspraak of polsen bij de burgers in een voorbereidende fase onmogelijk lijkt. Vaak wordt er het dus enkel informatie verstrekt, meestal wanneer de meeste beslissingen al genomen zijn.

Zelfs wanneer men zich beperkt tot het verstrekken van informatie over het project, loopt dat echter niet steeds over een leien dakje. (Het Infohuis ondersteunt de TD-Wegen (evenals Planning en Huisvesting) bij de communicatie omtrent werken en projecten. Het gaat dan om de logistieke ondersteuning bij infovergadering, het versturen van brieven, en het verstrekken van informatie via nieuwsbrieven, Mozaïek en de website. Burgers kunnen ook bij de mensen van het Infohuis terecht met hun vragen over een bepaald project.) Omwille van de tijdsdruk die heerst in andere diensten, wordt het Infohuis op zijn beurt vaak heel laat verwittigd en betrokken. Omdat er ook nog vaak op het laatste moment veranderingen doorgevoerd worden, krijgen de burgers daarenboven soms verkeerde informatie doorgespeeld. Te veel informatie willen geven, keert zich soms dus tegen de stad, want de burgers lijken niet te begrijpen dat er foute informatie doorgegeven worden.

2. Het gevaar van een groepje "roepers"

In het verleden zijn er verschillende voorbeelden geweest van groepjes burgers die projecten boycotten, infovergaderingen die uitmonden in hysterische discussies of gebruikt worden door een bepaalde groep om een project te kelderen. Gecombineerd met het feit dat er vaak gecommuniceerd staat als alles al vast staat, is het rebelleren van burgers gevaarlijk. Het bestuur zwichtte in het verleden wel eens voor deze "roepers". Er werd geopperd dat dit gevaar gedeeltelijk kan vermeden worden door de burgers eerder in het proces te betrekken. Nu duiken deze groepjes immers op wanneer het project al ver gevorderd is, terwijl een rustige raadpleging aan het begin de noden en uitgangspunten van de burgers zou hebben duidelijk gemaakt. Het projectvoorstel kan dan makkelijker toegeëigend worden door de burgers. Bovendien kunnen de "roepers" tijdens de grote vergaderingen dan niet veel tegenargumenten meer inbrengen.

3. Politieke onwil om participatie te organiseren

In het verleden werd door de Dienst Welzijn, het Infohuis en TD-Wegen voorgesteld vóór het opstellen van een voorontwerp de bewoners te bevragen, maar dit voorstel werd niet goedgekeurd door het schepencollege en ging dus niet door. De hoop dat dit voorstel of gelijkaardige voorstellen in de toekomst wel goedgekeurd zouden worden door het bestuur is bij de meeste betrokkenen miniem. Daardoor is de motivatie om zich voor participatie in te zetten ook kleiner geworden. "Inspraak blijft voor het bestuur taboe." Verschillende angsten liggen aan de basis van deze politieke "onwil". "We gaan toch niet met z'n allen een ontwerp maken? Dan eindigen we met een nietszeggende middenmaat van een ontwerp." "Iedereen gaat op zo'n vergadering voor zijn eigen belang zitten en wij moeten scheidsrechter spelen." "Mensen denken enkel aan hun eigen belang en niet aan het algemeen belang." "Dan duiken daar plots bewonersgroepen met een verborgen agenda op. En wat doe je dan?" "Zulke vergaderingen zullen confrontaties oproepen en wij zijn bij machte die confrontaties te vermijden door zelf beslissingen te nemen." De angst is het grootst als het gaat om projecten waarbij verkeer een belangrijke factor is. Ook bij bepaalde ambtenaren en stadsdiensten leeft een angst voor participatie, maar als de politiek echt zou opkomen voor participatie, zouden de diensten waarschijnlijk volgen. In wat volgt gaan we dieper in op eventuele paden om het bestuur te overtuigen.

Hoe kan het bestuur overtuigd worden van de nood aan participatie?

Men moet beseffen dat bepaalde angsten die aan de basis liggen van de politieke onwil, niet volkomen onterecht zijn. Op dit moment is er weinig vertrouwen tussen burgers en overheid en zijn burgers niet gewend te participeren. Men moet een leerproces doorlopen, waarin burgers opgeleid worden om participatie mogelijk te maken. Participatieve acties kunnen dus onmogelijk van bij het

begin van een leien dakje lopen. Het bestuur moet ook beseffen dat er tot nu weinig voorbeelden van participatie zijn, maar het in het verleden veeleer om inspraak ging. De burger moet gezien worden als een groeiende partner.

Men zou eventueel kunnen overwegen het bestuur trachten om de tuin te leiden door de vergaderingen met burgers niet aan te kondigen als vergaderingen over projecten van heraanleg, maar over uitgangspunten zoals verkeersleefbaarheid, sluikstorten of vandalisme. Uit die vergaderingen kunnen ontwerpers dan trachten de gegevens te verzamelen die zij nodig hebben. De wijkontwikkelaar zou zulke vergaderingen kunnen bijeenroepen en voorzitten. Het is echter onwaarschijnlijk dat het bestuur dit niet door zou hebben. Bovendien wordt op deze manier het bestuur niet overtuigd van de noodzaak van participatie.

Een tweede "oplossing" zou kunnen zijn dat wijkontwikkelaars informeel gevraagd worden door de verantwoordelijke ambtenaars van de TD – Wegen te polsen naar de noden en uitgangspunten van de burgers. Je zou een voorbeeld van waar het informeel gelukt is, kunnen gebruiken om aan het bestuur aan te tonen dat de aanpak werkt. Het grote nadeel van deze manier van werken is echter precies dat het een informele werkwijze is. Op die manier wordt er dus niet gewerkt aan het opbouwen van vertrouwen en een partnerschap met burgers.

Wanneer moet je met de burgers gaan praten? En met wat in handen?
Burgers kunnen op verschillende momenten bij projecten betrokken worden. Wanneer en hoe men dat doet, bepaalt in grote mate de tevredenheid van zowel burgers als stadsdiensten over deze participatieve acties. Volgende tips en aandachtspunten omtrent participatie kwamen naar voren:

- Hoewel burgers tegenwoordig in Leuven zeer mondig zijn en een sneuvelplan echt durven afbreken, moet toch opgelet worden niet te veel te sturen door middel van een voorontwerp. Door de mensen beelden voor te schotelen, beperk je de discussie. Mensen mogen ook niet het gevoel krijgen dat het ontwerp al vastligt op het moment dat zij geraadpleegd worden. Een eerste alternatief is het aanbieden van verschillende voorontwerpen, waardoor de indruk dat alles al vastligt vermeden wordt. Een ander alternatief is het werken rond uitgangspunten en principes in plaats van meteen in te gaan op het concrete ontwerp. Praten over uitgangspunten en intenties kan uiteraard tijdens de eerste vergadering al leiden tot vragen over het concrete en meer tastbare zaken. Zo kan een boeiend gesprek ontstaan tussen burgers en overheid. Let er hierbij echter op niet te veel in te gaan op het anekdotische.

- Aan de mensen vragen wat ze willen zonder meer, werkt niet. De idee dat alles kan, zorgt voor latere teleurstellingen. Men kan dus niet met een wit blad naar de mensen gaan. Het is nodig de mensen duidelijk te maken welke gegevens vast liggen en waar men niet onderuit kan bij het ontwerp. Bepaalde regels en normen zijn immers niet voor hen bekend en moeten vertaald worden, zodat iedereen duidelijk weet waar moet mee rekening gehouden worden. Ieder project is natuurlijk anders: wanneer er zeer weinig vast ligt, kunnen denkdagen georganiseerd worden waarbij met de burgers kan gebrainstormd worden; bij de heraanleg van een weg ligt al veel meer vast. Het structuurplan zou een eerste basis kunnen zijn voor het aangeven van grenzen aan wat kan en wat niet.

