

# BEYOND GOOD INTENTIONS

An examination of how corporate and citizen-led organizations frame and contribute to meaningful social impact in Amsterdam Zuidoost.

**Master thesis**

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# Abstract

The transition to renewable energy is not only a technical process but also a deeply social one, as it greatly impacts people's daily lives, and shapes how benefits and costs are distributed across society. Understanding how meaningful social impact can be defined and created within this context has become increasingly important. This thesis focuses on the case of the Johan Crujff ArenA (JCA) and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder in Amsterdam Zuidoost. It examines how both actors frame and operationalize social impact, how their perspectives differ, and what residents perceive as meaningful social impact. Building on these insights, it explores how collaboration between corporate and community actors can contribute to social impact that is considered meaningful by residents. A qualitative case study approach was employed, combining desk research, semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and a card sorting exercise.

The findings showed the JCA frames social impact in an instrumental and strategic manner, consistent with its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) objectives and Net Positive ambition. In contrast, the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder adopts a bottom-up and community-oriented framing of social impact, viewing it as an end in itself. Residents tend to associate meaningful social impact with immediate and tangible changes linked to their everyday lives, such as better facilities or cleaner streets. The research identifies collaboration opportunities between the JCA and the Energy Cooperative that both create value for the Energy Cooperative and align closely with the JCA's CSR strategy. The most feasible forms of collaboration, such as sharing expertise and providing meeting space, demonstrate that impactful collaboration does not necessarily require large-scale investments. Overall, this thesis demonstrates that meaningful social impact emerges when organizational framings of social impact are aligned with residents' lived realities.

**Key words:** social impact, framing, renewable energy transition, collaboration, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), energy cooperative

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## List of abbreviations

<b>JCA</b>	Johan Cruijff ArenA
<b>HOA</b>	Homeowners association
<b>CSR</b>	Corporate social responsibility
<b>LIFE</b>	Local Inclusive Fair Energy
<b>ESG</b>	Environmental, Social, and Governance
<b>SROI</b>	Social Return On Investment

# Table of contents

Abstract .....	2
Acknowledgements .....	3
1. Introduction .....	7
1.1 Background .....	7
1.2 Knowledge gap and research questions .....	8
1.3 Relevance.....	9
1.4 Reading guide .....	9
2. Theoretical framework .....	10
2.1 Conceptual differences of social impact .....	10
2.2 Approaches and challenges in assessing social impact .....	12
2.3 Actor perspectives on social impact .....	13
2.3.1 Corporate perspective .....	13
2.3.2 Energy Cooperative perspective .....	14
2.3.3 Residents' perspective .....	15
3. Research methodology .....	16
3.1 Research design .....	16
3.2 Data collection and analysis .....	17
3.2.1 Desk research .....	17
3.2.2 Participant observation .....	18
3.2.3 Semi-structured interviews .....	18
3.2.4 Card sorting exercise .....	23
3.3 Expected quality of the results .....	27
4. Case background .....	28
4.1 The social and spatial development of Amsterdam Zuidoost.....	28
4.2 Demographic and socio-economic profile of Venserpolder.....	31
4.3 Background on the Local Inclusive Future Energy project.....	32
5. Results .....	33
5.1 The Johan Cruijff ArenA's framing of its social impact in Amsterdam Zuidoost .....	33
5.1.1 Johan Cruijff ArenA's CSR strategy and Net Positive .....	33
5.1.2 Measuring impact within the Net Positive ambition .....	34
5.1.3 Johan Cruijff ArenA's approach to creating social impact in Zuidoost .....	35
5.1.4 Johan Cruijff ArenA's standing in Amsterdam Zuidoost and its perceived social impacts.....	36
5.2 The Energy Cooperative Venserpolder's framing of its potential social impacts .....	37
5.2.1 Energy Cooperative Venserpolder: background and plans .....	37

5.2.2 Potential social impacts of the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder .....	38
5.2.3 Difference in perceived social impact across homeowners and renters .....	45
5.2.4 Role of local actors in shaping the Cooperative's social impact .....	46
5.3 Meaningful social impact: perspectives of residents and local professionals in Venserpolder .....	48
5.3.1 Improving the physical environment .....	49
5.3.2 Strengthening social and economic conditions .....	51
5.3.3 Enhancing livability .....	52
5.4 Collaboration opportunities between the Johan Cruijff ArenA and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder .....	54
5.4.1 Collaboration opportunities from the LIFE project .....	54
5.4.2 Collaboration opportunities from Energy Cooperative Venserpolder members .....	55
6. Discussion .....	57
6.1 Discussion of the findings .....	57
6.1.1 Divergent framings of social impact .....	57
6.1.2 Defining meaningful social impact .....	58
6.1.3 Collaboration between the Johan Cruijff ArenA and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder .....	59
6.2 Relation of the findings to theory .....	61
6.3 Methodological reflections and limitations .....	62
6.4 Recommendations .....	62
6.4.1 Practical recommendations .....	62
6.4.2 Recommendations for future research .....	63
7. Conclusion .....	65
References .....	67
Appendix .....	74
Appendix A: Full list of interviewees and participants .....	74
Appendix B: Interview protocol .....	75
Appendix C: Semi-structured interview guide Johan Cruijff ArenA employees .....	76
Appendix D: Semi-structured interview guide Venserpolder residents and Venserpolder professionals .....	77
Appendix E: Semi-structured interview guide other experts .....	78
Appendix F: The indicators of the card sorting exercise .....	79
Appendix G: Results of the card sorting exercise .....	81

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

To combat climate change, cities worldwide are striving to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. To become climate neutral, there is an urgent need to transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources (IPCC, 2023). This urban energy transition is not just a technical challenge but also a deeply social one, as this transition greatly impacts people's lives. The impacts reach far beyond technical systems, influencing social areas such as employment, participation, and quality of life (Yang et al., 2024). Consequently, the concept of social impact has become more important in sustainability studies. Social impact is broadly defined in this research as the positive and negative consequences of an organization's activities on the wellbeing of individuals and communities (Johnston & Lane, 2018). Moreover, changes to the energy system reshape who benefits, who bears the cost, and whose voices are heard (Jenkins et al., 2016).

In response to these concerns, the concept of a just energy transition has emerged, which advocates for an energy transition that is inclusive, fair, and equitable. It underscores the inclusion of all affected stakeholders and the promotion of social wellbeing among them. This concept links energy justice and social impact, thereby shifting attention from environmental and economic impacts to the impacts the energy transition has on people's lives (Sovacool et al., 2019; Carley & Konisky, 2020). Within this framework, the city of Amsterdam provides a relevant context of how cities combine environmental objectives with social goals in the local energy transition. Amsterdam has committed to becoming climate-neutral by 2050 and has designated Amsterdam Zuidoost, which is a culturally diverse and socioeconomically disadvantaged district, as a testing ground for experimenting with sustainable innovations (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2020). The municipality has set the ambition for a social energy transition ("sociale energietransitie") in Amsterdam Zuidoost, combining environmental objectives with the creation of positive social impacts, such as reduced energy poverty and more citizen participation (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2024). This represents a broader metropolitan challenge of linking the technical progress of energy systems to equitable outcomes.

Within Amsterdam Zuidoost, the social energy transition is shaped by actors operating at different scales, ranging from large institutions such as the Johan Cruijff ArenA (JCA) and community-led initiatives such as the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder. The JCA is a major actor in the local energy transition as it operates large-scale energy storage systems and leads the local energy hub. It has adopted the ambition to be Net Positive in 2030, aiming to give back more than it takes across environmental, social, and governance (ESG) dimensions (Johan Cruijff ArenA, n.d.; van Raan, 2023). Within this ambition, nearby neighborhoods such as Venserpolder in Amsterdam Zuidoost are important target groups for creating social impact. In contrast, the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder represents a bottom-up initiative in which residents collaborate to produce local renewable energy. Its primary objective is the installation of solar panels to create local social impacts, such as reduced energy poverty and enhanced participation. The potential for collaboration between these two actors was researched in the Local Inclusive Future Energy (LIFE) project, which was aimed at accelerating the social energy transition in Amsterdam Zuidoost through strengthening

cooperation between businesses, organizations, and residents. These two contrasting approaches to social impact, one corporate and strategic, the other community-driven, offer a compelling basis for examining how social impact is framed and generated within the urban energy transition.

## 1.2 Knowledge gap and research questions

While section 1.1 outlined how different actors in Amsterdam Zuidoost contribute to the local energy transition, it also highlighted the gap in how social impact is understood and operationalized across these actors. Most studies examine corporate social impact from a top-down Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) perspective, typically measured using ESG indicators or other measurement frameworks such as Social Return On Investment (SROI) (Costa & Pescia, 2016; Feor et al., 2023). However, as Feor et al. (2023) observed, *“with almost 100 identified measurement models, a lack of standardization, and evaluation complexities, implementing SIM [social impact measurement] practices can be challenging for organizations in all sectors”* (p. 817). In contrast, studies on citizen-led initiatives such as energy cooperatives typically focus on their bottom-up contributions to inclusivity, participation, and local benefit-sharing (Gjorgievski et al., 2021; Ahlemeyer et al., 2022). However, these two perspectives on social impact remain largely disconnected, and limited attention has been given to how they might conflict or complement each other. Furthermore, what is often missing in literature is the perspectives of those who experience these impacts. As Costa & Pescia (2016) note, *“social impact and social impact measurements [are] social constructions of different stakeholders— suggesting, therefore, that it is not possible to establish a golden standard”* (p. 6). This argument highlights that social impact cannot be objectively defined, but rather depends on stakeholders’ perceptions (Costa & Pescia, 2016). Altogether, insights are lacking into how different actors frame social impact, how social impact is experienced, and how this shapes outcomes in urban energy transitions.

To address this knowledge gap, this thesis adopts a case study approach focusing on two key actors: the JCA and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder. Both organizations aim to create social impact in Venserpolder, but through different framings and activities. This research aims to develop a nuanced understanding of how these actors conceptualize and contribute to meaningful social impact. In this context, collaboration represents a key point where their differing perspectives on social impact intersect. Examining potential forms of collaboration provides insight into how these actors might jointly create social impact for residents. By incorporating residents’ lived experiences of social impacts, this research provides valuable insights into what social impacts are considered meaningful. In doing so, this thesis aims to bridge the gap between how social impact is framed and how it is experienced by residents in practice. The following main research question guides the study:

*How do the Johan Cruijff ArenA and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder frame and contribute to meaningful social impact for residents of Venserpolder?*

To answer the main research question, four sub-questions are addressed:

1. How does the Johan Cruijff ArenA frame its social impact in Amsterdam Zuidoost according to its employees?

2. How do members of the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder frame the potential social impacts that the Cooperative can create for different groups of residents in Venserpolder?
3. What social impacts do residents and local professionals in Venserpolder consider meaningful?
4. What opportunities for collaboration can be identified between the Johan Cruijff ArenA and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder to create meaningful social impact for residents of Venserpolder?

## 1.3 Relevance

The main scientific relevance of this research lies in advancing knowledge of how social impact is framed and experienced within urban energy transitions. While previous studies have typically analyzed corporate and cooperative actors separately, this study bridges these two strands of literature by examining how these frames of social impact interact in practice. Furthermore, it contributes to the literature that views social impact as a socially constructed phenomenon by integrating the perspectives of corporations, cooperatives, and residents. This approach contributes to a more holistic understanding of how social impact is defined, created, and experienced. Finally, this research provides empirical insights into how collaborations between local actors can influence the creation of social impact.

At the societal level, the findings of this study contribute to improving how social impact is approached in urban energy transitions. It offers concrete recommendations for corporate and community actors on how to incorporate residents' perspectives in shaping meaningful social impact. For large corporate actors such as the JCA, this research provides actionable recommendations for the creation of social impacts on local communities. For cooperatives such as the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder, this research provides insights into how their potential social impact is distributed over different groups of residents and how they can increase the meaningfulness of their impacts. Furthermore, this research generates policy insights for cities such as Amsterdam that aim to integrate social goals into their sustainability objectives. By incorporating residents' perceptions, policymakers can design sustainability strategies that are better aligned with residents' and community needs. Although this study focuses on Venserpolder in Amsterdam Zuidoost, its findings are relevant to other metropolitan areas facing similar social and sustainability challenges.

## 1.4 Reading guide

This research is structured as follows. Chapter 2 outlines the theoretical framework. Chapter 3 elaborates on the methodology of this research. Chapter 4 presents background information on the case, including information on Amsterdam Zuidoost, Venserpolder, the JCA, and the LIFE project. Chapter 5 includes the results of the research, which are discussed in Chapter 6. Finally, Chapter 7 presents a conclusion to the research.

## 2. Theoretical framework

This chapter elaborates on the key concepts relevant to this research, of which the central phenomenon is social impact. This chapter explains how social impact can be defined, why it is important, and how actors frame it. The structure of this chapter is as follows. Section 2.1 introduces different conceptualizations of social impact. Section 2.2 elaborates on ways to assess social impact and introduces the stakeholder-based approach to social impact measurement. Section 2.3 compares the framings of corporations, energy cooperatives, and residents.

### 2.1 Conceptual differences of social impact

The concept of social impact is central to understanding how societal changes affect the wellbeing of communities and individuals (Johnston & Lane, 2018; Johnston et al., 2025). However, the term lacks a universally accepted definition and is often used interchangeably with related terms such as social value and social return. The term social impact is used across disciplines, each emphasizing different levels of analysis and purposes (Maas & Liket, 2011; Hurst & Johnston, 2025). Understanding these conceptual differences is essential for researching how actors such as the Johan Cruijff ArenA (JCA) and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder frame and operationalize social impact. This section, therefore, discusses three key conceptualizations of social impact that are particularly relevant to this research: those from Social Impact Assessment (SIA), Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), and social psychology.

