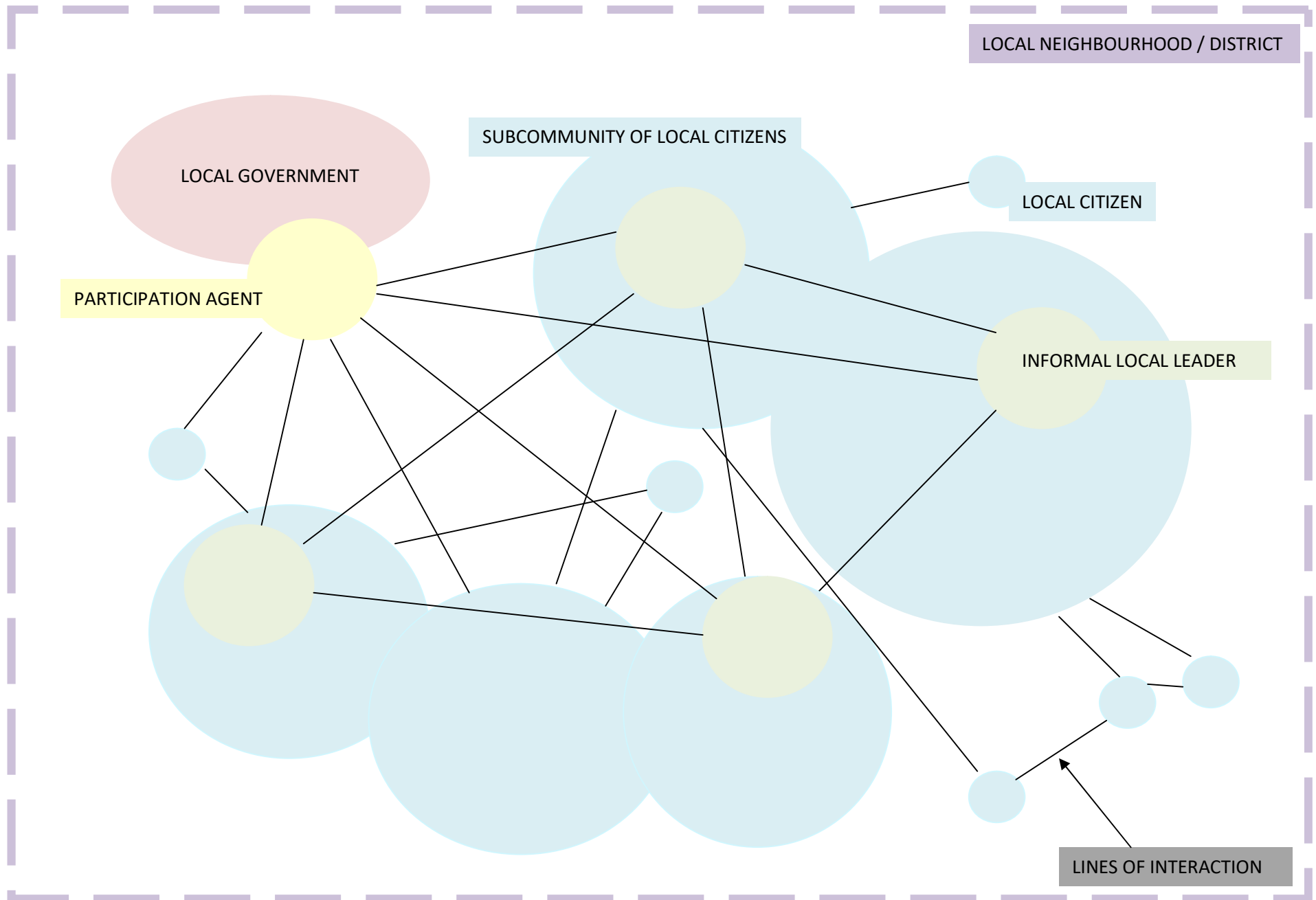


Recommendations for Co-Creating an inclusive neighbourhood network together with locals & local government

based on conversations with the past and future participation agent
& project coordinators at the Meevert,
with a former local government representative,
informal local leaders and locals

of **Indische Buurt** in Amsterdam

GRAPH: INCLUSIVE SOCIAL NEIGHBOURHOOD NETWORK STRUCTURE



WHY CO-CREATE A NETWORK (reason & value)

Recommendations for local governments...

- be honest to the locals, why you do support the co-creation of a neighbourhood network

Recommendations for participation agents...

- assist the locals in finding out WHY they (would) want to invest in networking, what value they expect to gain from networking, dig deep, find out about the common concern about the neighbourhood

Recommendations for locals...