- Als overheid mag je best eigen normen hebben en ergens voor staan (bijvoorbeeld: de natuur niet vernietigen en opkomen voor sociale rechtvaardigheid). Het is echter cruciaal hierover eerlijk en

open te zijn en al deze standpunten snel op tafel te gooien. Er moet immers vertrouwen opgebouwd worden. Als je vermoedt dat een bepaald persoon of groep een verborgen agenda heeft, moet je trachten die ook op tafel te krijgen.

-   Bovendien gaat het er niet om burgers te laten kiezen of opsommen wat hun wensen zijn (inspraakcultuur), maar moet het bij echte participatie draaien rond samenwerking: "Ik doe dit, wat doe jij dan? Ik zal het zo tekenen, hoe ga jij het dan in gebruik nemen?" Iedereen is "expert" op een welbepaald vlak.

-   Het is belangrijk te beseffen dat een bewonersgroep enkel zichzelf vertegenwoordigt en niet kan spreken in naam van een hele wijk of straat. Een bewonersgroep zal altijd voor zijn eigen belang gaan. Je moet dus een oproep doen en iedereen ertoe trachten te brengen om aan het algemeen belang te denken. Daarvoor is vertrouwen nodig van de burgers in de overheid.

Samenvattend:
Het ideale verloop van een project van (her)aanleg van publieke ruimte in Leuven
(met participatie van alle diensten en burgers) *vóór het voorontwerp is opgesteld*

1) vraag van de schepen (formulering van de opdracht)

2) kennisname van de context door de verantwoordelijke ambtenaar van de TD – Wegen

3) gegevens verzamelen door ambtenaar TD:
    - op het niveau van de plannen (ruimtelijk structuurplan, mobiliteitsplan,…)
    - op het terrein (info over de riolering,…)
    + eventueel gegevens verzamelen aan de hand van consultatie van de burgers (door ?)

4) verschillende typeprofielen/schetsontwerpen worden opgesteld

5) "agenderingscommissie" (wanneer ambtenaar TD weet wat mogelijk is op die plaats):
    (? betere naam: "projectoverleg")
    doel: aflijnen van de opdracht (de eerste beslissingen worden genomen);
           aftoetsen van verschillende doelen en voorstellen en zoeken naar een consensus (neergelegd in een intentieverklaring?).
    aanwezige diensten: TD-Wegen, Mobiliteit, Groendienst (afhankelijk van het project), Communicatie, Reinigingsdienst, Jeugddienst (Jeugdparagraaf), wijkmanager/wijkontwikkelaar (Dienst Welzijn), Monumenten en Landschappen (indien bindend advies)
    (OPM.: Vanuit het Infohuis komt de vraag niet enkel aanwezig te mogen zijn bij grote projecten – zoals dat nu het geval is – maar ook bij kleinere projecten. Op die manier begrijpen de personen verantwoordelijk voor de communicatie het project beter en kunnen zij correcte en volledige informatie aan de burgers verschaffen.)

6) betrekken van de Werkgroep Toegankelijkheid en andere adviesraden indien nodig
    + bij moeilijke keuzes: terugkoppeling naar de stuurgroep ruimtelijke planning
    + eventueel raadplegen van de burgers (zonder de idee op te roepen dat alles reeds vast ligt door één voorontwerp aan te bieden)

ANNEX 4

Referring to the concept of 'sustainable development' [78]

LA REFERENCE AU DEVELOPPEMENT DURABLE

LE BUT DE LA FICHE

Aujourd'hui, la référence au "développement durable" est utilisée sans vergogne dans la publicité, a toutes les apparences d'une nouvelle vertu et est affichée comme telle dans tous les domaines. Pourtant, l'appellation peut s'avérer inconfortable car elle est contestée à plus d'un titre. Le but de cette fiche est d'attirer l'attention des animateurs territoriaux sur l'importance de garder une distance critique vis-à-vis de tout slogan aux allures dogmatiques, comme l'est devenu le développement durable. Elle présente les limites du modèle classique généralement admis et questionne son utilité comme référence dans le développement et la gestion concertée des espaces publics.

Le développement durable : un modèle parmi d'autres

Le modèle classique Qu'est-ce que le développement durable ? La référence majeure a été exprimée en une phrase dans le rapport Brundtland (ONU, 1987) : "Un développement qui répond aux besoins du présent sans compromettre la capacité des générations futures de répondre à leurs propres besoins". Le texte en appelle à donner priorité aux besoins "essentiels". L'expression sustainable development, maladroitement traduite par développement durable, signifie que le développement doit être supportable par l'environnement. Cette vision généreuse, coquille vide à habiller, a depuis lors suscité d'abondantes interprétations et polémiques.

Dans le modèle le plus répandu pour présenter la notion de développement durable, ce dernier doit s'appliquer à trois domaines : la société, l'économie et l'environnement. La représentation schématique la plus courante est sous forme d'un diagramme de Venn.


Source : D. Lecomte, 2008 sur le site Campus responsable

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[78] This annex is an extract of the concept-file of the dashboard entitled 'La référence au développement durable'.

Ce modèle est un peu hybride : en effet, la société et l'environnement apparaissent comme des entités à développer, cette dernière étant le contexte dans lequel vit la collectivité humaine, alors que l'économie est un secteur d'activités visant à la production et à la consommation de richesses.

Un autre modèle, tout aussi classique et courant, semble plus cohérent : il utilise des adjectifs pour qualifier les dimensions, les aspects du développement à envisager : dimension sociale, environnementale et économique.
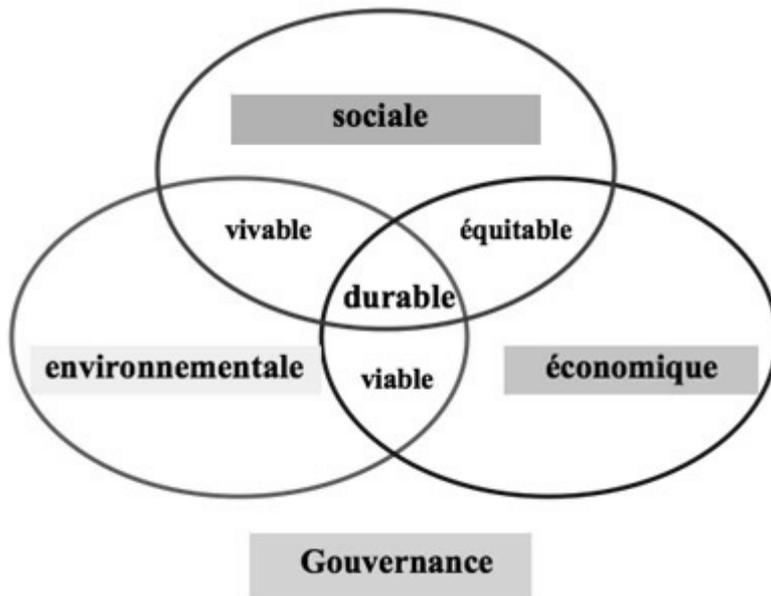
Source : E. Zaccaï notes de cours

Ce modèle change très fort la perspective, puisqu'il ne précise plus ce qu'il s'agit de développer. Il peut dès lors s'appliquer à peu près à tout, et c'est sans doute ce qui le rend commode et facile à diffuser : le développement durable d'une entreprise, d'un projet, d'un territoire, d'une ville, d'un quartier, ... d'une politique d'un pays :

Constitution (révision le 25 avril 2007) : "Art. 7bis.- Dans l'exercice de leurs compétences respectives, l'État fédéral, les communautés et les régions poursuivent les objectifs d'un développement durable, dans ses dimensions sociale, économique et environnementale, en tenant compte de la solidarité entre les générations." Le modèle à trois dimensions invite à en ajouter d'autres : culturelle, institutionnelle, patrimoniale, spatiale, spirituelle, esthétique,...