#### Social Impact Assessment: social impact as societal change

Within the field of SIA, a widely used definition of social impact comes from the Interorganizational Committee on Guidelines and Principles for Social Impact Assessment (1994, p. 107), which defined social impact as *“the consequences to human populations of any public or private actions that alter the ways in which people live, work, play, relate to one another, organize to meet their needs and generally cope as members of society.”* This definition frames social impact as a multi-dimensional process that is primarily concerned with systemic and societal effects. Originally, the purpose of SIA was to predict the potential social consequences of an intervention, focusing primarily on unintended negative effects (Vanclay, 2002). Over time, however, SIA has evolved into a development and management tool that is used throughout an intervention’s lifecycle. The focus has shifted from predicting side effects to intentionally creating and managing positive social impacts (Esteves et al., 2012).

#### Corporate Social Responsibility: social impact as an organizational contribution

In CSR literature, social impact is framed more narrowly as an organizational contribution to social change, with a stronger focus on causality and accountability. For example, Clark et al. (2004, p. 7) define impact in a corporate setting as *“the portion of the total outcome that happened as a result of the activity of the venture, above and beyond what would have happened anyway.”* This frame emphasizes the distinction between outputs (the immediate results of activities) and outcomes (long-term changes to stakeholders). Several debates shape how social impact is understood within this tradition. One central debate is whether it is useful to measure social impact through standardized metrics or if it should be interpreted contextually. A related challenge here is also whether it is always possible to attribute impacts

to one actor (Maas & Liket, 2011; Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014). These debates are essential as they shape what counts as social impact and who can take responsibility for it. Furthermore, corporate engagement with social impact can be either instrumental for creating a strategic advantage, or normative, grounded in moral or ethical responsibility (Porter & Kramer, 2011). Section 2.4.1. elaborates on these debates in more depth.

### Social psychology: social impact as perceived and experienced

The third conceptualization originated from social psychology and emphasizes that social impact is subjective and relational. Latané (1981, p. 343) referred to social impact as *“any of the great variety of changes in physiological states and subjective feelings, motives and emotions, cognitions and beliefs, values and behavior, that occur in an individual, human or animal, as a result of the real, implied, or imagined presence or actions of other individuals.”* This perspective centers on the recipient of social impact, highlighting that individuals’ opinions, meanings, and experiences shape how change is perceived (Latané, 1981). Accordingly, social impact is thus not only what objectively happens, but also how it is experienced. Together, objective outcomes and subjective experiences co-produce what is perceived as improvement (Joffe, 2003). While this definition frames social impact from an individualistic perspective, other social-psychological research also shows that meanings are often collectively constructed through group norms and shared narratives. From this perspective, community and societal levels are also relevant to how social impact is perceived (Nicolopoulou & Weintraub, 1998).

### Defining social impact for this research

These three conceptualizations of social impact show that it is not a single fixed concept, but a multi-dimensional construct that is understood differently across disciplines. Its focus differs from objective societal change to the subjective ways individuals experience that change. Each perspective is based on its own assumptions about whose viewpoint is centered, what qualifies as social impact, and how it should be measured. Table 1 summarizes the main differences between these three conceptualizations. For this research, these perspectives are treated as complementary rather than competing, as each one offers valuable insights.

Table 1: Conceptual differences between the three perspectives on social impact

Perspective on social impact	Focus of definition	Unit of analysis	Purpose of assessment
<b>Social Impact Assessment (SIA)</b>	Systemic consequences affecting how people live and interact	Project and policy interventions	Anticipate and manage social consequences of interventions
<b>Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)</b>	Measurable outcomes from organizational activities	Organizational activities and projects	Demonstrate accountability and strategic value
<b>Social psychology</b>	Experienced and perceived effects of other individuals	Individual	To understand how people experience and respond to social dynamics.

Accordingly, social impact is defined in this research as both the actual and perceived changes in the wellbeing of individuals and communities that result, directly or indirectly, from organizational activities or interventions. This definition explicitly centers the perspective of individuals and communities as those who experience and perceive social change. Moreover, this definition is limited to wellbeing, thereby excluding cognitive or attitudinal dimensions that were included in the conceptualization of social psychology.

## 2.2 Approaches and challenges in assessing social impact

As the previous section showed, social impact is a multi-dimensional and context-specific concept, which makes its assessment inherently complex. Therefore, various ways to assess tangible and intangible social impacts have emerged from the academic field of SIA. Tangible impacts refer to measurable improvements, such as improved housing conditions, while intangible impacts include perceptual changes such as increased social cohesion or an improved feeling of trust (Vanclay, 2002). Assessing both types of impact comes with methodological challenges. The most dominant approaches to assessing social impact are quantitative approaches, which employ measurable indicators such as quality of life metrics (Estoque et al., 2019). A strength of these approaches is that they allow for standardization and comparability across contexts. However, these approaches risk mostly focusing on what is easy to measure: tangible impacts, and ignoring more qualitative aspects of impact (Feor et al., 2023). In contrast, qualitative approaches are useful as they capture the depth and meaning of social changes. However, this data is often context-specific and therefore hard to compare, while some stakeholders, such as investors, often prefer numeric data. For these reasons, quantitative and qualitative methods are often used side-by-side (Maas & Liket, 2011). Among quantitative approaches, monetization-based frameworks such as the Social Return On Investment (SROI) have gained prominence. SROI utilizes a cost-benefit analysis by translating social impacts into monetary value and comparing this value to the costs of the investment. Financial proxies are used to assign monetary values to non-financial impacts. However, monetization relies on value-based assumptions, and some inherently qualitative or relational impact might lose meaning when expressed in financial terms (Clark et al., 2004; Maas & Liket, 2011).

Beyond methodological debates, a more fundamental question in literature is what counts as meaningful to measure. Costa & Pescia (2016, p. 5) argue that this differs per organization, stating that *“it is unrealistic to think that it is possible to develop a ‘golden standard’ capable of universally capturing the social impact of all SEs [Social enterprises].”* These authors frame social impact as a social construction that is shaped by the perspectives of stakeholders. This difference in perception is labeled by Johnston et al. (2025) as perceptual disparities on social impact. This argument connects closely to the conceptualization from social psychology of social impact that was discussed in the previous section, which described social impact also as a subjective experience. Both these perspectives emphasize the importance of perception for defining and evaluating social impact. In response to these perspectives, Costa & Pescia (2016) propose a stakeholder-based approach to social impact assessment. These authors advocate for a shift from the organization’s perspective of its social impact to the perspectives of those experiencing the impacts. This approach involves engaging groups of stakeholders to understand their needs and to co-create relevant metrics to measure the organization’s social impact. For instance, employees might prioritize job satisfaction or financial benefits,

while local communities might emphasize issues such as nuisance reduction and accessibility (Costa & Pescia, 2016). By grounding assessments in local understandings of value, they become more meaningful.

## 2.3 Actor perspectives on social impact

The previous section has positioned social impact as a socially constructed concept, i.e., that its meaning and value depend on the perspectives of those experiencing it. For this reason, it is essential to distinguish between the perspectives of actors that produce social impact and stakeholders who are affected by it. In the context of this research, three perspectives in Amsterdam Zuidoost are particularly relevant: corporate actors such as the JCA, citizen-led initiatives such as the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder, and residents who experience social impacts. In the sections below, these different perspectives on social impact are examined.

### 2.3.1 Corporate perspective

Companies are key players in shaping social impact through their operations. The concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) provides a useful framework for analyzing how companies assume responsibility for their impacts. The European Commission defines CSR as *“a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis”* (European Directive, 2011, p. 3). There are different definitions of CSR, but most of them have three elements in common: CSR is voluntary, it is about companies taking responsibility for the impacts of their business decisions, and it broadens the focus from shareholders to stakeholders (Antonaras, 2022).

The idea that companies have a social responsibility has a long history, and the concept of CSR has gained increased attention in recent decades. However, over time, the role of CSR has changed significantly. It originated in ethics and philanthropy, but it has since gained a more strategic character. CSR has slowly shifted from doing less harm to actively doing good (Latapí Agudelo et al., 2019). For many companies, creating positive social impact is embedded in their corporate purpose. A recent example of this is companies adopting a Net Positive ambition. What becoming Net Positive entails is context-dependent, but it broadly refers to creating more positive impacts than negative impacts. The idea behind this ambition is that companies thrive in the long term when they take good care of all stakeholders, not only shareholders (Polman & Winston, 2021). In this context, creating positive social impact has turned into a source of competitive advantage (Porter & Kramer, 2011).

In practice, companies assess their social contributions through frameworks such as Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) indicators (Gorin, 2023). As corporations typically value measurability and comparability, they tend to focus on quantifiable indicators to measure their performance (Costa & Pescia, 2016). However, while standardized indicators often support the environmental and governance dimensions, the social dimension remains underdeveloped. Social impacts often concern intangible outcomes such as wellbeing or happiness, which are difficult to quantify. As a result, there is a lack of standardized metrics in the social dimension (Maas & Liket, 2011; Keeley et al., 2022). Furthermore, a general critique is that ESG reporting focuses too much on companies' activities and outputs rather than the actual lived impacts of those actions (Diez-Cañamero et al., 2020; Larrinaga, 2023). Because

of these reasons, scholars such as Koenigsmarck & Geissdoerfer (2023) have advocated for developing approaches that better capture the qualitative dimensions of corporate social impact.

In the context of this research, the concepts of CSR and Net Positive are particularly relevant for understanding how corporate actors such as the JCA frame and operationalize social impact. This approach is often strategic and outcome-oriented, emphasizing measurable indicators. It differs from community-oriented perspectives used by bottom-up initiatives such as the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder. This contrast is explored further in the following section.

### 2.3.2 Energy Cooperative perspective

To understand how Energy Cooperatives frame social impact, it is essential to examine what they are and what role they play in the energy transition. Citizen energy cooperatives are a type of energy community, which refers to an organization of citizens that participate in local bottom-up energy initiatives together (Gjorgievski et al., 2021; Ahlemeyer et al., 2022). Connected to this frame is the concept of energy citizenship, which is relevant as it sheds light on how the role of citizens within the energy transition has been changing. Energy citizenship frames citizens as stakeholders actively participating in the evolution of the energy system instead of passive energy users (Wahlund & Palm, 2022; Shejale et al., 2025). Energy citizenship also has a strong focus on communities and cooperation between citizens (Rygghaug et al., 2018). Participation in citizen energy cooperatives can be seen as an expression of energy citizenship in practice (Wahlund & Palm, 2022).

In contrast to corporate actors, who employ a more strategy-driven approach to social impact, energy cooperatives adopt a bottom-up framing of social impact. In practice, the meaning of social impact is socially constructed by the members of a cooperative. What is seen as a meaningful social impact differs per cooperative, as it is highly dependent on a community's needs and priorities (Tarhan, 2015). For example, some energy cooperatives might prioritize energy independence, while others might emphasize social cohesion (De Vidovich et al., 2023). Moreover, the bottom-up approach can also advance the fairness and inclusiveness of the energy transition. For instance, by creating participatory opportunities for citizens, distributing financial benefits equitably, and recognizing the needs of marginalized or vulnerable groups (Dall-Orsoletta et al., 2022; Sokółowski et al., 2025).

However, bottom-up approaches do not automatically guarantee inclusiveness. Barriers for inclusive engagement primarily include financial constraints, a lack of time, and a lack of knowledge (Bögel et al., 2023). These barriers can lead to an overrepresentation of certain demographic groups in energy communities. For instance, multiple studies have shown that older males with high incomes and high levels of education tend to be overrepresented. Other groups, such as women or citizens with a low income, tend to be underrepresented (Hanke et al., 2021; Goedkoop et al., 2025). Furthermore, energy communities can also have high entry barriers, such as owning a house. Thus, even though an energy cooperative can contribute greatly to the energy transition, it could also reinforce or widen existing social and economic gaps if they are not open and inclusive (Karakislak et al., 2023).

This bottom-up approach to social impact is relevant to this research as it helps to understand the perspective of the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder. As a citizen energy cooperative, it defines its goals based on the members' priorities. Building on this, the following section examines the residents' perspective on social impact.

### 2.3.3 Residents' perspective

This section builds on the notion that social impact is a socially constructed phenomenon, that frames social impact as perceived and experienced. The perspectives of residents are central to assessing social impact, as they are the ones who experience social change in their daily lives. Understanding these lived experiences is crucial for grasping how social impacts are perceived and valued in practice. However, Johnston et al. (2025) emphasize that impacts can be experienced very differently within a community. Recognizing these differences contributes to revealing inequalities: while some residents experience benefits, others might primarily experience negative effects, such as rising costs.

These perceptual differences also exist between organizations and residents. Because social impact assessments are typically organizationally driven, they often reflect institutional priorities rather than lived realities (Vanclay et al., 2015). Johnston et al. (2025, p. 2) argue that such *“organizationally derived perceptions can lead to incorrect determinations about the nature and extent of impacts.”* For instance, an organization might report local job creation as a positive social outcome, while residents might not consider these types of jobs as valuable. This illustrates that the perceived value of an impact not only depends on its existence but also on its relevance to residents' needs. To assess social impact meaningfully, it is therefore essential to take residents' perspectives and priorities into account (Hurst et al., 2023).