- explore what value you could gain by networking
- consider the opportunity, that you, the locals, can build a new valuable society within your own district

HOW TO CO-CREATE A NETWORK (approach/tenor)

Recommendations for participation agents...

- take your time
- make it nice, pleasant and safe
- invest in trust
- focus on skills, talents and pride in the neighbourhood
- focus on the power of engagement
- consider conflict as a source of innovation
- take the role between local government and locals
- turn the district's streets into your work office

Recommendations for local governments...

- commit yourself to horizontal communication with the locals
- do not try to force things to happen
- be aware of the power distribution and respect the “power-allergy” of locals
- Appreciate informal local leaders for being guardians of their own community's knowledge & stories, change agents for positive behavioural and relational within their communities and bridge-builders

Recommendations for locals, who are networking...

- focus on what you can do yourself, on how you can build a new society within your district
- assume ownership – “the person who creates in the building is the owner”
- share leadership: everybody is a leader – “we don't need ONE leader”
- embrace conflicts – “without conflict there is no movement”
- share a set of values and norms

WHAT TO DO WHEN PREPARING THE GROUNDS FOR A NETWORK (actions)

Recommendations for participation agents...

Take 3 months time to observe the district's structural and social factors and develop a social district map. Therefore explore:

- the real estate structure within the district
- the district's residential, commercial and industrial nature
- who are the commercial actors, who keep their "eyes on the streets" (Jane Jacobs) and who stimulate traffic, and where are they located
- the residing groups within the district (ethnic communities, creative classes, etc)
- the inviting social spaces for people to have contact with each others
- the formal and informal meeting places within the district
- how people interact or don't interact within the district, at the meeting places
- who is networking and how does the networking happen
- who invests "passion time" into the neighbourhood
- who are the informal local leaders within the district, meaning who have vast networks, invest much "passion time" and have great impact on others

WHAT TO DO WHEN INITIATING A NETWORK (actions)

Recommendations for participation agents...

- invite the informal local leaders to co-create a local network (10 to 15 people is a good group size to start with)

Recommendations for local governments...

- invite locals to join political debates/think tanks/etc. on how to solve societal problems (example from Amsterdam: think tank on how to strengthen social cohesion)
- invite locals to present their own communities to the government, to show: this is who we are and what we can do
- invite locals to build a network which aims at building a new society within the local neighbourhood

Recommendations for locals...

- accept the government's invitations and join debates and networks

WHAT TO DO WHEN CO-CREATING A NETWORK (actions)

Recommendations for local governments...

- give room and space to the locals for self-organized actions
- ask the locals what to do
- also give room for feedback and criticism

Recommendations for participation agents...

- support the locals throughout their networking activities – assist them in implementing the recommendations for locals (see blue box)
- only marginally give space for negativity collect the people's concerns

Recommendations for locals, who are networking...

- participate by doing and experimenting (instead of talking) –develop “rules of engagement”
- connect neighbourhood skills and talents and people who have entrepreneurial ambition by using a theme
- divide into subgroups/sub-communities which become active on a topic or theme (e.g. annual streetfoodfestival: food as a theme to promote the neighbourhood and the local entrepreneurs in the food business, who keep the neighbourhood alive)
- implement happenings which are fun, bring joy to people
- start off with activities like cooking, eating, dancing, music and encourage self-organized activities on public squares
- gain mass in the neighbourhood through the informal local leaders
- develop neighbourhood rituals (e.g. festival) and embrace the self-organized making-of-the-rituals as great experience
- invite local politicians, government and real-estate companies to cooperate – offer them the chance to run an experiment with the locals
- “get the rumour on the place” – develop a brief communication strategy on how to get the message out – focus on the positive stories (e.g. “yez we can TV”)
- pay respect to the village gossip as a measure instrument for what is going on
- if setting up an own space e.g. an inclusive social centre for more network activities: approach local politicians, government, ask to take over unused empty real estate

HOW TO CO-CREATE A SUB-COMMUNITY (approach/tenor)

Recommendations for informal local leaders...

- “it’s all about trust”
- understand the situation of the people because you are part of the community have the same problems
- know the language and the right words
- act as role model
- be gentle to the people
- dare to move in the “grey world” (between legal and illegal)
- share what you have with your people, do not be greedy
- treat the active people in the sub-community like your family

WHAT TO DO WHEN CO-CREATING SUB-COMMUNITY (actions)

Recommendations for informal local leaders...

- Pick a theme and start with that (e.g. chess)
- Explain to locals what is the value they gain when joining in (e.g. chess is good for the cognitive development of children)
- invest in teambuilding
- give practical help to locals, also in sudden cases of emergency and help to prevent personal crises and in exchange ask locals to become or stay active