Les interfaces entre ce qui est devenu trois "piliers" mettent en évidence autant de zones sensibles, susceptibles de frictions, mais aussi autant de zones de rencontres souhaitables entre acteurs poursuivant des objectifs jugés a priori difficilement compatibles, pour le moins contradictoires, voire opposés.

Dans le monde de l'entreprise, comme dans la mise en oeuvre des agendas locaux 21, "la démarche clé est la création d'un projet commun, avec des objectifs et des responsabilités de mise en œuvre partagés. Ni l'environnement, ni le développement durable au sens « Rio » ne sont centraux. Pas de tabou sur les objectifs. Le DD apparaît comme un autre nom de la gouvernance" (E. Zaccaï, notes de cours, diaporama).

Les limites de la notion de développement durable La prééminence du développement et de son caractère durable comme "finalité de l'humanité" est aujourd'hui l'objet de vives controverses.

Le rejet de la croissance

C'est tout d'abord la perspective même de développement qui est mise en cause, car si le terme "développement", appliqué à un être humain, peut signifier "épanouissement" (Testart, 2003), il est le plus souvent synonyme de croissance, en particulier de croissance économique, voire de croissance financière. Or, la croissance en tant que telle ne suscite plus l'adhésion (cfr "Halte à la croissance ?", titre du rapport commandé par le Club de Rome en 1970, se terminant par la proposition d'une croissance zéro). Bien plus, certains en appellent à la décroissance. Leur argument est le suivant : le développement actuel des pays riches constitue l'idéal à atteindre pour l'immense majorité des pays pauvres, or il est incontestablement non durable. Les simulations proposées par les outils nous permettant de calculer notre empreinte écologique en attestent : si l'ensemble de l'humanité devait accéder à notre niveau de vie, il faudrait trois à cinq planètes pour répondre à ses "besoins". Le modèle de la croissance indéfinie, basé sur une consommation effrénée, n'est plus crédible, l'épuisement des ressources non renouvelables pose des problèmes cruciaux et le mythe du progrès selon lequel les artefacts humains pourront se substituer à tous les mécanismes naturels est à revoir.

Le rejet d'une sphère économique autonome et dominante

Ensuite, la vision en trois piliers est critiquée en ce qu'elle contribue à modeler un imaginaire social à propos de l'économie et de ses acteurs, présentés comme une bulle en soi, avec ses propres lois, dont le développement serait à mettre en balance avec le développement sociétal, plutôt que d'être un outil au service de ce dernier.

Lucie Sauvé juge ce rapport de force inégal : "La relation à l'environnement est subordonnée au développement économique : il n'y est question que de ne pas dépasser la capacité de support des milieux pour répondre aux besoins (non discutés) des sociétés de type occidental actuelles et futures" (Sauvé, 1998). Sylvie Brunel estime quant à elle que faute d'instance d'arbitrage entre les acteurs qui sont, par vocation, profession ou mandat, tournés plus vers un domaine que vers l'autre, ces différents objectifs apparaissent comme difficilement compatibles. Les entreprises privées ont bien compris tout le profit qu'elles pouvaient en tirer, pesant de tout leur poids au Sommet de Johannesburg en 2002. Et depuis le 11/09/2001, la lutte contre la pauvreté a désormais cédé le pas à la lutte contre le terrorisme (Brunel, 2004), l'Occident "privilégiant les alliés sûrs et utiles (même dictatoriaux) plutôt que les pays pauvres" (Brunel, 2004, op cit., p. 59).

Le rejet d'un modèle hégémonique (Sauvé, Latouche, Stengers, Rist, Sachs, ...) La contestation à l'égard du DD est également fondée sur le fait que l'ONU le présente comme un projet de société, voire un projet de civilisation qu'il faudrait appliquer à toute la planète, alors qu'il s'agit d'un programme politico-économique promu par certains types d'acteurs sociaux qui siègent à l'ONU (dont des dirigeants de pays non démocratiques), dont le credo est le suivant : le développement économique va résoudre les problèmes sociaux et environnementaux, à condition qu'un nouvel ordre mondial impose des règles, fondé sur le libre marché. L'environnement correspond à l'ensemble de la planète comme un réservoir de ressources qui doit être globalement administré par des organisations régionales ou mondiales (d'après le Calgary Latin American Group, 1994).

Contexte : fin des années 80, qui vit la chute du communisme soviétique, le développement durable serait venu à point nommé pour remplacer les notions de développement, de sous-développement et de "en voie de développement" (Brunel), faisant l'apologie de la croissance, de la science et de la technique comme salvatrices du monde. Dans l'espoir, pour les pays pauvres, de retrouver la manne perdue avec la fin de la guerre froide ? Pourtant, dans les pays "en développement", l'environnement n'est prioritaire ni pour les gouvernements, ni pour les instances internationales telles le FMI ou la Banque mondiale (Mancebo, 2006).

Le caractère hégémonique du développement durable se perçoit aussi à la façon dont il est désormais posé comme une référence "sacrée", une "nouvelle religion" (Latouche). En effet, s'il a le mérite de poser une vision du monde sur la table, celle-ci est rarement mise en débat, bien au contraire : émettre l'idée qu'elle doive y être soumise provoque souvent incompréhension, opposition, voire anathème à l'encontre de la personne qui s'y autorise.

Dans cette vision hégémonique, "l'éducation correspond à un transfert d'informations et d'expertise surtout de type scientifique, technologique et législatif. Il s'agit aussi de former un public prêt à collaborer à des décisions prises par « en-haut »" (selon la typologie de Bertrand et Valois, 1992).

Des modèles alternatifs D'autres visions existent, des relations entre la société et son environnement et de la place de l'économie, comme en attestent les propositions ci-dessous.

Le modèle du développement alternatif

Credo : Seul un changement en profondeur des valeurs, des choix sociaux et des modes de vie permettra le développement de communautés viables. Vision de l'économie : développement d'une économie biorégionale ; distinction entre les besoins réels et les désirs ; réduction de la dépendance ; accroissement de l'autonomie ; valorisation des ressources renouvelables et localement disponibles ; processus démocratiques, participation, solidarité. Dans cette optique, certains prônent une option "décroissance" (Latouche), où la priorité serait donnée à créer davantage de liens entre les personnes et entre les personnes et leur environnement, que de biens. Vision de l'environnement : il devient un projet communautaire. Vision de l'éducation : un processus communautaire d'investigation critique du milieu de vie pour une transformation des réalités sociales et environnementales (paradigme inventif).

Le développement autonome (ou indigène)

Credo : Le développement doit se baser sur l'identité culturelle et préserver l'intégrité territoriale. Vision de l'économie : économie de subsistance, endogène,collective et solidaire, associée à un territoire et qui s'appuie sur une cosmologie propre. "L'économie de croissance menace les économies de subsistance : elle menace les bases de subsistance des humains et à long terme celle de la biosphère. Dans ce contexte, pour beaucoup de communautés, la durabilité ne signifie rien d'autre que la résistance au développement. » (W. Sachs, 1996). Vision de l'environnement : comme un territoire, comme un milieu de vie et comme un projet culturel communautaire. Vision de l'éducation : construction de savoirs contextuellement signifiants et utiles, prenant en compte les valeurs et savoirs-faire traditionnels.

L'environnement comme système intégrateur
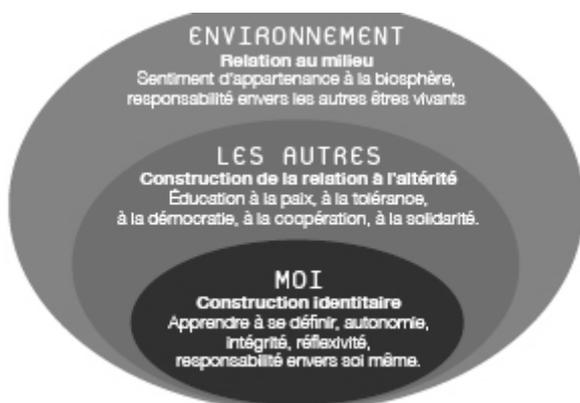
Source : **L.** **Sauvé**
conférence aux assises de l'Education relative à l'Environnement, Namur, 2004.