In conclusion, residents' perspectives on social impact are highly relevant for corporate actors such as the JCA and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder. For these organizations to create meaningful social impact, their actions must be perceived as valuable and beneficial by the residents of Venserpolder. This perspective also helps to understand how different groups of residents experience impact differently and what opportunities for social impact exist according to the perceptions of residents.

## 3. Research methodology

This chapter elaborates on the methodological design of this research. Section 3.1 explains how the research is designed and what methods were used. Section 3.2 describes the data collection methods and the steps that were taken to analyze the data. Finally, section 3.3 discusses the expected quality of the results.

### 3.1 Research design

This research employed a qualitative case study design to answer the main research question. A qualitative approach was chosen since the research is explorative and seeks to understand how social impact is framed and produced by different organizations in a specific local context. An important part of this was also understanding residents' experiences, perceptions, and meanings. Qualitative methods are most suitable for this as they enable the collection of in-depth and nuanced data on the perspectives of different actors, including themes that were not expected. In contrast, quantitative approaches, that for instance use standardized indicators, are useful for collecting objective and tangible data, but they are not well-suited to collecting intangible data on intangible impacts (Taylor et al., 2015).

#### Case study design

This research employed a case study design since it allowed for an in-depth exploration of how social impact is produced in practice (Ellinger & McWhorter, 2016; Harrison et al., 2017). The case study design was primarily exploratory in nature, as it sought to uncover how different conceptualizations of social impact interact and take shape in practice (Yin, 2018). This design was also instrumental, as the case served as a lens for developing a wider understanding of how organizations conceptualize and contribute to meaningful social impact in the context of the energy transition (Stake, 1995). The reason why this particular case was selected is described below.

The case focuses on two contrasting actors in Amsterdam Zuidoost: the Johan Cruijff ArenA (JCA) and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder. Both actors are engaged in creating social impact in the neighborhood of Venserpolder, though through different means. The JCA does so primarily through its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, while the Energy Cooperative focuses on community initiatives such as the installation of solar panels on roofs in Venserpolder. Moreover, these actors' approaches to social impact are guided by fundamentally different organizational logics. The JCA is a corporate, strategically-oriented organization, whereas the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder is a citizen-led and community-oriented organization. The contrast between these actors enables a comparative analysis, as it enables the examination of how different framings of social impact interact in the same neighborhood context. Venserpolder is a socioeconomically disadvantaged neighborhood, which renders it a relevant setting for researching how social impact is generated and experienced in practice.

The focus of the case is on how these actors frame and contribute to social impact, and how these impacts are experienced and perceived by residents of Venserpolder. This study builds on earlier research done in the Local Inclusive Fair Energy (LIFE) project, which explored potential collaborations between these actors. By examining how these actors conceptualize

and approach social impact, this research contributes to a richer understanding of the ways social impact is produced, perceived, and experienced.

### Multi-method approach

A multi-method approach was used, employing desk research, participant observation, a card sorting exercise, and semi-structured interviews. This approach was chosen as it is flexible and allows for triangulation by collecting data from different angles. This enriched the findings and improved their credibility (Fusch et al., 2018; Ahmed, 2024). These methods complemented each other by providing unique lenses: desk research provided context, participant observation allowed for learning on organizational dynamics, the card sorting exercise facilitated an accessible discussion on social impacts, and interviews enabled the gathering of in-depth perspectives of individuals. Table 2 presents the research methods used to answer the research sub-questions. The following section explains the research methods.

Table 2: Data collection methods per research sub-question

Research sub-question	Data collection method
SQ1: How does the Johan Cruijff ArenA frame its social impact in Amsterdam Zuidoost according to its employees?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Semi-structured interviews</li> <li>• Desk research</li> </ul>
SQ2: How do members of the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder frame the potential social impacts that the Cooperative can create for different groups of residents in Venserpolder?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participant observation</li> <li>• Semi-structured interviews</li> <li>• Card sorting exercise</li> </ul>
SQ3: What social impacts do residents and local professionals in Venserpolder consider meaningful?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Semi-structured interviews</li> </ul>
SQ4: What opportunities for collaboration can be identified between the Johan Cruijff ArenA and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder to create meaningful social impact for residents of Venserpolder?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Semi-structured interviews</li> </ul>

## 3.2 Data collection and analysis

This section elaborates on the various methods used for data collection, including desk research, participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and a card sorting exercise. For each method, the reason for using it and the data analysis strategy are described. In addition to these data collection methods, an organized bike tour through Amsterdam Zuidoost was done, which was combined with a visit to the Bijlmer Museum. These activities were not formally used for gathering data, but they were important in learning about the history of this district and experiencing it in real life.

### 3.2.1 Desk research

Desk research was primarily conducted for creating the case background chapter, which is presented in Chapter 4. The case background chapter includes information on Amsterdam

Zuidoost, the JCA, Venserpolder, and the LIFE project. To construct this contextual overview, the desk research utilized a range of non-academic sources, which were mainly identified through internet searches. The primary data sources for this were government reports, news articles, blogs, and an online archive. Academic literature was not used, as the goal was to gather local and area-specific insights, for which archives and municipal databases were considered more suitable. The most important source of data was the online archive *Bijlmermuseum*. This website provides meticulous information on the development of Amsterdam Zuidoost from the early twentieth century until now. Another important source was the blog *Bijlmer for beginners*, in which the history and modern issues of this district are discussed. For the socio-economic analysis of Venserpolder, mainly open databases of the municipality of Amsterdam were used, sometimes supplemented with other sources. Desk research was also used to gather additional data on the JCA's CSR policy, which is relevant for research sub-question 1. For this, an online presentation and an interview published in an online magazine were examined.

### 3.2.2 Participant observation

Participant observation was conducted during a meeting of the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder on 14 July 2025, which included approximately twelve participants, including Cooperative members, municipality employees, and other local stakeholders. Participant observation is a qualitative method that involves observing while taking part in a group's activities. This method was particularly suitable as the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder was not yet officially established, and little written information about its organization was available. This research method provided an opportunity to learn first-hand about the organization's dynamics, priorities, and challenges. In addition, this method allowed for active engagement in the discussions, making it possible to raise issues relevant to this research (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2010). At the introduction of the meeting, I introduced myself and my reason for taking part in this meeting. During the meeting, participants discussed practical and strategic topics, including the selection of rooftops for solar panel installation, the payment of members, and engagement strategies. The observation provided insights into the Cooperative's organizational structure, its members, decision-making processes, priorities, and tensions. In addition, after the meeting, two conversations were held with participants of the meeting. Data was collected by making field notes, which documented key observations but were not coded like the interviews. This meeting was also used for identifying potential interviewees and participants.

### 3.2.3 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were the primary data-gathering method as they allow the collection of context-specific insights on a complex topic such as social impact. They enable in-depth engagement with interviewees and the gathering of nuanced data from different perspectives (Wengraf, 2001). Semi-structured interviews follow a flexible structure in which a set of guiding questions is used across interviewees, which increases the comparability of the interviews. This type of interview allows the possibility to ask follow-up questions and explore relevant topics that arise during the interview (Taylor, 2015). The flexibility of this method is important as this research is exploratory in nature. In total, eleven interviews were conducted, partly in person and partly online via Microsoft Teams. All interviews were conducted in Dutch, except for one interview that was done in English. Regarding ethics, the

WUR ethical guidelines were followed. This means that the interviewees were informed that this interview was conducted to collect data for thesis research. The interviewees were asked if they gave consent for them to be recorded and for the recording to be transcribed and analyzed. The interview protocol is presented in Appendix B. In the next section, the selection of interviewees is described, as well as the sampling and interview strategies.

### Selection of interviewees and interview strategies

Three distinct groups of interviewees can broadly be distinguished: JCA employees, Venserpolder residents and professionals, and other experts. In Tables 3, 4, and 5, these groups of interviewees are shown. These tables also show to which research sub-questions the interviews contributed. The names of the interviewees have been anonymized to protect their privacy. Accordingly, each interviewee has been assigned a pseudonym in the tables and throughout the report. In addition, their job titles or role descriptions have been generalized to ensure confidentiality. The full list of interviewees and participants, including additional information, is shown in Appendix A. Three interviewees, referred to as Peter, Sebas, and Remco in Table 3, took part in both the card sorting exercise and the interviews. They took part in the card sorting exercise in their capacity as members of the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder, and were interviewed in their role as residents of Venserpolder. The sampling and interview strategy per group is explained below.

#### Johan Cruijff ArenA employees

The three JCA employees who were interviewed are shown in Table 3. They were selected based on their knowledge or involvement in certain projects. Interviewees were identified and contacted through a designated contact person within the JCA, which ensured their relevance. The first two employees were selected based on their knowledge on the JCA's CSR strategy, including its Net Positive ambition. The third employee was selected because of its knowledge on the LIFE project as a project manager. The interview guide, which is shown in Appendix C, covered themes such as the JCA's CSR strategy, its Net Positive ambition, and its connection with Amsterdam Zuidoost. The interview questions were adapted to accommodate the different roles of the employees, but key topics were consistent across interviewees.

*Table 3: List of Johan Cruijff ArenA interviewees*

Pseudonym interviewee	Job/role description	Organization	Relevance to sub-questions
<b>JCA employee 1</b>	Operational manager	Johan Cruijff ArenA	SQ1, SQ4
<b>JCA employee 2</b>	CSR employee	Johan Cruijff ArenA	SQ1, SQ4
<b>JCA employee 3</b>	Project manager	Johan Cruijff ArenA	SQ1, SQ4

## Venserpolder residents and professionals

Interviewing residents of Venserpolder posed some obstacles, including research fatigue, a known issue for over-researched populations (Ashley, 2021). To mitigate this and ensure a diversity of perspectives, the interview sample included both residents and local professionals with close ties to Venserpolder. The Venserpolder residents and professionals that were interviewed are shown in Table 4.

Three Energy Cooperative Venserpolder members, who are all homeowners, were interviewed after they participated in the card sorting exercise (see section 3.2.4). They were identified through the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder meeting. To include the perspective of renters, two neighborhood managers from local housing corporations were selected. These professionals have extensive experience working with tenants, as they are the point of contact for many social renters. These neighborhood managers were identified through internet searches. Finally, a municipality employee who works in Venserpolder was interviewed, who offered a broader institutional perspective. This person was also identified through the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder meeting.

The interview guide, which can be found in Appendix D, includes general questions and questions specifically for the local professionals. The interview with neighborhood manager 2 was largely conducted as a walking interview through Venserpolder, while this person was doing the daily check-in around the neighborhood. This allowed for direct observation of local challenges and neighborhood conditions. The walk took around an hour and covered streets, hallways, basements, stairways, and inside courtyards.

Table 4: List of Venserpolder residents and professional interviewees

Pseudonym interviewee	Job/role description	Organization	Relevance to sub-questions
<b>Neighborhood manager 1</b>	Neighborhood manager in Venserpolder	Local housing corporation	SQ1, SQ4
<b>Neighborhood manager 2</b>	Neighborhood manager in Venserpolder	Local housing corporation	SQ1, SQ4
<b>Local municipality employee</b>	Municipality employee working in Venserpolder	Municipality of Amsterdam	SQ1, SQ3, SQ4
<b>Peter*</b>	Homeowner in Venserpolder	-	SQ1, SQ2, SQ3, SQ4
<b>Sebas*</b>	Homeowner in Venserpolder	-	SQ1, SQ2, SQ3, SQ4
<b>Remco*</b>	Homeowner in Venserpolder	-	SQ1, SQ2, SQ3, SQ4

\*These interviewees also took part in the card sorting exercise and were interviewed together.

## Additional experts

Two additional experts, who are shown in Table 5, were interviewed for their specialized knowledge on housing projects and the LIFE project. The first was a municipal project manager focused on sustainability and housing projects (relevant to SQ2), who was identified through the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder meeting. The second interviewee was a former

LIFE project researcher with extensive knowledge of the collaboration opportunities between the JCA and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder that were researched. This interviewee was identified via internet searches. The interview guide can be found in Appendix E.

*Table 5: List of additional expert interviewees*

<b>Pseudonym interviewee</b>	<b>Job/role description</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Relevance to sub-questions</b>
<b>Municipal housing project manager</b>	Project manager for housing and sustainability	Municipality of Amsterdam	SQ2
<b>Former LIFE researcher</b>	Researcher, formerly for the LIFE project	TU Delft	SQ4

### Transcription and coding

The recordings of the interviews were used to create transcriptions. Microsoft Teams automatically generated transcriptions of the interviews, while in-person interviews were transcribed using Microsoft Word's transcription tool. For both these options, parts of the transcriptions still had to be corrected manually. A naturalized transcription approach was chosen, which involves making the transcriptions as accurate as possible by making word-for-word records of the interviews. This means that no words or sentences were corrected or omitted, even if they were incomplete or grammatically incorrect. Although this approach results in a less clean transcription, the advantage is that it preserves the authenticity of the interviews (Taylor et al., 2015). For the walking interview, there was much background noise from cars and wind. Before this could be transcribed, the audio file had to be cleaned using online audio tools. Also, there was one interviewee who did not consent to be recorded, and one interview where the recording failed. For these interviews, a different approach was taken. During these interviews, notes were taken in a notebook. Directly after the interview, everything that was relevant and not yet covered in the notes was written down to minimize recall bias (Wengraf, 2001). These detailed notes were converted into an online document and used in the same way as the interview transcriptions.

The transcriptions were manually coded using ATLAS.ti 25. The coding strategy initially focused on open coding, which is a form of inductive coding. This means that no predetermined codes were used. This form of coding is explorative and allows for unbiased coding. This is different from deductive coding, which involves using codes that were developed a priori, usually based on a particular theory or concept (Taylor, 2015; Bingham, 2023). The code names were assigned in a descriptive and detailed way. This enhanced the interpretability of the data, reducing the need to open the transcriptions. This resulted in 883 quotations with 819 unique codes. Once the phase of initial coding was done, the list of codes was scanned to identify themes. After this, similar codes were grouped together in higher-level themes such as [CSR and Net Positive ambition]. These folders were organized in a way that contributed to answering the research sub-questions, which is shown in Figure 1. The number of codes varies considerably per sub-question, as some topics generated more detailed and diverse discussions among interviewees. In addition, the number of codes per interview is shown in Figure 2. Note that the number of codes does not indicate the importance of an interviewee's input, as the number of codes also reflects differences in communication style.

If quotes from the interviews are used in the results sections, the interviewee's consent was explicitly obtained.

Name	Grounded
1. JCA's CSR strategy and its social impact	121
↳ CSR and Net Positive ambition	65
↳ JCA's approach to create social impact in Amsterdam Zuidoost	13
↳ JCA's social impact in Amsterdam Zuidoost	43
2. Energy Cooperative Venserpolder's social impact	303
↳ Barriers	12
↳ Distribution of social impacts	56
↳ Energy Cooperative Venserpolder's potential social impacts	52
↳ Future plans & opportunities	19
↳ General information	11
↳ Indicator exercise	47
↳ Role local actors	116
3. Opportunities for social impact in Venserpolder	154
↳ Enhancing livability	45
↳ Improving physical environment	80
↳ Strengthening social and economic conditions	31
4. Collaboration between JCA and Energy Cooperative Venserpolder	55
↳ Collaboration ideas	55
↳ Context energy transition	92
↳ Interesting, not relevant	62
↳ Other information JCA	27
↳ Other information Venserpolder	71

Figure 1: A screenshot from ATLAS.ti showing the final coding structure

Name	Quotations
1. JCA employee 1	41
2. JCA employee 2	69
3. JCA employee 3	36
4. Neighborhood manager 1	62
5. Neighborhood manager 2	214
6. Local municipality employee	54
7. Peter and Sebas	110
8. Remco	142
9. Employee of an environmental organization	32
Municipal housing project manager	114

Figure 2: Screenshot from ATLAS.ti showing the number of quotations per interview

### 3.2.4 Card sorting exercise

A card sorting exercise was conducted to explore the potential social impacts of the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder. This exercise directly informed sub-question 2. Card sorting was chosen as it is a structured and accessible way to engage participants. This is particularly suitable for participants who are non-experts and may not have reflected on the topic of social impact before. Card sorting is a participatory research method where participants have to sort a pile of cards into categories. This method enabled the participants to interactively express their views on how wellbeing indicators might improve or worsen because of the Energy Cooperative's initiatives (Barton, 2015; Meagher et al., 2024).

#### Selection of participants

For this exercise, it was important that the participants were somehow engaged in the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder. The exercise was done with four people in total, who are shown in Table 6. Three of the participants were members of the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder, who were also interviewed afterwards. The fourth participant is an employee of a regional environmental organization that is engaged in solar panel projects in Venserpolder. There is a chance that the organization of this employee will collaborate with the Energy Cooperative; therefore, this employee was also present at the Energy Cooperative meeting. All participants were identified during the Energy Cooperative meeting. Peter and Sebas did the exercise together, while the other two participants performed it alone. Remco discussed certain aspects with other members of the Energy Cooperative beforehand so that he could give more informed answers.

Table 6: List of participants of the card sorting exercise

Pseudonym participant	Job/role description	Organization	Relevance to sub-questions
<b>Employee of an environmental organization</b>	Project manager energy transition	A regional environmental organization	SQ2
<b>Peter*</b>	Member	Energy Cooperative Venserpolder	SQ2
<b>Sebas*</b>	Member	Energy Cooperative Venserpolder	SQ2
<b>Remco</b>	Member	Energy Cooperative Venserpolder	SQ2

\*These participants did the exercise together

#### Design of the exercise

A closed card sorting approach was used, in which participants sorted a pile of cards with wellbeing indicators into three pre-defined categories: (1) This will worsen, (2) Not relevant / I don't know, and (3) This will improve. Using pre-defined categories such as "positive impact" or "negative impact" could have caused confusion, as some indicators describe desirable states (such as neighborhood satisfaction) and other undesirable ones (such as stress). Instead, participants were asked to indicate whether they expected each indicator to improve or worsen, which provided a clearer and more intuitive task. There were versions in Dutch and English, and the exercise typically lasted 30-45 minutes. The exercise was designed to be

performed both in person and online. However, the online session with the employee of an environmental organization proved less effective, after which the remaining sessions were conducted in person.

The indicators used in the exercise were derived from the Wellbeing Dashboard Venserpolder, which is a project by the University of Amsterdam to develop a tool to measure residents' wellbeing. This dashboard was co-created with residents to identify the most important local wellbeing topics, which resulted in 16 topics with 35 corresponding indicators. For instance, the topic "Connection" includes the indicators "How often is loneliness experienced" and "Sense of connection with other residents". A 2023 snapshot of how these indicators were scored in practice is shown in Figure 3 (Wellbeing Dashboard Amsterdam, n.d.). Using this dashboard as the basis for the card sorting exercise aligns well with the definition of social impact that is adopted in this study, which focuses on both the actual and perceived changes in the wellbeing of individuals and communities. By using the dashboard's indicators, this exercise operationalizes the abstract concept of social impact into measurable and locally relevant indicators. While the dashboard is by no means definitive or exhaustive, it is relevant as it captures many of the important wellbeing topics according to residents in Venserpolder. The list of indicators was slightly adapted for this study. Some were excluded due to their limited relevance, which is the case for the indicator "A computer and internet at home". Others were merged to improve the clarity. For instance, four housing indicators were merged into "Satisfaction with housing in Venserpolder". An overview of which indicators were included or excluded is presented in Appendix F.

# Wellbeing Dashboard Venserpolder

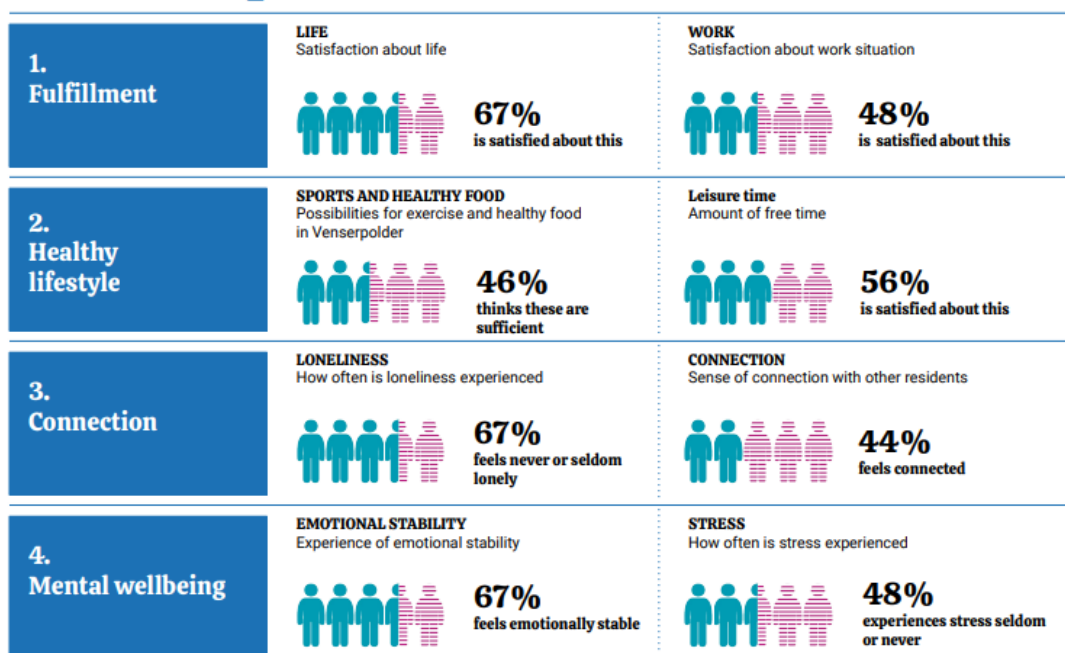


Figure 3: Snapshot of a part of the Wellbeing Dashboard Venserpolder (Wellbeing Dashboard Amsterdam, n.d.)

When introducing the exercise, it was important to give some background information and to use clear and simple language. Before starting, the Wellbeing Dashboard was briefly explained, while avoiding complex terms such as “indicator” and “co-creation”. The exercise began with the facilitator placing the three pre-defined categories on the table: “This will worsen”, “Not relevant / I don’t know”, and “This will improve”, and handing the participants a stack of cards with various wellbeing indicators on them. A visual representation of all the cards is shown in Table 7. The participants were asked to consider how the Energy Cooperative’s solar plans might affect residents of Venserpolder and to sort each card into one of the three categories accordingly.

*Table 7: The cards of the card sorting exercise*

Satisfaction with housing in Venserpolder	Satisfaction with educational opportunities	Experience of emotional stability	How often is stress experienced
Residents feel heard, involved, and think that the municipal policies match what the neighborhood needs	Participation in political activities (e.g. voting, demonstrating/protesting)	The offer and amount of social services in Venserpolder meets my needs	The offer and amount of neighbourhood activities in Venserpolder is sufficient
Satisfaction with range of shops in Venserpolder	Satisfaction with facilities in Venserpolder, as a library or restaurants	Satisfaction with public space (e.g. art or culture)	Frequency of nuisance experience
Satisfaction about life	The jobs offered in Venserpolder and immediate surroundings fit what I am looking for	Feeling of safety at the streets	Satisfaction with the neighbourhood
Financial problems because of fixed expenses	Making ends meet on income	Possibilities for exercise and healthy food in Venserpolder	Amount of free time
Having a paid job	Satisfaction about work situation	Loneliness	Sense of connection with other residents

Space was left between the category rows to allow participants to express uncertainty or conditional responses, for instance when an indicator might improve depending on how the revenues of a project are spent. After the placement of a card, participants were asked why they placed it there. For example, if a participant expected the indicator “Financial problems because of fixed expenses” to improve, they placed the card in the “This will improve” column and elaborated on their reasoning. Similarly, if they believed that “Loneliness” could improve only under certain conditions, then the card could be placed in the empty row between “Not relevant / I don’t know” and “This will improve”. After all the cards had been placed, participants were asked whether they felt any impacts were not addressed in the exercise. This step was included because the Wellbeing Dashboard Venserpolder was co-created by other residents, who may have different needs and priorities. An additional goal of the exercise was to explore

who will be affected by these identified impacts. For each indicator that was considered relevant, participants were asked which groups of residents in Venserpolder would benefit and which may not. This generated insights into the expected distribution of social impacts of the Energy Cooperative.

## Data analysis

The card sorting exercise generated both visual and verbal data. Each session was recorded, and photos were taken of the final arrangements of the cards. While the visual layout of the cards provides a structured overview of how the participants categorized the indicators, the most important insights are derived from the recordings that capture the participants' explanations of why they sorted the cards in specific ways. Because the participants completed the same exercise, their responses could be systematically compared. An example of the final layout of one of the sessions is shown in Figure 4.

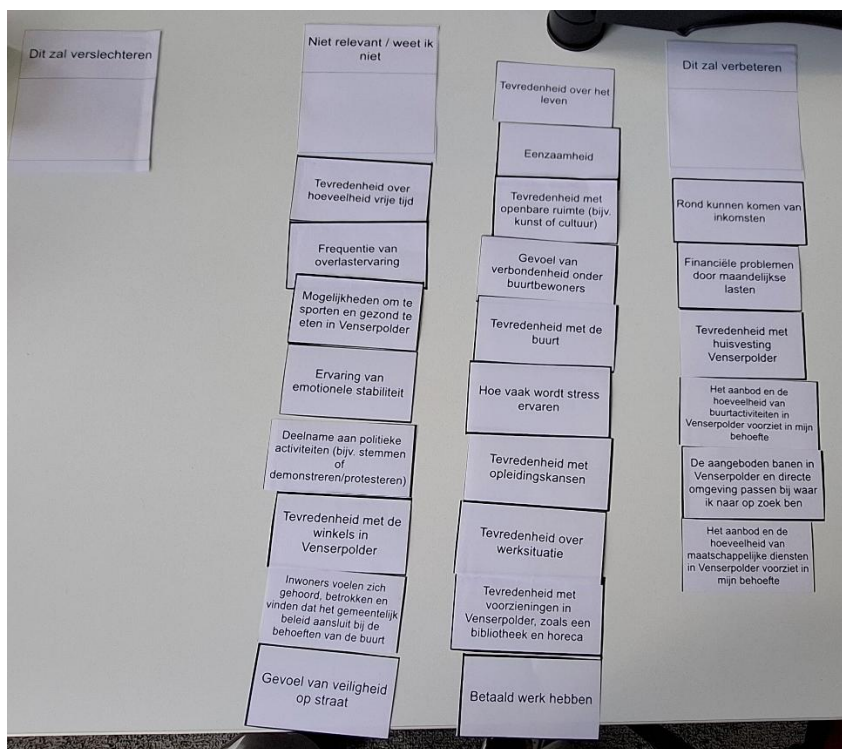


Figure 4: Photo of a final layout at the end of the exercise

The first stage of analysis involved analyzing the photos of the completed exercises, which were converted into summary tables that allowed the comparison of results across participants. In these tables, the placement of each card is represented through a short code and color scheme:

- White cells with a hyphen represent cards placed under “Not relevant / I don’t know”.
- Yellow cells marked “maybe” represent cards placed in between the rows “Not relevant / I don’t know” and “This will improve”.
- Green cells marked “yes” represent cards placed under “This will improve”.