Dans cette vision, "au-delà des ressources et des « services » qu'on peut en tirer et au-delà des problèmes et défis liés à la gestion de ces ressources, l'environnement c'est aussi un ensemble de systèmes de vie (la nature et les écosystèmes aménagés), un territoire d'appartenance (le village, le quartier, la ville), des paysages (urbains, ruraux, naturels), un milieu de vie (la maison, l'usine, la ferme, l'école, la place publique, etc.), un réseau de relations (locales, régionales, biosphériques ; concrètes et symboliques) et bien d'autres choses encore..." (Sauvé, 2006, p.1).

La place de l'économie est située autrement, comme une des composantes de l'environnement, comme le montre le schéma ci-dessous proposé par Léon Mathot, inspecteur de l'enseignement.
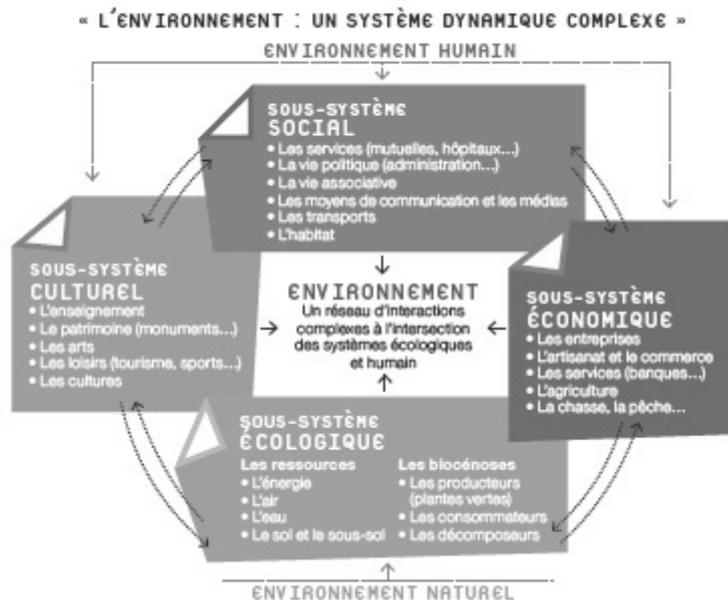
Source : Programme cadre en éducation à l'environnement pour l'enseignement secondaire Ministère de l'éducation de la recherche et de la formation, Bruxelles, 1992.

Les êtres humains au coeur des préoccupations

On retrouve un changement de priorité du même ordre avec les visions qui plaident pour donner à l'économie, principalement incarnée par les entreprises, une utilité sociale, notion qui va beaucoup plus loin que l'idée de responsabilité sociale de l'entreprise. C'est l'idée de citoyenneté de l'entreprise, faisant de cette dernière un "acteur social durable" (Lamon, 2001), pour lequel l'ancrage social est important. Mais cette nouvelle culture répond toujours à des incitations ou à des pressions et est moins "l'expression d'un idéal philanthropique qu'une stratégie défensive du secteur privé aux prises avec une sévère contestation sociale" (Lamon, 2001, p. 206). Et la souplesse des arrangements entre acteurs, préférée aux normes contraignantes, fragilise les pouvoirs publics, pouvant aller jusqu'à des formes de "délégation par abandon" (Manço et Amoranitis, 1999).

Intérêt du concept pour le développement et la gestion concertée des espaces publics

Le développement des espaces publics ? Commençons par mettre en débat le sous-titre du tableau de bord, qui concerne le développement des espaces publics. Que veut-on dire par là ? La recherche d'une extension des espaces disponibles pour tous, au détriment des espaces privés ? L'élargissement de l'accessibilité des espaces publics à tous les publics ? L'exploitation économique et sociale des espaces publics ?

Pour notre part, nous proposons que le terme développement fasse référence à l'idée d'une évolution positive, qui se traduit le plus souvent par le maintien ou l'ajout de qualités pour l'espace public en question. Partant du principe qu'un espace public se transforme de toute manière, qu'il fasse l'objet d'une intervention ou pas, qu'il soit utilisé ou pas, il s'agit de ne plus laisser cette transformation s'effectuer au gré des aléas et des vicissitudes du temps et des hommes, mais bien de décider de ce que l'on souhaite à son propos. "Evolution positive" donne une direction, mais pas le sens de celle-ci : elle peut s'envisager dans le sens de la croissance en termes de superficie ou d'usage, ou dans le sens d'une décroissance.

Cette perspective reste ouverte et peut accueillir sans réserve des remises en cause de logiques de fonctionnement ou de valeurs aujourd'hui dominantes, comme la mobilité.

La référence au développement durable ? Une opportunité majeure de l'appropriation du développement durable par le politique, c'est de faire avancer l'idée qu'il est de moins en moins

acceptable de laisser faire un acteur tout seul, même animé des meilleurs intentions du monde. En ce sens, les sources de financement qui s'y rapportent permettent de soutenir la gouvernance multiacteurs, qui semble une bonne méthode pour toute une série d'espaces publics, afin de définir une vision commune des qualités à promouvoir.

Par contre, le schéma à trois piliers offre davantage de faiblesses que d'atouts, en raison de son caractère réducteur et partial. Lorsque l'on recueille les préoccupations des acteurs à propos d'un espace public, un classement plus ouvert des aspects et des points de vue émergents est plus propice à la mise en évidence des multiples préoccupations de chacun et des préoccupations communes (voir Fiche Histogramme). Cette méthode a en outre le mérite de ne pas embarrasser les acteurs avec un concept flou et mal connu, qui fait partie d'un jargon de spécialistes. Enfin, cela facilite la rupture avec des attitudes propices à l'éducation "par le haut", tant de la part des acteurs à l'égard des scientifiques ou des formateurs ("Dites-nous ce qu'il faut faire !") que de ces derniers, qui se présenteraient avec des grilles d'évaluation ou des solutions clé sur porte, définies par des technocrates.

De même, la réalisation du diagnostic de la manière dont fonctionne un espace public s'est avérée plus porteuse en partant de l'énoncé de principes qui font référence à d'autres visions que celle du développement durable (voir fiche Grille d'autodiagnostic).

Pour une gouvernance des espaces publics sans abandon par les pouvoirs publics Les espaces publics apparaissent comme des lieux où s'expose aux yeux de tous la capacité des pouvoirs publics à s'occuper du bien commun en fixant un cadre d'utilisation de ces espaces publics et en le faisant respecter. La délégation par abandon de ces espaces peut les transformer en espaces de non droit où l'abus est permis, avec la complicité du politique qui en retire par ailleurs un profit sous forme de taxes. A titre d'exemple, dans quelle mesure les commerçants sur les marchés qui se tiennent sur la voie publique sont-ils tenus de garantir la sécurité sociale de la main d'oeuvre qu'ils occupent, avec un contrat d'emploi en bonne et due forme ? De même, est-il cohérent de laisser des touristes s'amuser dans des rivières ou des plans d'eau dont la qualité des eaux serait douteuse ? Nous avons vu combien est cruciale la question de l'arbitrage entre les différentes dimension du développement. Il appartient aux pouvoirs publics de promouvoir une vision "service public" des espaces publics, au service d'un mieux être social pour tous, où le profit économique n'occupe pas une place prépondérante. Cette vision plaide pour accorder une grande importance à la construction en commun des espaces publics pour qu'ils deviennent des lieux symboliques puissants, des lieux "habités" par le public. Il s'agit, au fond, de reterritorialiser les lieux publics. Il conviendrait que l'animateur territorial invité à travailler dans cette vision du développement, que l'on pourrait qualifier d'alternatif, y accorde sa manière de travailler et soit dans une vision plus inventive que rationnelle de l'accompagnement.