As no participants placed any cards in the “This will worsen” row, this category is not shown in the table. The complete table, which is shown in Appendix G, gives a systematic overview of the final layout of the sessions. The recordings of the sessions were transcribed and coded, using the indicators as a coding structure, which allows the comparison of participants' motives

per indicator. The indicators that were thought to be similar were grouped together, which led to themes such as “Financial situation” and “Work and education”. In the Results Chapter, the results are discussed by theme.

### 3.3 Expected quality of the results

This section discusses the expected quality of the results, based on their reliability and validity. Reliability is often referred to as dependability in qualitative research, and it concerns the transparency and consistency of the research process (Ahmed, 2024). Efforts were made to safeguard the dependability by documenting all methodological steps in detail. For instance, the interview procedures, including the interview guides and sampling strategies, are clearly explained, as are the design choices made for the card sorting exercise. This enhances the study’s transparency and enables other researchers to repeat this research. An example of a limitation is that actively participating in the Energy Cooperative meeting influenced the discussions, which impacts the replicability of the data.

Regarding validity, Cypress (2017, p. 256) states that it concerns the “*accuracy and truthfulness of scientific findings.*” There is a distinction between internal and external validity. Internal validity refers to the credibility of the findings, and whether the research effectively measures what it intends to study (Andrade, 2018). In this regard, a primary strength of this research is its multi-method approach, which enables data triangulation. This allows for researching the topic from different angles, which improves the credibility of this research (Ahmed, 2024).

External validity emphasizes the generalizability of the findings to other contexts, which is also referred to as transferability (Andrade, 2018; Ahmed, 2024). The use of a case study design means that the results of this research are highly context-dependent, which complicates their transferability. However, the findings contribute more generally to valuable insights into the concept of social impact within the context of the energy transition. In addition, this report offers sufficient contextual background for other future researchers to judge whether the findings of this case are relevant to their own research.

## 4. Case background

This chapter provides contextual background for the case of this research. Section 4.1 describes the social and spatial development of Amsterdam Zuidoost, including subsections on the Johan Cruijff ArenA (JCA) and the neighborhood of Venserpolder. Section 4.2 presents demographic and socio-economic characteristics of Venserpolder. Finally, section 4.3 concludes with background information on the Local Inclusive Future Energy (LIFE) project, from which the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder emerged.

### 4.1 The social and spatial development of Amsterdam Zuidoost

Following the Second World War, Amsterdam faced a large housing shortage. In response, city planners planned the expansion of Amsterdam, including the construction of Amsterdam Zuidoost. In the mid-1960s, construction began on the Bijlmer, located adjacent to the villages of Duivendrecht and Diemen. As shown in Figure 5, these villages physically separate Amsterdam Zuidoost from the rest of Amsterdam. The development plan primarily consisted of high-rise apartment complexes laid out in hexagonal grids. The public spaces between the buildings were designed to be spacious, green, and largely car-free, creating a pedestrian-friendly environment. In the development plan, there was a clear separation of residential, commercial, transportation, and social areas (Redactie Stadsdeel Zuidoost, 2023). The Bijlmer was envisioned as a model for future cities, with some referring to it as the *city of the future*. In 1964, Amsterdam's mayor Gijs van Hall proclaimed: *"Nowhere else in the world has a more beautiful and modern city of such magnitude been built"* (Wassenberg, 2017, p. 78). The neighborhood was primarily intended to attract young families from Amsterdam who were living in low-quality social housing units elsewhere in Amsterdam. Approximately 75% of the planned housing was designated for educated workers and middle-income residents, and 25% for higher-income groups. Initially, the demand for housing in the Bijlmer was high, and there were waiting lists for apartments (BijlmerMuseum, n.d.).



Figure 5: Map showing the location of Amsterdam Zuidoost

However, many early residents expressed dissatisfaction about the lack of amenities, safety, pollution, and the state of the buildings. As a result, the Bijlmer quickly developed a negative reputation. Therefore, many young families preferred to move to new single-family homes outside of Amsterdam in cities such as Purmerend, Almere, and Lelystad. In 1972, only six years after the construction began, vacancy rates in the Bijlmer had increased significantly. Instead of young families, the Bijlmer primarily attracted young single residents and immigrants. In particular immigrants from Suriname moved to the Bijlmer because of the expectation that Suriname would become independent. Over time, the Bijlmer faced high rates of unemployment and criminality, and by 1983, 25% of the apartments were vacant. In response, the first plans for large-scale demolition were introduced in the early 1980s. These plans were executed in the 1990s, when more than half of the high-rise buildings were demolished and replaced primarily by low-rise buildings (BijlmerMuseum, n.d.).

### The development of Venserpolder

The urban and social challenges in the Bijlmer also significantly influenced the development of the rest of Amsterdam Zuidoost. In Gaasperdam, located to the south of the Bijlmer, urban planners opted for predominantly low-rise and mid-rise housing as a response to the problems in the Bijlmer (van Lier, 2004). A similar approach was adopted for Venserpolder, which is the last neighborhood that was constructed in the Bijlmer area, completed in 1984. Venserpolder is located in the northwestern part of the Bijlmer, bounded by a metro line to the north and by the Amsterdam-Utrecht railway to the west. In contrast to the Bijlmer, the urban planners designed a layout without high-rise buildings. In Venserpolder, rectangular building blocks of four to five stories were constructed, as is shown in Figure 6 (BijlmerMuseum, n.d.). Each building block featured a private courtyard containing greenery or playgrounds. While the neighborhood was designed with much public space, much of the ground surface is paved and allocated to streets or car parking. As a result, the public space contains little greenery, except for the peripheral areas of Venserpolder, which are relatively green. Compared to the rest of the Bijlmer, the car has a much more dominant presence in the urban landscape (Arcam, n.d.). The public space is thus primarily functional in nature, designed for mobility instead of social interaction, and it has been described as *“an area with little to no appeal for staying or lingering”* (Stadsdeel Zuidoost, 2020, p. 6). Similar to the rest of the Bijlmer and Gaasperdam, there is a strong separation of living, working, and recreation (BijlmerMuseum, n.d.).



Figure 6: Aerial view of Venserpolder (Arcam, n.d.)

## The construction of the Johan Crujff Arena

By the late 1980s, AJAX's football stadium had become too small. Consequently, plans were developed for the construction of a multifunctional stadium, intended for hosting football games as well as other sports and music events. In the mid-1990s, the Johan Crujff Arena (JCA) was built, which was formerly called Amsterdam Arena. The stadium was constructed in the Amstel III business district, which is located in the western part of Amsterdam Zuidoost, directly across the railway from the neighborhood of Venserpolder (in the Bijlmer). Figure 7 illustrates the proximity of the JCA to Venserpolder. At the time, in this area there were mostly offices and other commercial buildings (BijlmerMuseum, n.d.). There is not much written documentation on why this location was selected. The Commissie voor de milieueffect-rapportage (1993, p. 11) wrote that *"the reasoning for the chosen location is very brief"* and that the only alternative considered was Strandvliet, a nearby site that was quickly dismissed as the municipality of Amsterdam could not come to an agreement with neighboring municipalities (Meeus, 2001). Accessibility appears to be the main reason for selecting this location, as it was well-connected to major highways and situated directly next to Bijlmer station (Commissie voor de milieueffectrapportage, 1993). Another reason appears to have been that it was part of a broader municipal plan to revitalize Amsterdam Zuidoost (Meeus, 2001; van Engelen, 2012).



Figure 7: Screenshot from Google Maps showing the location of the Johan Crujff Arena and Venserpolder (top right side)

To what extent the construction of the JCA has contributed to the revitalization of Amsterdam Zuidoost is a topic of debate. Proponents argued that the JCA would enhance the prestige of the Bijlmer and that local residents would benefit from its presence. It was expected that the JCA and surrounding businesses would create employment opportunities and that employees might choose to live in Amsterdam Zuidoost (van Engelen, 2012). For example, one person who was involved in the construction of the JCA said in the late 1990s that the JCA had functioned as an important catalyst for Amsterdam Zuidoost, particularly strengthening the Bijlmer (Meeus, 2021). However, whether these expectations were realized is contested. For instance, a district councilor noted in 1998 that almost no residents from Amsterdam Zuidoost were employed in the construction of the JCA. Furthermore, this councilor added that despite the popularity of football among low-income groups, many Bijlmer residents could not afford a ticket to attend matches (van Engelen, 2012). In the first decades after the construction of the

JCA, a clear divide persisted between the JCA area and the Bijlmer. In the local discourse, the phrase *the other side of the tracks* came to symbolize both the physical and emotional divide between these two areas. This phrase shows the social and economic distance felt by residents towards the JCA (van Engelen, 2012).

There have been efforts to physically improve the connection of the JCA area to the Bijlmer, most notably through the construction of the Johan Cruijff Boulevard, which is a pedestrian promenade that connects the JCA district to the Bijlmer's main shopping center. Since the construction of the JCA, the surrounding area has evolved into a commercial and entertainment hub. Over the past three decades, a wide range of facilities such as cinemas, retail spaces, and event venues such as AFAS Live and the Ziggo Dome have been added to this area (BijlmerMuseum, n.d.).

## 4.2 Demographic and socio-economic profile of Venserpolder

This section provides an overview of demographic, socio-economic, and housing characteristics of Venserpolder. Venserpolder has approximately 8,500 residents, of whom 60% of households consist of a single person. Venserpolder is characterized by a high cultural diversity: approximately 84% of residents have a non-Dutch background, which is significantly higher than the Amsterdam average. The most common backgrounds include Suriname (26%), other African nations (16%, excluding Morocco), and Asian (15%). The average living duration in Venserpolder is 10.4 years, which is roughly comparable to the Amsterdam average (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2025).

Socio-economic indicators reveal significant challenges. In Venserpolder, the poverty rates are relatively high, with 29% of households having a low income. The average household income is €32,400, which is much lower than the Amsterdam average of €48,700. The unemployment rate is also notably higher than the Amsterdam average (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2025). In addition, 9.8% of the households suffer from energy poverty, which is approximately twice as high as the city average (Vereniging van Nederlandse Gemeenten, n.d.). Furthermore, economic activity is limited in Venserpolder, with only a small shopping center that includes one supermarket and a few restaurants. Because of these socio-economic problems, Venserpolder has been labelled as a development neighborhood (“ontwikkelbuurt”) by the municipality of Amsterdam (Stadsdeel Zuidoost, 2020).

In terms of housing, 62% of the dwellings in Venserpolder are social rental apartments, which is significantly higher than the city average. Some building blocks are fully owned by housing corporations, while others have a mix of social rental, homeownership, and private rental. Approximately 26% of the dwellings in Venserpolder are owned by residents, which is quite comparable to the broader Amsterdam Zuidoost area. The share of homes owned by housing corporations varies significantly by block, ranging from 35% to 100%, with five different housing corporations owning dwellings in Venserpolder (Stadsdeel Zuidoost, 2020). Regarding energy efficiency, 39.4% of dwellings in Venserpolder have an energy label between A++++ and B, which is roughly similar to the city average but slightly below the average of Amsterdam Zuidoost. However, only 2% of the dwellings in Venserpolder have solar panels or a heat recovery system, which is considerably lower than the city average (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2025).

## 4.3 Background on the Local Inclusive Future Energy project

To understand how the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder emerged, it is necessary to describe the background of the Local Inclusive Future Energy (LIFE) project. This project was initiated in 2021 with a broad range of stakeholders to develop innovative solutions for smart energy management. The project's central goal was to stimulate the energy transition in Amsterdam Zuidoost by creating an energy exchange platform for ArenApoort, a part of Amsterdam Southeast that is unique because of its mix of event locations such as the JCA and the Ziggo Dome, large corporations such as the ING Bank, and housing (Gemeente Amsterdam, n.d.). This energy exchange platform aimed to contribute to the energy transition in four ways: (1) simplifying the integration of renewable energy, (2) financially incentivizing shifting energy usage or offering energy storage, (3) optimizing the current energy grid, and (4) supplying nearby neighborhoods with local sustainable energy. In addition to these technical objectives, social innovation also played an integral role in this project as it explored new ways to engage businesses and residents in the energy transition. An important principle of this platform was that all businesses and residents should be able to actively participate and profit from the local energy initiatives (Spectral, 2021). This highlights the socio-technical character of this project.

One of the main achievements of the LIFE project was the establishment of an energy hub, which brought together local companies from the ArenApoort area (Energie Lab Zuidoost, n.d.). Among these stakeholders, the JCA played a prominent role in the LIFE project, among others by leading this energy hub. Because the JCA owns over 4,200 solar panels and 8.6 MWh of battery capacity, it was a key partner in exploring innovative energy solutions. Within the LIFE project, research was conducted on how the JCA's energy assets could be deployed to relieve grid congestion and accelerate the local energy transition (Johan Cruijff ArenA, 2023, 2025). Furthermore, the LIFE project also had a citizen engagement component. As part of this effort, the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder was established as an experimental way to engage citizens in the local energy transition. The Energy Cooperative's main objective was to bring residents together to invest in sustainable energy assets such as solar panels or energy storage systems (Energie Lab Zuidoost, n.d.). This was particularly relevant as currently only a few of the dwellings in Venserpolder have solar panels installed (Zuidoost TV, 2025). Within the LIFE project, potential forms of collaboration were researched between the JCA and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder, including electricity sharing and the use of shared battery systems (Energie Lab Zuidoost, n.d.).

## 5. Results

This chapter presents the results of this research. The findings are organized according to the four research sub-questions. Section 5.1 examines how the Johan Crujff ArenA (JCA) frames social impact and what social impact it has on Amsterdam Zuidoost. Section 5.2 investigates how the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder frames social impact and what social impacts it is expected to create. This is followed by section 5.3, which considers what is regarded as meaningful social impact by Venserpolder residents and professionals. Finally, section 5.4 explores the potential collaboration opportunities between the JCA and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder.

### 5.1 The Johan Crujff ArenA's framing of its social impact in Amsterdam Zuidoost

To understand the JCA's role and how it contributes to social impact in Venserpolder and the wider area of Amsterdam Zuidoost, it is important to examine how it frames social impact. Therefore, this section addresses the first sub-question: *“How does the Johan Crujff ArenA frame its social impact in Amsterdam Zuidoost according to its employees?”* The insights are drawn from interviews with JCA employees, Venserpolder residents, and Venserpolder professionals, complemented by desk research. This section begins with an examination of the JCA's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategy, with a focus on its Net Positive ambition. It then explores JCA's approach to creating social impact in Amsterdam Zuidoost. The section concludes by discussing the JCA's local standing and how its social impacts are perceived and experienced by residents and professionals from Venserpolder.

#### 5.1.1 Johan Crujff ArenA's CSR strategy and Net Positive

The interviews with the three JCA employees revealed that the scope of JCA's CSR strategy extends beyond its greenhouse gas emissions. JCA employee 2 argued that rather than focusing on regulatory compliance, the JCA actively aims to actively contribute to environmental sustainability and the social wellbeing of different stakeholders. According to JCA employee 1, the JCA is intrinsically motivated *“to do good things”*. This employee emphasized that this creates opportunities for the JCA, including partnerships with other innovative companies and attracting employees. Doing more than legally required is not seen as an obstacle by the JCA employees, but as a core part of the JCA's corporate identity. Furthermore, JCA employee 1 highlighted that the JCA also intends to create a positive impact by showcasing the use of sustainable technologies to other stadiums and companies.

A central part of the JCA's CSR strategy is its ambition to become Net Positive. Insights from the interviews with the JCA employees 1 and 2 reveal that Net Positive is considered a complex and context-dependent concept that is different for each organization. According to these employees, a key element of the JCA's Net Positive ambition is the adoption of a holistic approach that includes a wide range of focus areas. They remarked that the main focus of becoming Net Positive for the JCA is to strive to shift the balance from negative to positive impacts. However, both employees acknowledged the difficulty of determining when an organization can be considered Net Positive. As JCA employee 2 reflected: *“Are you ever Net Positive? Can you ever say you're giving back more than you use? That is really difficult, I*

*think, for such a large organization with so much consumption.”* Instead, both employees emphasized that the most important thing is continuous improvement and the direction the company is heading in, which implies for JCA employee 2 that the work will never be truly finished. This employee suggested that the best strategy to become Net Positive for the JCA is to first focus on becoming Net Zero before determining how the JCA can create more positive impacts. A major challenge identified by JCA employee 1 is the extent to which this ambition relies on external collaboration. This employee gave the example that efforts to reduce the JCA's waste production are dependent on coordinated action with their service providers, such as cleaning and catering companies.

### 5.1.2 Measuring impact within the Net Positive ambition

In the interviews with all three JCA employees, the challenge of measuring impacts was a recurring theme. To monitor progress towards its Net Positive ambition, the JCA is developing a set of metrics across three dimensions: environmental, social, and governance (van Raan, 2023). The governance dimension was not discussed in the interviews because of its limited relevance. According to the JCA employees, measuring the JCA's environmental impacts is comparatively straightforward, as most metrics can easily be quantified. JCA employee 1, for example, referred to metrics related to CO<sub>2</sub>, energy consumption, and waste production. According to all three JCA employees, the JCA has already made considerable progress in reducing its environmental impacts, particularly through energy efficiency and renewable energy. In contrast, JCA employees 1 and 2 stated that the social dimension of the JCA's Net Positive ambition is currently underdeveloped, as measuring social impacts is perceived to be more complex. As JCA employee 2 explained: *“But it is harder for people, isn't it? So we could say: ‘We've invited this number of people from the neighborhood to a neighborhood day.’ That is a nice goal, and we've stated our ambition: ‘We want everyone from Zuidoost to have been to the ArenA at least once.’ But yes, whether that has a lasting impact, yes or no? That is very difficult to pin down.”* Thus, while environmental impacts can quite easily be measured with tangible metrics, social impacts often rely on subjective, context-dependent assessments.

The JCA employee 2 argued that for Net Positive, each dimension should be assessed separately, noting that it makes, for example, no sense to balance out CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by creating more local employment. According to this employee, the social dimension of the Net Positive ambition should focus on measurable and actionable metrics. This employee explained that measurable metrics, such as the number of created jobs, form the basis for defining goals and developing plans with relevant stakeholders. Within the social dimension, the JCA employees identified three target groups: visitors, employees, and their surrounding community. The visitors were not discussed further with the interviewees because of their limited relevance to this research. Regarding employees, JCA employee 1 stated that the JCA already has a clear understanding of how to improve its social impact on this group. Furthermore, JCA employee 2 argued that for employees it is important to go beyond quantifiable measures, such as the number of jobs, by including subjective indicators such as employee satisfaction in the future as well. According to JCA employees 1 and 2, the primary focus of the third target group, the JCA's surrounding community, is Amsterdam Zuidoost, of which Venserpolder is an important part because of its proximity to the JCA. JCA employee 2 explained that the JCA is currently developing metrics to monitor its progress for this target group, but that it is a work in progress.

### 5.1.3 Johan Cruijff ArenA's approach to creating social impact in Amsterdam Zuidoost

The previous section demonstrated that Amsterdam Zuidoost is a key target group within the JCA's Net Positive ambition. Following the discussion on how the JCA measures its impacts, this section explores how it envisions and describes the social impact it seeks to create in Amsterdam Zuidoost. The focus here is therefore on the JCA's own perspective and intentions, rather than on an empirical assessment of its outcomes.

In an interview with *Sport & Strategie*, the JCA's CEO Tanja Dik stated that the JCA aspires to be *the clubhouse of Amsterdam Zuidoost* (Oosterwijk, 2023). Insights from the interviews with JCA employees 1 and 2 reveal that the JCA aims to foster a sense of connection and belonging among residents of Amsterdam Zuidoost. According to JCA employee 2, the JCA seeks to ensure local residents perceive the stadium as an integral part of their community. This employee also emphasized that social impact should not be framed as development aid, but rather as an effort to support residents in becoming more self-sufficient and in developing their strengths.

According to JCA employee 2, the JCA's approach to creating social impact is tailored to its core business operations. This means that its current initiatives are primarily focused on employment and education opportunities. Beyond these activities, JCA employee 2 argued that the JCA is also creating local social impact by acting as a reliable collaboration partner to local social organizations such as the food bank and other community organizations. JCA employee 3 emphasized that financial support is not the preferred option to support these organizations. Instead, the JCA aims to contribute through other means, such as encouraging JCA employees to do volunteer work or offering meeting spaces to these organizations. An important emphasis that was added is that the JCA should support these organizations, not replace them. In addition, the JCA employee 2 added that the JCA also organizes events such as neighbor days and local sports events to strengthen its connection with Amsterdam Zuidoost. From the perspectives of JCA employees 1 and 2, these activities constitute the JCA's most important local social contributions. They described the JCA's social impacts primarily in terms of opportunities that serve the community. However, JCA employee 1 added the nuance that relatively few staff members are actually from Amsterdam Zuidoost. This might suggest that the local social impact of JCA's employment is limited, despite being considered a key social contribution.

At the same time, JCA employees 1 and 2 also acknowledged that the JCA has negative social impacts on Venserpolder, and to a lesser extent, on Amsterdam Zuidoost. For example, they mentioned that local residents experience sound pollution, litter, and parking disturbances. However, JCA employee 1 stressed that all the event locations in the ArenAPoort contribute to these problems, not only the JCA. This employee also noted that in the coming years, all sorts of new buildings and facilities will be added in Amsterdam Zuidoost, so more disruptions and nuisances are expected. So, even ensuring the nuisance does not increase will be a major challenge. JCA employee 2 concluded by noting that Amsterdam Zuidoost may currently experience more disadvantages than benefits from the JCA.

### 5.1.4 Johan Crujff ArenA's standing in Amsterdam Zuidoost and its perceived social impacts

Despite the JCA's initiatives, the question remains how local residents perceive the JCA. This section discusses the JCA's standing in Amsterdam Zuidoost and the extent to which residents feel connected to the stadium. A recurring theme in the desk research and the interviews is that many residents of Amsterdam Zuidoost do not feel a meaningful connection with the JCA. An interview in *Sport & Strategie* with Tanja Dik, the current CEO of the JCA, offers insights into this lack of connection. In this interview, Dik acknowledged that while the construction of the JCA has brought several benefits to the area, the stadium is also perceived as a colossal, inaccessible place by local residents. She noted that *"the ArenA also symbolizes distance, whiteness, dominance, and knowing better in Zuidoost"* (Oosterwijk, 2023).

The interviews with JCA employees 1 and 2 confirm that the JCA can feel distant to residents of Amsterdam Zuidoost. Both employees described the stadium as relatively inaccessible, and JCA employee 1 emphasized that it is not a place where people can simply walk in. They also highlighted that many residents of Amsterdam Zuidoost are unable to afford event tickets. As a result, many local residents have never been inside the JCA. These accounts by JCA employees show that the JCA itself is aware of how it is perceived locally, both as a symbol of local identity and as one of exclusion and inequality. The residents' emotional distance towards the JCA was confirmed by a local municipality employee who has lived in Venserpolder for a long time. She recalled that when the JCA was built, there was a *"hooray feeling"* among many residents, who felt that the stadium would bring opportunities to the area. However, she noticed that the *"hooray feeling"* has generally faded, and that the JCA now feels emotionally distant for most residents, even though it is in physical proximity.

Residents and local professionals from Venserpolder also reflected on the social impacts of the JCA. In contrast to the JCA employees, they tended to emphasize the negative social impacts of the JCA more strongly. A recurring topic in the interviews was the nuisance from JCA visitors parking their cars in Venserpolder. According to the local municipality employee, some JCA visitors park their cars in Venserpolder because parking is relatively cheap and it is close to the stadium. One interviewee who lives in Venserpolder, referred to in this report as Remco, added that particularly the building blocks close to JCA experience nuisance from this problem. This parking issue creates problems beyond a lack of parking spaces. Problems mentioned by Venserpolder residents and professionals include drunk visitors in the streets, visitors urinating against buildings, visitors entering the inner courtyards of buildings, visitors honking their car horns at night, and visitors leaving trash behind. Additionally, the local municipality employee added that she is frustrated by people who come here, create problems, and then go home again. She believes this parking issue negatively impacts the livability of Venserpolder. Furthermore, another resident, referred to in this report as Peter, argued that the presence of the JCA can also negatively impact local safety. For instance, during the riots around the JCA, he felt unsafe in Venserpolder as well.

At the same time, residents and local professionals also identified positive social impacts associated with the JCA, although these were more limited. Remco indicated that the JCA and the surrounding businesses create many opportunities for entrepreneurs, which he believes is valuable. In addition to employment, he also appreciated that the area around Venserpolder is so lively because of the JCA. He argued that Venserpolder residents can benefit from local

activities and the additional stores and supermarkets in the area. However, multiple interviewees questioned the overall social impact the JCA creates in Amsterdam Zuidoost as an employer. For instance, Remco noted that most jobs, such as catering jobs, likely have low job stability. Furthermore, Peter questioned whether jobs such as a steward can be considered “good jobs” for local residents. This demonstrates that residents value aspects such as the quality and stability of jobs, not only the number of jobs. Remco concluded that he believes the JCA’s negative social impacts currently outweigh its positive ones.

## 5.2 The Energy Cooperative Venserpolder’s framing of its potential social impacts

To understand the types of social impact that the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder seeks to create, this section examines how the Cooperative frames social impact and the potential social impacts of the Cooperative’s solar panel plans. Therefore, this section addresses the second sub-question: *“How do members of the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder frame the potential social impacts that the Cooperative can create for different groups of residents in Venserpolder?”* The section begins with information on the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder, including its plans and its main obstacles. The subsequent part presents the results of the card sorting exercise, which shows what kinds of social impacts the Cooperative aims to create. The attention then shifts to the difference between homeowners and renters in Venserpolder, and how this is relevant for the Cooperative. Finally, this section concludes by considering the roles of relevant local actors and how this shapes the social impacts in practice.