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ANNEX 5
Multiple intelligences [79]

INTELLIGENCES MULTIPLES

Le but de la fiche

La conception d'un accompagnement méthodologique dans le but de favoriser un changement de pratiques implique une référence à des modèles de l'apprentissage que l'on espère cohérents avec les finalités poursuivies. Le but de cette fiche est de présenter la théorie des intelligences multiples proposée par Howard Gardner, qui nous invite au respect et à la prise en compte des différences entre les individus dans les pratiques en matière de gouvernance.

La théorie des Intelligences Multiples (Howard Gardner)

Le concept d'intelligence

Quand dites-vous d'une personne qu'elle est intelligente ? Quand elle manifeste une grande culture ? Quand elle est capable d'argumenter de manière confondante ? Quand elle est capable de résoudre des problèmes concrets ? Quand elle réussit des épreuves scolaires réputées difficiles ? La perception de l'intelligence est fonction de variables qui diffèrent selon l'époque et la société au sein de laquelle elle s'exerce. Mais en tout état de cause, cette perception est étroitement liée au conformisme social.

Au début du vingtième siècle, les premiers tests permettant de déterminer un quotient intellectuel (QI) ont vu le jour, se voulant une mesure objective indépendante des normes sociales. Au fil des ans, on a constaté que ces mesures permettent surtout de prédire l'avenir scolaire d'un individu avec une faible marge d'erreur, par le fait que ces systèmes de mesure, tout comme notre système scolaire, accordent beaucoup d'importance aux les aspects de la logique, des mathématiques et de la langue. La conception de l'intelligence que sous-tend cette forme de mesure laisse entendre que l'intelligence est innée, qu'elle ne se modifie guère avec l'âge, l'apprentissage ou l'expérience.

Cette conception est largement mise en question aujourd'hui. On considère en effet que les facultés d'une personne sont essentiellement un produit de la culture et de l'éducation : "90% des circuits de neurones vont se former progressivement dans les années qui suivent la naissance. C'est précisément sur la construction de ces circuits que l'environnement intervient sous ses diverses formes, qu'il s'agisse du milieu intérieur (alimentation, hormones) ou extérieur (interactions familiales et sociales, rapport au monde). On parle de "plasticité" pour qualifier cette propriété du cerveau à se modeler en fonction de l'expérience vécue. La plasticité cérébrale est très prononcée chez l'enfant, mais elle existe aussi chez l'adulte avec les processus d'apprentissage et de mémorisation qui ne cessent de remodeler nos micro-circuits de neurones." (Vidal, 2001, sur base des travaux de Paulesu et al, 2000 ; Maguire et al, 2000).

Afin de contrecarrer les visions traditionnelles (du passé, et dépassées) de l'intelligence, H. Gardner propose d'envisager qu'il existe de multiples formes d'intelligence, l'intelligence étant entendue comme une "capacité à résoudre des problèmes ou à produire des biens, de différentes natures, ayant une valeur dans un contexte culturel ou collectif précis". Afin de distinguer l'intelligence humaine

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[79] This annex is an extract of the concept-file of the dashboard entitled 'Intelligences multiples'.

de celle d'une machine-outil, l'intelligence est précisée comme étant "un potentiel biopsychologique, c'est-à-dire que chaque membre de l'espèce a la potentialité d'exercer l'éventail des facultés intellectuelles propres à l'espèce. »

Cette vision considère qu'avec un stimulus approprié, il est possible de développer chacune de ses intelligences à un niveau de performance relativement élevé : "ce qui a été démontré par la recherche la plus récente, c'est que, indépendamment des différences initiales, une intervention précoce et un enseignement constant peuvent jouer un rôle décisif dans la détermination du niveau des prestations d'un individu. (...) Inversement, même les individus les plus doués du point de vue génétique resteront aux niveaux médiocres en absence d'un soutien positif de la part du milieu social" (Gardner, 1983).

Neuf formes d'intelligence

Parmi les nombreuses grilles d'intelligences qui ont été élaborées, la théorie des Intelligences Multiples d'Howard Gardner a le mérite d'être particulièrement simple à comprendre et pratique à utiliser dans une quelconque situation d'apprentissage.

H. Gardner part de l'observation des individus en situation concrète et de ce qui est socialement jugé performant pour qualifier leurs intelligences. Intelligences au pluriel, qui ouvre le champ de la reconnaissance de bien d'autres formes d'intelligence que celles qui sont mises en évidence par les tests classiques de QI.

Dans la traduction française (1996) de l'ouvrage "Frames of Mind" (1983), huit formes d'intelligence sont proposées par l'équipe d'H. Gardner, qui travaille sur une neuvième forme d'intelligence. Elles sont présentées dans le schéma ci-dessous.
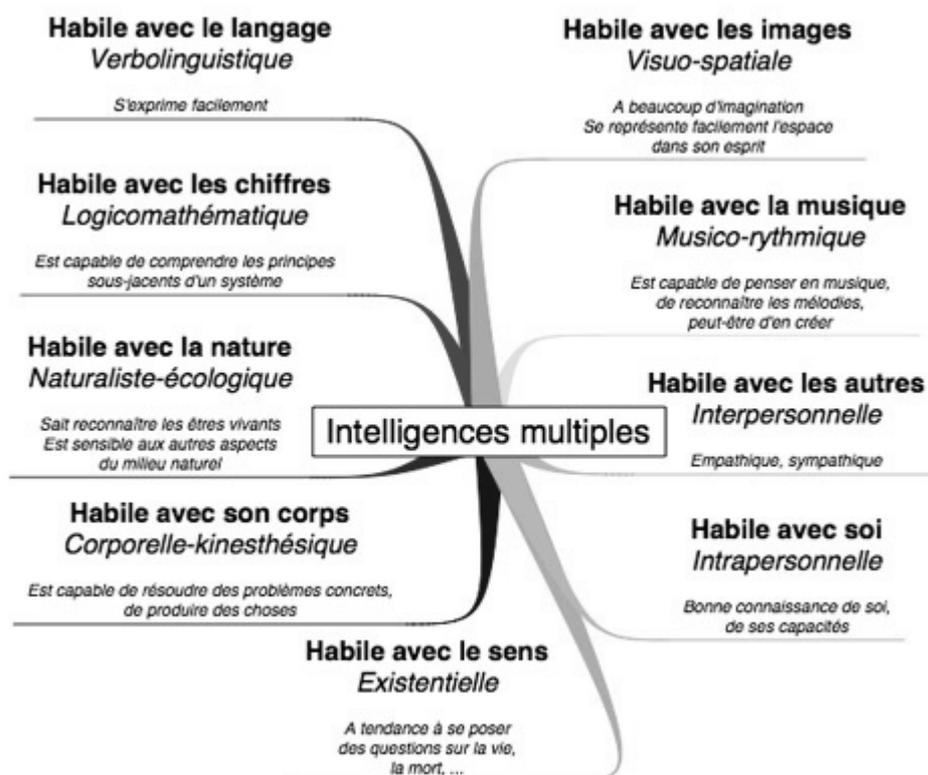
Cette liste est n'est pas fermée. Nous pourrions y associer, pour notre propos, l'intelligence émotionnelle, l'intelligence citoyenne Concept 03 - Intelligences citoyennes et l'intelligence commune du territoire Concept 11 - Intelligence commune du territoire.

Ce qui distingue les individus, selon cette théorie, c'est la combinaison originale du degré de développement de chaque forme d'intelligence chez chacun, en fonction des situations (cfr infra).