### 5.2.1 Energy Cooperative Venserpolder: background and plans

The participant observation of the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder meeting revealed much information about the Cooperative’s plans and goals. The Energy Cooperative Venserpolder was formed in 2025 under the name “ZO Opgewekt”. During the Energy Cooperative meeting, the Cooperative was presented as having five goals: (1) improving the quality of the living environment, (2) combating poverty, (3) strengthening the identity of Venserpolder, (4) collaboration with residents, and (5) energy independence (van Leeuwen, 2025). The primary focus of the Energy Cooperative in the short-term is installing solar panels on as many roofs in Venserpolder as possible. According to Peter, one of the members, the core idea of the initiative is to lease the roofs of apartments or commercial buildings in Venserpolder for the installation of solar panels. However, he remarked that the Cooperative is not geographically restricted to Venserpolder and that it could, in the long term, expand its scope beyond solar panels to other energy projects, such as EV charging or heat projects. Another resident and member of the Cooperative, referred to here as Sebas, suggested that in the long term, other social cooperatives could even emerge from their Energy Cooperative.

In the Energy Cooperative meeting, the most prominent challenge that was discussed was the building selection for the first projects. Members Peter and Remco explained that the Cooperative is highly dependent on the willingness of homeowners associations (HOA) and housing corporations to cooperate. However, there was no consensus among participants regarding which building type to prioritize. Some participants argued that starting with a building that is fully owned by a housing corporation would be the most practical, because you are only dealing with one actor. Other people opposed excluding HOA buildings from the start,

noting that some are well-organized and are motivated to invest in sustainability. A municipality employee emphasized the importance of speed at this stage, proposing that the Cooperative starts with the simplest building before expanding to other buildings. Two municipality employees suggested using solar panels more as a means than an end. They argued that solar panels could be used to gain trust and establish networks, which will be needed for other sustainability measures such as insulation and the transition towards a gas-free Venserpolder.

Another point of discussion from the interviews with the Cooperative members is resident engagement and how the benefits will be distributed. Remco explained that the way the solar panels are connected to apartments and the electricity grid will determine how residents benefit from the project. The Cooperative has not finalized its plans to approach residents, but Remco and Peter both stressed that it is important to ensure the project benefits owners as well as renters. Remco noted that the simplest way to install solar panels would be to focus only on homeowners, but he warned that this could widen the gap between homeowners and renters. Therefore, he emphasized that renters should *“not be let down at the end of the day.”* He added that addressing socio-economic challenges such as poverty in Venserpolder is relevant for everyone, including homeowners, as the whole neighborhood will become more livable.

## 5.2.2 Potential social impacts of the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder

In this section, the potential social impacts of the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder are discussed, based on the results of the card sorting exercise. The aim of this exercise was to assess the potential social impacts on residents of Venserpolder of the Cooperative's solar panel plan. The purpose of this section is to compare the results between the participants. The results are discussed by theme, which typically includes multiple indicators. As participants Peter and Sebas did the exercise together, they are treated as a single participant below. The section concludes with a comparison of the participants' results.

### Financial situation

The theme Financial situation includes the indicators “Financial problems because of fixed expenses” and “Making ends meet on income”. Table 8 shows that two out of three participants indicated that both indicators will improve because of the Energy Cooperative, except for the employee of an environmental organization who indicated that only “Financial problems because of fixed expenses” will improve. Peter and Sebas emphasized the importance of distinguishing between income and expenses. With regard to household expenses, they argued that the Energy Cooperative could help reduce people's energy costs. Furthermore, they noted that retaining profits in Venserpolder, rather than flowing to commercial energy providers, could lead to more local employment and thus a higher income. In contrast, the employee of an environmental organization did not perceive a clear link with income, but she acknowledged that energy bills potentially could be lowered slightly, which could help stabilize monthly expenses. Also, this participant argued that the profits from these types of energy projects are typically limited, therefore, she warned that the Cooperative should be careful about making financial promises to residents. At the same time, she added that the profitability of solar panels could increase significantly in the case of energy crises.

Table 8: Results of the Financial situation theme of the card sorting exercise

Theme	Indicator	Employee of env. org.	Peter & Sebas	Remco
Financial situation	Financial problems because of fixed expenses	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Making ends meet on income	-	Yes	Yes

## Work and education

Regarding the theme Work and education, the participants are cautiously optimistic about the possibility of creating social impact in Venserpolder. Table 9 shows that the participants' results vary considerably. The indicators are discussed below. Nobody indicated that the indicator "Amount of free time" is relevant, therefore it is left out of the discussion. Regarding this indicator, Remco explained that while a lower energy bill theoretically could mean that people could work less, this is not relevant as the income to be made with solar projects is too limited for this.

### Employment-related indicators

The first three indicators in Table 9 are related to employment. All participants reported that installing and maintaining solar panels could create jobs in Venserpolder. Peter emphasized how much he would like to create jobs in Venserpolder: *"So, what if an electrician from Venserpolder could do it? Yeah, sounds fantastic to me."* Remco added that occupations such as electricians do not require a university degree and are relatively well-paid in the Netherlands. He emphasized that it is sensible to strive to keep these well-paid jobs within Venserpolder. While Peter and Sebas expected that only a limited number of employees would be needed, Remco argued that installing and maintaining solar panels require a large amount of labor, thereby creating more employment opportunities. In addition, the employee of an environmental organization and Remco pointed out that involvement in the Energy Cooperative could offer residents relevant work experience in the renewable energy field. Such experience, they argued, could serve as a stepping stone towards paid employment. Remco further emphasized that creating opportunities for vulnerable groups, such as teenagers, could also help reducing social problems like criminality.

### Education-related indicators

Regarding the indicator "Satisfaction with educational opportunities", the employee of an environmental organization expected it to improve, while the other two participants regarded improvement as possible but uncertain. The employee of an environmental organization cited examples from other Energy Cooperatives, such as Zuiderlicht and Amsterdam Energie, which offer free training courses for people aiming to become solar roof project managers. She argued that these types of educational opportunities will also be valuable for residents of Venserpolder. In contrast, Remco stated that although he cannot guarantee that the Cooperative will create educational opportunities, he hopes that the Cooperative will offer those wishing to participate training courses, possibly in collaboration with commercial partners.

Table 9: Results of the Work and education theme of the card sorting exercise

Theme	Indicator	Employee of env. org.	Peter & Sebas	Remco
Work and education	Satisfaction about work situation	-	Maybe	Yes
	Having a paid job	Yes	Maybe	Yes
	The jobs offered in Venserpolder and immediate surroundings fit what I am looking for	-	Yes	Yes
	Satisfaction with educational opportunities	Yes	Maybe	Maybe
	Amount of free time	-	-	-

### Loneliness and connection

Regarding the theme Loneliness and connection, Table 10 shows that all participants, except for Remco, indicated that the indicators “Loneliness” and “Sense of connection with other residents” might improve. Remco expressed a slightly stronger view, indicating that the indicator “Sense of connection with other residents” will improve. The participants primarily attributed these expected improvements to the Cooperative's activities, such as meetings, consultation evenings, and projects, which could help reduce loneliness and improve social cohesion. Although the participants indicated that reducing loneliness is not an explicit goal of the Energy Cooperative, they acknowledged that it could be a result. However, some participants questioned which residents would actually benefit from these effects. For instance, the employee of an environmental organization remarked that not everyone is interested in an Energy Cooperative, and that some lonely people might benefit more from informal social activities such as walking the dog with someone from the neighborhood. Similarly, Sebas suggested that residents who currently feel little connection to the topic of energy will likely not benefit from the Cooperative's work in this regard.

Table 10: Results of the Loneliness and connection theme of the card sorting exercise

Theme	Indicator	Employee of env. org.	Peter & Sebas	Remco
Loneliness and connection	Loneliness	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe
	Sense of connection with other residents	Maybe	Maybe	Yes

### Health

For the Health theme, Table 11 shows that the health indicators were mostly considered irrelevant. The exception is the indicator “How often is stress experienced”, which Peter and Sebas expected might improve. However, they did not elaborate on their reasoning. Remco argued that the lack of healthy food in Venserpolder falls under the municipality's responsibility. He also observed that emotional stability is likely linked to loneliness, but he considered the link too weak to be relevant in any way.

Table 11: Results of the Health theme of the card sorting exercise

Theme	Indicator	Employee of env. org.	Peter & Sebas	Remco
Health	Possibilities for exercise and healthy food in Venserpolder	-	-	-
	Experience of emotional stability	-	-	-
	How often is stress experienced	-	Maybe	-

### Social services and neighborhood activities

As shown in Table 12, the participants were divided about the theme Social services and neighborhood activities. The employee of an environmental organization and Remco indicated that none of these indicators are relevant. Remco noted that these indicators could improve, but he described such effects as “optimistic” and “far-fetched”. In contrast, Peter and Sebas argued that these indicators will improve. Peter explained that he views the Cooperative’s activities as a social service, thereby contributing to the provision of social services in Venserpolder. Additionally, the Energy Cooperative will organize local activities, which, in his view, would increase the availability of neighborhood activities. However, Peter emphasized that these indicators will likely improve primarily for people interested in the Energy Cooperative.

Table 12: Results of the Social services and neighborhood activities theme of the card sorting exercise

Theme	Indicator	Employee of env. org.	Peter & Sebas	Remco
Social services and neighborhood activities	The offer and amount of social services in Venserpolder meets my needs	-	Yes	-
	The offer and amount of neighborhood activities in Venserpolder is sufficient	-	Yes	-

### Neighborhood and housing

The participants were divided about the indicators of the theme Neighborhood and housing, as shown in Table 13. The employee of an environmental organization indicated that she considers all three indicators irrelevant. Regarding the indicator “Satisfaction with housing in Venserpolder”, Remco, and Peter and Sebas indicated that it will improve. Peter and Sebas illustrated this by explaining that the HOA or housing corporation could generate more income by renting its roofs to the Energy Cooperative. This additional income could be used for the maintenance of the building or to make it more attractive, for example with a paint job, which could enhance residents’ satisfaction with their housing. In contrast, Remco had a different rationale for expecting that housing satisfaction will improve. He argued that the Energy Cooperative might kick-start the building renovations, as the rooftops often need repairs or renovations before solar panels are installed. Moreover, he noted that installing solar panels could improve the building’s energy label, thereby further enhancing housing satisfaction.

Regarding the indicator “Satisfaction with the neighborhood”, Remco was the only participant with an outspoken opinion. He expected that this indicator will improve if an outcome of the Energy Cooperative projects is improved housing, as this could enhance the internal and external image people have of Venserpolder. Therefore, he argued that residents will be more satisfied with the neighborhood. Similarly, Sebas reported that improvements to housing in Venserpolder could enhance the neighborhood’s overall appearance, thereby increasing residents’ satisfaction with the neighborhood.

Regarding the indicator “Satisfaction with public space (e.g. art or culture)”, only Peter and Sebas considered it potentially relevant, but they noted they could not be outspoken on it. In contrast, Remco considered this indicator as irrelevant. However, he noted that at least the Cooperative will not have a negative impact in this regard: *“there is no like, negative externality of having a coop on the satisfaction with public space. There is nothing bad that we can do.”*

Table 13: Results of the Neighborhood and housing theme of the card sorting exercise

Theme	Indicator	Employee of env. org.	Peter & Sebas	Remco
Neighborhood and housing	Satisfaction with housing in Venserpolder	-	Yes	Yes
	Satisfaction with the neighbourhood	-	Maybe	Yes
	Satisfaction with public space (e.g. art or culture)	-	Maybe	-

### Shops and facilities

Regarding the theme Shops and facilities, the participants indicated that the indicators were not relevant or unlikely to improve, as shown in Table 14. Peter and Remco argued that while the indicator “Satisfaction with facilities in Venserpolder” could be relevant, improving the facilities in Venserpolder is the municipality's and the residents' responsibility. Peter further noted that the Energy Cooperative will definitely not have a negative impact on these indicators.

Table 14: Results of the Shops and facilities theme of the card sorting exercise

Theme	Indicator	Employee of env. org.	Peter & Sebas	Remco
Shops and facilities	Satisfaction with range of shops in Venserpolder	-	-	-
	Satisfaction with facilities in Venserpolder, such as a library or restaurants	-	Maybe	-

## Life satisfaction

The Life satisfaction theme created diverse discussions among participants. As shown in Table 15, the employee of an environmental organization indicated that she did not consider the “Satisfaction about life” indicator relevant, but Peter and Sebas, and Remco indicated that it might improve. Peter argued that revenue generated from solar projects could be reinvested in community initiatives such as making the neighborhood more attractive or greening the neighborhood, which could potentially lead to more life satisfaction among residents. In addition, both Peter and Sebas expressed that the creation of an Energy Cooperative makes them personally happy, which might also apply to other residents. Remco similarly suggested that some people might feel more satisfied, but only if “all the pieces come together.” Peter also acknowledged that life satisfaction will likely increase primarily for people who join or engage with the Cooperative. In any case, Peter argued that the life satisfaction of residents will not decrease.

*Table 15: Results of the Life satisfaction theme of the card sorting exercise*

Theme	Indicator	Employee of env. org.	Peter & Sebas	Remco
Life satisfaction	Satisfaction about life	-	Maybe	Maybe

## Safety and nuisance

The theme Safety and nuisance was not considered highly relevant by the participants, as shown in Table 16. Only the employee of an environmental organization indicated that the indicators “Feeling of safety at the streets” and “Frequency of nuisance experience” could improve because of the Energy Cooperative. She argued that if residents view safety or nuisance as important issues, then revenues from solar projects could be spent on addressing them. However, she also emphasized that interventions such as installing lighting fall under the municipality's responsibility rather than the Cooperative's. Remco suggested that the Energy Cooperative could indirectly contribute to these issues by creating more connections in the neighborhood that are relevant to tackling problems such as nuisance.