Les styles d'apprentissage

La théorie des Intelligences multiples s'harmonise bien avec la notion de styles d'apprentissages. De quoi s'agit-il ?

Chaque situation d'apprentissage mobilise différemment chacun d'entre nous en fonction du contexte, du contenu d'apprentissage et de nos états d'âme du moment : nous pouvons choisir de suivre un mode d'emploi à la lettre pour utiliser un instrument alors qu'en cuisine, nous préférons en général improviser à partir d'une recette ; mais certains jours, nous pouvons manquer de disponibilité pour activer notre créativité et préférer nous laisser emmener dans le confort d'un pas à pas.

C'est cette hypothèse de la préférence individuelle pour certaines façons d'apprendre dans un contexte donné, que l'on appelle le "style d'apprentissage", qui est lié à notre façon d'entrer en contact avec le monde, elle-même liée au développement inégal dans le temps et chez chacun de chacune des formes d'intelligence.

La plasticité des styles d'apprentissage

Contrairement aux conceptions de l'apprentissage reposant sur l'idée d'une "cristallisation" d'un style à un moment donné du développement, le point de vue constructiviste défend l'idée que le style d'apprentissage est généré en fonction des représentations de l'apprenant à propos de la tâche et à propos de lui-même dans l'apprentissage.

D'emblée, certains apprentissages nous mettent à l'aise ou au contraire nous font peur. Nous avons forgé des idées préconçues de nos forces et de nos faiblesses dans divers contextes d'apprentissage depuis l'enfance, par auto-évaluation, et nous aurons tendance à mettre en place des stratégies pour apprendre qui deviennent stéréotypées, constituant une structure relativement stable. Lorsque les personnes en prennent conscience, elles attribuent en général "leur" style d'apprentissage à un trait de leur personnalité : "ça, c'est bien moi !" Il devient constituant de leur identité.

Le risque est d'attribuer spontanément ces préférences à un déterminisme biologique sans imaginer le poids considérable des facteurs socioculturels. Thomas et Harri-Augstein (1990), cités par Chevrier et alii (2000), estiment même qu'il ne faudrait plus parler de style d'apprentissage "caractéristique d'un individu" pour pouvoir plus facilement se libérer des croyances développées à l'égard de nous-même et qui nous empêchent d'explorer et d'apprendre de manières différentes.

Nos représentations ne cessant d'évoluer d'une situation à l'autre, mais aussi en raison d'autres expériences de vie, le style d'apprentissage est donc considéré comme dynamique. La "mesure" d'un style d'apprentissage à un moment donné, surtout si elle est uniquement fondée sur un questionnaire soumis à l'apprenant, doit donc être accueillie avec toute la relativité nécessaire et considérée avant tout comme un cliché témoignant de la perception qu'a l'apprenant de lui-même à ce moment-là, ou comme un cliché de l'image qu'il souhaite donner/se donner, pour servir de balise dans une perspective de développement.

Intérêt du concept pour le développement et la gestion concertée des espaces publics

La théorie des intelligences multiples peut être utilisée dans deux directions, au croisement desquelles la conception d'un dispositif méthodologique différencié peut être réfléchie :

▶ repérer quelles sont les formes d'intelligence susceptibles d'être mobilisées par le développement et la gestion concertée des espaces publics ;
▶ repérer quelles sont les formes d'intelligence des personnes en présence.

Les formes d'intelligence requises par le développement et la gestion concertée des espaces publics sont principalement :

▸ les intelligences visuo-spatiale, corporelle-kinesthésique, émotionnelle et logico-mathématique pour percevoir et penser l'espace en tant qu'écosociosystème ;
▸ les intelligences visuo-spatiale, émotionnelle et territoriale pour imaginer l'espace public autrement ;
▸ les intelligences interpersonnelle, émotionnelle et verbolinguistique pour communiquer et interagir positivement avec les autres acteurs ; y ajouter l'intelligence visuospatiale si la communication est médiatisée par des images ;
▸ les intelligences intrapersonnelle, territoriale, citoyenne et existentielle pour réfléchir au sens de l'action, se positionner en tant que citoyen et se fixer des objectifs communs.

En ce qui concerne les profils des personnes composant le groupe d'acteurs, outre le fait de choisir des modes différenciés d'approche de l'espace public et d'expression au sein du groupe, la question à se poser est aussi celle du degré de plasticité de chacun, pour favoriser un changement de pratiques : Comment enrichir les intelligences de chacun ? Quelles résistances au changement allons-nous rencontrer ?

Si le style d'apprentissage est intimement lié aux représentations que nous avons de nous-mêmes en situation d'apprentissage et de notre conception de l'apprentissage, nous sommes dans le domaine des croyances et même parfois des mythes. Ces croyances sont d'autant plus fondamentalement ancrées qu'elles ont rarement fait l'objet d'une analyse réflexive et d'une distanciation. Acquises "sur le tas", elles ont été sans doute confirmées par toute une série de réussites et d'échecs qui n'ont jamais été mis en perspective sur le plan culturel. Ces croyances constituent donc un "noyau dur" difficilement modifiable, à moins d'être mis en situation de "dissonance cognitive", qui crée une rupture par rapport à ces croyances, qui insinue le doute dans l'univers des certitudes que nous nous étions forgées.

C'est à partir des zones de flexibilité de la personne que ce travail pourra se faire, notamment par la mise en évidence de situations où elle se rendra compte qu'elle est bien plus complexe qu'elle l'imaginait (dans tel contexte, je ne suis pas créatif, mais dans tel autre, je reconnais que je peux l'être). Alors, des ponts pourront être créés entre des contextes d'apprentissage apparemment éloignés. Il est donc surtout question de travailler l'image que l'on a de soi dans les contextes en question. Tout l'art des formateurs sera de proposer des situations d'apprentissage situées dans la "zone proximale de développement" des apprenants (Vygotsky, 1978), de provoquer des ruptures douces en garantissant un climat de sécurité et de confiance (Kaës et alii, 1979 ; Strike et Posner, 1985).

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ANNEX 6

**SWOT analysis : heterogeneous versus homogeneous groups
in different stages of the process** [80]

Le but de la fiche

▶ Mettre en évidence les éléments d'hétérogénéité dans un groupe pour susciter une dynamique et un enrichissement de la réflexion
▶ Construire ensemble une vision convergente sur le projet.
▶ Mettre en phase de travail le groupe hétérogène
▶ Organiser les acteurs en profil de coopération : comment chacun se place en acteur de la réalisation de l'aménagement de l'espace public ? Complémentarité de mission, symbiose ou synergie ?

Présentation du concept de l'hétérogénéité dans un groupe de travail

"L'action collaborative intègre ce que la pensée experte fragmente".

Le modèle de coproduction repose sur l'appartenance des différents acteurs à différents groupes sociaux. Les acteurs rassemblés se différencient par leurs fonctions, leurs compétences et savoir-faire et leurs niveaux de pouvoir. Chaque type d'acteur a une représentation, des attentes et une ou plusieurs stratégies à mettre en place. Il y a donc hétérogénéité dans le groupe au niveau de la composition de ses membres mais aussi au niveau de leurs aspirations et de leur vision de l'aménagement de l'espace public. Par exemple, l'élu a une compétence de gestionnaire, l'habitant a une compétence d'usager, le technicien assure le professionnalisme de la démarche.

Lors de la constitution du groupe de travail, il faut éviter l'effet de filtre et veiller à inclure dans le groupe de travail des personnes non sensibles au collectif.

A chaque étape du projet, il faut veiller à mettre en place un scénario de manière à permettre à chaque acteur de se mettre en scène et de manière à valoriser le processus de confrontation, générateur de nouvelles formes de puissances publiques et créateur d'un nouvel espace public, lieu de cohésion sociale. L'organisation de rencontres réussies entre acteurs permet la libre confrontation des idées et des différences dans un climat de franchise et de convivialité, renforce le lien social et devient un principe actif de la construction d'un projet. C'est également une garantie de mobilisation permanente des acteurs du groupe de travail.

Les différents groupes actifs

▶ comité de quartier
▶ le monde politique ou acteurs politiques élus
▶ le personnel administratif
▶ les écoles
▶ les mouvements de jeunes
▶ PCDN / Naturalistes
▶ Troisième age
▶ Cercle historique

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[80] This analysis is an extract of the concept-file of the dashboard entitled 'Synchronisation dans un groupe hétérogène'.

- Centre culturel
- individus

Intérêt du concept de l'hétérogénéité pour le développement et la gestion concertée des espaces publics

Le concept de l'hétérogénéité a été analysé selon la méthode AFOM (Atouts Faiblesses Opportunités Menaces) afin d'identifier les facteurs positifs et négatifs dans l'environnement interne et dans l'environnement externe du projet.

La confrontation est le fil conducteur et est appréciée à chaque étape du cycle du projet, depuis sa conception jusqu'à la réalisation et la gestion. Le scénario n'est pas écrit à l'avance et les conditions de son écriture peuvent changer la configuration de l'espace en même temps que la personnalité des acteurs et la nature de leurs relations. Il y a une évolution permanente du positionnement des différents acteurs et des enjeux.

Ce principe de fonctionnement est générateur de nouvelles puissances publiques

Au stade amont du projet, pendant la phase de conception ou co-élaboration du projet

- Atouts de l'hétérogénéité

  - Démarche novatrice et attrait pour l'innovation sociale
  - Energie de mobilisation
  - Dynamique du groupe
  - La diversité est un gage de flexibilité
  - Il n'y a pas encore de normes communes établies qui freinent le développement du projet
  - Garantie de rencontrer la diversité de la population et d'avoir une représentativité informelle de sa diversité.

- Faiblesses de l'hétérogénéité

  - Conflit de l'usage du temps
  - Chronophage
  - Interférences avec des problèmes antérieurs
  - Agenda des réunions
  - Disparité au niveau des disponibilités
  - Statuts
  - Expertise différente
  - Entrées et sorties des membres du groupe « tous experts »
  - Valeurs différentes d'engagement sur le plan moral entre l'habitant et la personne rémunérée
  - Contrat qui lie les acteurs
  - Contraintes de l'organisation
  - Contraintes de structuration du groupe

- Opportunités de l'hétérogénéité

  - Renforcement du lien social
  - On bénéficie d'un effet réseau ou reliance qui accompagne la personne
  - Synergie
  - Points de vue complémentaires
  - Compétences complémentaires
  - Valorisation du processus de confrontation entre acteurs

▶ Menaces de l'hétérogénéité

- Basculement du système de valeurs
- Calendrier des étapes du projet difficile à tenir
- Coût financier

Au stade médian du projet, pendant le phase de réalisation

▶ Atouts de l'hétérogénéité

- Le groupe porteur crédibilise et appuie la décision politique
- Partage des rôles et des responsabilités
- Prise en charge par le groupe
- Eléments mobilisateurs
- Cadre de travail motivant
- Ancrage humain et social
- Créateur de sens et de cohésion sociale
- Facilite le montage financier et technique du dossier
- Nombreuses ressources et informations utiles
- Le groupe est en contrôle de la réalisation du cahier des charges

▶ Faiblesses de l'hétérogénéité

- On met en place un espace parallèle aux lieux de décisions institués par la loi
- Effets de contrôles et de prise de pouvoir
- Initiatives malheureuses peu adaptées au contexte
- Evolution des identités et des points de vue au fur et à mesure de l'avancement des travaux

▶ Opportunités de l'hétérogénéité

- Gain de temps au niveau des procédures de décision
- Gain de temps au niveau des procédés à mettre en place
- Constitution d'un groupe

▶ Menaces de l'hétérogénéité

- Suivi de chantier
- Mandat pour garantir le bon fonctionnement du suivi de chantier
- Retard dans le calendrier de suivi des travaux
- Conflits d'intérêt
- Peu d'adaptabilité par rapport aux contraintes locales matérielles

Au stade aval du projet, phase de gestion (court, moyen et long terme)

▶ Atouts de l'hétérogénéité

- Durabilité de l'infrastructure
- Garant de la pérennité du projet d'aménagement
- On conserve les lignes directrices du projet
- Garantie de l'adaptabilité du projet à de nouvelles contraintes
- L'ensemble des acteurs restent mobilisés au service de l'esprit du projet

▶ Faiblesses de l'hétérogénéité

- Syndrome NIMBY collectif (on n'accepte pas les autres dans notre aménagement)

- Désengagement des responsabilités : effet de dissipation
- Manque de moyens
- Pas d'adaptation des moyens aux nouvelles responsabilités

▶ Opportunités de l'hétérogénéité

- Valorisation et dissémination de l,expérience
- Valeur d'exemplarité
- Légitimité du contrôle social
- Appropriation locale

▶ Menaces de l'hétérogénéité

- Reprise de pouvoir au niveau communal
- Prise de pouvoir par une personne du groupe ou une personne extérieure

Sources

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ANNEX 7
The creativity matrix [81]

Le but de l'outil

"Le jeu combinatoire paraît être la caractéristique essentielle de la pensée créatrice" Albert Einstein.

▸ Le but de l'outil est de rationaliser et de maximiser le processus créatif en "forçant" le couplage d'items pour dégager un maximum d'idées nouvelles, indépendamment de toute évaluation portée à priori sur la pertinence des résultats produits.
▸ Subsidiairement, en permettant à toute personne, quelle que soit son expertise et ses dispositions mentales, de produire une somme considérable d'idées innovantes, la matrice de créativité démystifie et banalise le "génie créatif" de la découverte et de l'invention.

Présentation de l'outil

"Il semble que la découverte puisse toujours se ramener à un phénomène de composition ou de combinaison. Deux objets, deux concepts deux phénomènes, que nul n'avait jusqu'ici songé à rapprocher, se superposent tout à coup l'un à l'autre pour donner naissance à un nouvel objet, un nouveau concept, un nouveau phénomène..." Michel Fustier.

Basé sur ce que Arthur Koestler (Le cri d'Archimède) appelle la "bisociation", la matrice de créativité décline un rêve (un cauchemar ?) qui remonte au Moyen-Age (combinatoire alchimique) : la machine à inventer.

Son principe est simple : un tableau à deux entrées dont les croisements d'items sont autant d'occasions de prendre en compte directement (A + 1) ou d'associer indirectement (@ + *) une infinité de combinaisons ; certaines, tenant de l'inventaire (solutions existantes), d'autres, de l'innovation (solutions originales).

Ci-dessous, un exemple de matrice développée dans le cadre d'une séance d'accompagnement TOPOZYM des acteurs du RAVeL 112 à Charleroi et portant sur les pistes d'activités susceptibles de favoriser l'appropriation de l'infrastructure par les riverains et les usagers. Cette grille laisse voir que des cases non-retenues ici peuvent encore faire germer des idées nouvelles et pertinentes.

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[81] This annex is an extract of the tool-file of the dashboard entitled 'La matrice de créativité'.

		GROUPES									
		Comité de fête	Comité de quartier	Politique	Ecole	Mouvement jeunesse	PCDN - Naturalistes	Club sportif (marche, vélo, cheval)	Club 3eme âge	Cercle historique	Centre culturel
ACTIVITES	Balade	x	xo	xo	xo	xo	x	x		x	
	Fêtes	x	x	x			x				
	Brocante	x	x								
	Réhabilitation		x	x							
	Communication		o	xo	o	o					
	Concours Jeux	x				x					
	Promotion	x	x	x						x	
	Musée de plein air										x
	Evènement	x	x	x							
	Nettoyage entretien		x	x	x	x					
	Reliance			x		x		x			

x : lors de la construction de la matrice
o : lors de la construction du planning commun

Déclinée en multiples versions, la matrice de créativité se retrouve appliquée avec succès dans tous les domaines (technique, artistique, scientifique, philosophique...). Ainsi, en architecture/aménagement du territoire, la matrice de créativité de Le Corbusier a contraint l'esprit de l'époque à croiser les fonctions de l'habitat (habiter, travailler, cultiver le corps, cultiver l'esprit, circuler, se distraire) et des concepts tels que la démographie, l'occupation du territoire, la législation, le financement,...

Au départ du tableau de conjonction de base, une discrimination peut s'opérer par analyse et classification des résultats potentiels.

Exemple

Ci-dessous, les concepteurs du Village de Noël (Liège) ont hiérarchisé les priorités d'amélioration de leur manifestation à la mesure de leur imagination et des principes d'un développement durable. Ainsi, après la phase "créative" (*"au croisement de ceci et de cela, je développerais bien cette idée ..."*), les participants ont appliqué à la grille des clés d'analyse et de sélection pour déterminer les propositions à retenir (cases colorées et/ou codées).

	Aménagement	Économie	Entretien	Environnement	Mobilité	Participation	Santé	Culture	Social
Solidarité	•		4 J	1	Rg	•Rg		•	•Rg
Mémoire/trad	•2 B	•V				•		•1 RsO	•
Ruralité/intégration de l'environnement	•V				•	•M		•	•
Contrôle	•	•	•1 J	1	1		•2Rs		
Productions locale	•	•3Rs		V		Rs		•	•O
Cocoon	•4 J								
Espace protégé	•B		•	1	•1	•	V	•	
Intégration sociale	•	'	•		1 Rg	•Rs			
Leader d'opinion	•	•	•	•M	•	•1		•	•
Ambiance sonore	•	•		•O	•		•	•O	'
Multifonction/polyvalence	•Rg		'			•			
Circulation de l'information	•		•1		Rg	' JB	'	1	

• = Rempli dans le cadre du VN

Chiffre = nbre de votes :
	1
	2
	3
	4

Cette matrice a donné naissance à plus de 70 idées dont une sélection (10) sera mise en oeuvre dans les prochaines années.

Atouts

▶ Evident dans son usage, sans consignes fastidieuses et sans préambules discriminatoires.
▶ Redistribue les rôles "experts" de compétence.
▶ Invite à capitaliser les résultats pour "ne rien perdre".
▶ Crée une dynamique de grand nombre favorable à motiver par la garantie d'un résultat positif probable.
▶ Potentialise la pensée en association libre et inconsciente.

Faiblesses

▶ Convoque très rapidement une pensée qui raisonne l'inventaire de l'existant et l'évaluation du possible.
▶ Le grand nombre de combinaisons désintègre le groupe et convoque à brève échéance des jugements individuels de positionnement et de confrontation.
▶ Déstabilise les valeurs magiques dont est chargé le "génie imaginant" et crée une résistance à cette désacralisation.
▶ Contraint les intuitions préexistantes à "rentrer dans les cases".
▶ Favorise les profils "créatifs", toujours plus dominants par l'usage de cet outil.

Sources

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▶ La créativité personnelle - Françoise Rougeoreille-Lenoir - 1973 - Ed Universitaires
▶ Créativité et méthodes d'innovation - Abraham Moles - 1970 - Ed Fayard

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ANNEX 8
Question and answer rounds [82]

Le but de l'outil

▸ Fournir à chaque acteur une information utile et facilement exploitable sur la question qu'il se pose
▸ Valoriser les compétences de chaque participant et les faire connaître au reste du groupe dans un esprit de complémentarité et mise en place de nouvelles synergie.
▸ Informer et élargir la vision des participants : leur permettre d'approfondir leurs connaissances de l'espace public et de mieux comprendre les logiques d'action des acteurs.

Présentation de l'outil

La méthodologie de travail est basée sur des principes de travail collaboratif actif (le travail collaboratif se fait en collaboration du début à la fin sans diviser les tâches). Les participants sont ainsi invités à partager en permanence leurs savoirs et expériences pour contribuer à l'émergence d'une expertise commune. Cette méthode permet de faire surgir les connaissances au sein du groupe par l'échange de savoirs en sous-groupes. Chaque acteur participant à la séance est invité à poser une question (celle-ci peut s'écrire sur un post-it ou tout autre support) relative à l'aménagement des espaces publics ; les participants sont invités à se répartir en sous-groupes ; ceux-ci vont travailler en séquences de tâches parallèles pour apporter leurs ressources à une question posée par un des participants. Les acteurs sont ainsi placés en situation de réflexion-action afin de favoriser les échanges sur les différentes perceptions d'un espace public, en fonction de l'expérience des différents acteurs présents, de leur culture et de leurs projets respectifs.

Présentation du dispositif

Si le groupe compte 16 participants. L'activité se déroule en 4 temps :
▸ Les acteurs posent chacun une question sur un post-it (16 questions).
▸ Les questions sont placées en tête de colonne
▸ L'émetteur de la question place son nom en dessous
▸ Les autres personnes viennent se placer dans les colonnes pour répondre à la question correspondante selon leurs compétences.
▸ Les 4 sous-groupes correspondants aux colonnes débattent de la question et de ses réponses durant 10 minutes.
▸ Le demandeur discute en sous-groupe avec 3 acteurs qui viennent en réponse à sa question et lui apportent leurs ressources pour sa question.
▸ L'opération est répétée 4 fois afin de traiter l'ensemble des questions posée ; à chaque tournante, quatre questions sont traitées pendant 10 minutes.
▸ La durée est de 60 minutes pour les quatre échanges et de 15 minutes pour la présentation de l'outil.

En final, les questions sont toutes passées en revue. Une synthèse des réponses émises en sous-groupe peut être présentée en plénière aux participants.

Expériences dans le cadre de Topozym

▸ Le Séminaire international, le 21 novembre 2008 dans les locaux Benelux
Les participants sont invités à se répartir en 3 sous-groupes, chacun étant animé par l'un des

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[82] This annex is an extract of the tool-file of the dashboard entitled 'Bourse d'échange'.

membres de l'équipe Topozym. L'activité se déroule en 3 temps. À chacun de ces "rounds", les participants sont invités à changer de groupe afin d'échanger autant que possible avec des personnes différentes.

- Le RAVeL 112 à Charleroi

La bourse d'échange des ressources a eu lieu à la première séance des accompagnements et marque le déclenchement d'un processus de co-production ; c'est à ce moment que s'esquissent les premières orientations de travail choisies par le groupe et que chaque participant a pris conscience de l'importance de l'échange d'expériences et de la communication. Suite à l'utilisation de cet outil, les conditions d'écriture pour un nouveau scénario sont mises en place où les acteurs se mettent en scène, jouent leur propre rôle, se mettent d'accord et négocient les conditions de réalisation du prochain tronçon du RAVeL à aménager sur la commune de Fontaine-l'Evêque.

Atouts de l'outil

- Nous sommes tous experts (tous détenteurs de connaissances, d'expérience, de méthodes, de pratiques...)
- Il permet d'obtenir ce qu'il y a de mieux avec les ressources disponibles au sein d'un groupe de travail.
- Mise en place d'un travail collectif dans le respect des compétences de chacun.

Faiblesses de l'outil

- Présentation claire, concise et structurée de l'outil et du dispositif à mettre en place par l'animateur territorial.
- La durée totale de la bourse d'échange de savoirs est parfois longue en fonction du nombre de participants et du nombre de sous-groupes.
- Cet outil est construit sur l'hypothèse que la prise de parole est aisée pour chaque participant à la séance d'accompagnement et que chacun a le devoir d'écouter l'autre.

Source

Outil mis au point par l'Institut d'Eco-pédagogie dans le cadre de ses formations.