*Table 16: Results of the Safety and nuisance theme of the card sorting exercise*

Theme	Indicator	Employee of env. org.	Peter & Sebas	Remco
Safety and nuisance	Feeling of safety at the streets	Maybe	-	-
	Frequency of nuisance experience	Maybe	-	-

## Municipal policies and political participation

Regarding the Municipal policies and political participation theme, Table 17 shows that only Remco indicated that these indicators are relevant. He reasoned that the Energy Cooperative will unite residents’ voices, strengthening their collective voice. He argued that this will make it easier for residents to be heard and to address other issues as well.

Table 17: Results of the Municipal policies and political participation theme of the card sorting exercise

Theme	Indicator	Employee of env. org.	Peter & Sebas	Remco
Municipal policies and political participation	Residents feel heard, involved, and think that the municipal policies match what the neighborhood needs	-	-	Yes
	Participation in political activities (e.g. voting, demonstrating/protesting)	-	-	Yes

### Comparison of the participants

The results from the card sorting exercise provide valuable insights into different perspectives on the potential social impacts of the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder. In several themes, the participants were quite like-minded. For example, for the Financial situation and Work and education themes, the participants agreed to some extent that the indicators will improve. Nevertheless, all participants except Remco emphasized that they were cautious about promising financial returns to residents. Across participants, there was general agreement that the social impacts of the Cooperative depend on how the revenues from solar projects are allocated. Some participants also noted that certain indicators they were presented with, such as safety, nuisance, and the availability of healthy foods, were considered outside the scope of the Energy Cooperative. The main difference between the participants is the scope of the potential social impact. The scope of the expected social impacts of the employee of an environmental organization was most limited, as she mainly focused on the themes Financial situation and Work and education. In contrast, Peter and Sebas, and Remco envisioned broader opportunities for the Energy Cooperative to create social impacts, for example by improving housing, offering social services, and uniting voices.

Participants also differed in their expectations of which groups of residents will benefit from the Cooperative's activities. Some social impacts such as reduced loneliness, more connections, satisfaction with social services, satisfaction with neighborhood activities, and life satisfaction might be mostly limited to people who are involved or interested in the Energy Cooperative. However, other impacts might reach a broader audience. For instance, buildings where solar panels will be installed will generate additional revenue from leasing the roof, which could be used to maintain or improve the building. This could increase residents' satisfaction with their housing, and could contribute to a more attractive neighborhood. Furthermore, work and educational opportunities could benefit all residents of Venserpolder who are interested, not only residents in participating buildings. In this way, the entire neighborhood could benefit from the Energy Cooperative's plans.

### 5.2.3 Difference in perceived social impact across homeowners and renters

While the previous section showed the expected social impacts of the Energy Cooperative, this section examines the distribution of social impacts in greater detail. The interviews suggest that the Cooperative's social impacts are unlikely to be experienced uniformly across Venserpolder. Several interviewees specifically emphasized the structural differences between renters and owners. These differences shape how residents benefit from solar projects and how the associated social impacts are perceived. According to neighborhood manager 2, there typically is a significant difference between these two groups in Venserpolder. In his experience, homeowners, though not particularly wealthy, tend to be somewhat younger and more highly educated compared to renters. Moreover, in his view, homeowners have distinct needs, priorities, and attitudes towards sustainability, being generally more inclined to support energy-related measures. According to neighborhood manager 1, property value plays an important role in considerations of sustainability measures: *"So that is a huge, substantial difference, making an owner much more willing to invest in the future, because the property also increases in value. Because, hey, if I sell my house, I can say, well, I have solar panels. That is just added value."* This suggests that homeowners often perceive sustainability projects as long-term investments that can enhance property value.

In contrast, the local municipality employee emphasized that social renters often face more immediate financial and social challenges, which limit their capacity for long-term thinking. She explained that many social renters experience "worries about tomorrow" ("zorgen om morgen"), although she emphasized that not all renters face significant difficulties. However, she did add that they typically have different priorities, and sustainability is usually not among their top one. Consequently, she argued that if renters were given the opportunity to improve their homes, they would likely not choose solar panels. She illustrated that they might rather choose to have their walls plastered, as some people are too ashamed of the state of their home to invite people over. Moreover, neighborhood manager 2 added that pressing neighborhood issues can overshadow sustainability issues, stating: *"If you already, well you know, feel like you're in a cramped, moldy house, and you think the rent is way too high. The neighborhood is also crap. Just to give an example, right? Or because outside there is another car on fire, or those damn guys with their scooters, and well then of course at that moment, whatever with sustainability. I'd actually rather leave here."*

Finally, the interviews reveal that perceived costs play a decisive role, in particular for renters. The local municipality employee argued that renters have little incentive to invest in their homes, particularly when doing so could lead to higher rents. Neighborhood manager 2 confirmed this concern, explaining: *"Look, the tenants are really afraid that if we renovate here, it will mean the rent increases, and in some cases, that is true. After all, it has to pay for itself at some point, of course."* Moreover, Neighborhood manager 1 reported that rents for social housing in Venserpolder have been increasing annually, while tenants often feel they receive no tangible improvements in return. Moreover, he argued that renters are *"essentially throwing money away every month."* Therefore, he argued that for sustainability projects, the perceived costs are crucial: *"But it all comes down to one thing: especially for social housing tenants, it is all about money. What will it cost? If the costs go up, then—sorry, no—we will not do it."* Overall, it is clear that homeowners and renters in Venserpolder typically have distinct financial

priorities and experience the benefits from sustainability measures differently. These differences shape how social impact is distributed across the neighborhood, with homeowners generally better positioned to experience tangible, positive impact than renters.

#### 5.2.4 Role of local actors in shaping the Cooperative's social impact

A recurring theme in the interviews was the importance of the distribution of decision-making power regarding the installation of solar panels. When roofs in Venserpolder are leased for this purpose, the question arises who has the authority to take such decisions and how this influences the potential social impact. This section aims to answer this question by examining the roles and decision-making capacities of various local actors, including renters, homeowners associations (HOA), housing corporations, and the Energy Cooperative.

##### Renters

According to the municipal housing project manager, renters are in a weak position when it comes to decision-making power on building modifications. He explained that changes to the building are always decided by the building owners, which can be individual residents, commercial building owners, or housing corporations. However, as renters do not have ownership rights, they have limited or no formal influence on structural changes to the building or their own apartment. Because of this, the municipal housing project manager metaphorically described renters as “a ball in a pinball machine”, with the owners acting as the flippers that determine their movement. He noted that while in most cases renters do not need to be consulted when installing solar panels on their buildings, it would be considerate of the housing corporation to inform the tenants properly and to ask for their input. However, he clarified that consent from renters is generally required only when the proposed plans would cause a nuisance or increase tenants' costs. For minor activities such as painting the building or installing solar panels, consent is typically not required. Neighborhood manager 1 confirmed this, stating that renters are typically only informed of incoming plans and only rarely asked for input. At the same time, the municipal housing project manager emphasized that changes to the building that may impact the rents or residents' living situation are often perceived to be “super threatening.” According to him, the lack of a voice in such decisions can cause social unrest among renters. He added that homeowners sometimes share these feelings, who also resist measures that could increase costs.

##### Homeowners associations

The interview with the municipal housing project manager generated valuable insights into what role HOAs (“VVE” in Dutch) will potentially play in the Energy Cooperative's plans. He argued that the HOAs will play a central role in shaping the Cooperative's social impacts, as they hold decision-making power regarding the installation of solar panels, and because most buildings in Venserpolder have mixed ownership. According to the municipal housing project manager, an HOA's mandate is straightforward: through an HOA, homeowners collectively own and maintain the building. He added that even adding something to the building is quite special for an HOA. He emphasized that an HOA cannot allocate any funds to other activities. He further argued that a good HOA is conservative and risk-averse, prioritizing cost savings and financial stability over innovation. This conservative approach is particularly important for HOAs in Venserpolder with financially constrained homeowners, as neighborhood manager 2 noted: *“the people who buy in Venserpolder, or you know in the H-buurt, they're generally not*

*the richest homeowners. So, you often end up with a homeowners association that is not exactly wealthy, so to speak, so they're cutting corners on everything."*

Importantly, the municipal housing project manager emphasized that an HOA is fundamentally a homeowners association, not a residents association. In his view, you cannot — and should not — use an HOA to address social challenges, as it does not exist to help residents. The only way in which an HOA might indirectly create social impact, according to him, is by improving the building, which benefits all residents equally. He added that even this stretches the HOA's traditional role. Furthermore, decision-making within large HOAs can be slow and complex, particularly for sustainability projects. The interviews with residents Remco, Peter, and Sebas, who live in HOA-managed buildings, demonstrate how difficult it can be for an HOA to gather enough support for renovations. Remco identified the procedural barrier that Dutch law requires consent from 66% of the homeowners for such plans to be approved. Peter described the challenge of gathering support: *"We went to great lengths to invite people, both tenants and buyers. Yes, it really is a matter of persistence. Now, out of the 200 apartment rights, which also include tenants, we have now managed to get together 70 people or so. That was truly one hell of a job, so it takes a lot of time and effort for the people who have to do this."* However, Remco also noted that nationally, the threshold might be lowered to 51%, which he sees as an opportunity.

### Housing corporations

The municipal housing project manager explained that housing corporations generally own large portfolios of buildings, which are often managed by professional managers. According to the municipal housing project manager, one key advantage of buildings owned by housing corporations is that it is easier for them, compared to an HOA, to get to business and make decisions since decision-making authority is centralized. However, this raises the question of why housing corporations in Venserpolder have not yet installed solar panels on their buildings. The most prominent reason identified in the interviews appears to be a lack of cash flow. Neighborhood managers 1 and 2, as well as the local municipality employee, confirm that underfunding is a major structural issue for housing corporations in Amsterdam Zuidoost. Not all housing corporations in this district are underfunded, but the ones that are will be risk-averse and reluctant to engage in sustainability projects according to neighborhood manager 1. Furthermore, he added that many housing corporations feel overburdened. He reported they are pressured to make existing housing more sustainable and build more housing, while keeping everything affordable. Similarly, neighborhood manager 2 explained that within Venserpolder, his housing corporation is quite focused on livability problems, so there is less capacity for sustainability plans.

In addition to underfunding, other renovations can also impede the installation of solar panels. Neighborhood manager 2 reported that housing corporations in Venserpolder are hesitant to invest in rooftop solar panels when other major renovations are planned, such as adding new building layers. Experiences of residents of Venserpolder further illustrate these institutional barriers. In Remco's building, for example, a housing corporation owns more than 40% of the apartments, and without their support, no renovations are possible. He expressed frustration that the housing corporation's representative appeared to be blocking renovation plans. He attributed this in part to the housing corporation's financial problems, which prevent the HOA from securing loans. Similarly, Peter and Sebas, who live in the same building, also

encountered resistance from housing corporations when they tried to advance sustainability plans. Taken together, housing corporations are significantly constrained in their ability to contribute to renewable energy projects in Venserpolder, primarily due to underfunding and conflicting priorities.

### The Energy Cooperative Venserpolder

The previous sections have shown that HOAs and housing corporations in Venserpolder are typically risk-averse and that some may be financially constrained, creating significant barriers to installing solar panels on residential buildings. In this context, the municipal housing project manager argued that the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder could play a facilitating role in overcoming some of these barriers. According to him, one key benefit of the Energy Cooperative is its ability to offer HOAs and housing corporations a straightforward and low-risk business case. He explained that the contract with the building owners can be structured so that the Energy Cooperative assumes most of the financial and operational risks. For example, the contract could stipulate that if the building must undergo renovation, the Energy Cooperative would be responsible for temporarily removing the solar panels. Furthermore, the municipal housing project manager suggested that by making collective agreements with large building complexes, the Energy Cooperative does not have to deal with individual owners for installing solar panels. By reducing financial and operational barriers for local actors, he argued that the Energy Cooperative could play an important role in the installation of solar panels in Venserpolder.

## 5.3 Meaningful social impact: perspectives of residents and local professionals in Venserpolder

The previous sections examined how the JCA and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder frame social impact and how they seek to create social impact in Venserpolder. To better understand what social impacts are considered meaningful by residents of Venserpolder, this section addresses the third sub-question: *“What social impacts do residents and local professionals in Venserpolder consider meaningful?”* In this analysis, meaningful social impact refers to the forms of change that residents perceive as valuable. Building on the socio-psychological perspective that was introduced in the theoretical framework, this section focuses on how residents and communities experience and assign meaning to social change in the context of Venserpolder. The analysis in this section is based on interview data collected from Venserpolder residents and local professionals. The results are structured around three social impact categories, which were identified through the thematic coding process. Each category includes a set of themes that reflect specific opportunities for creating social impact as perceived by the interviewees. An overview of these categories and corresponding themes is presented in Table 18. In the sections below, some positive perceptions of Venserpolder are also described. These are relevant as they highlight the features that residents and local professionals consider valuable and worth preserving.

Table 18: An overview of the identified categories of social impact and their corresponding themes

Social impact category	Social impact theme
<b>Improving the physical environment</b>	Neighborhood infrastructure Housing Facilities
<b>Strengthening social and economic conditions</b>	Poverty and inequality Social cohesion Mental health and loneliness
<b>Enhancing livability</b>	Neighborhood tensions Street-level disturbances Criminality and safety Cleanliness

### 5.3.1 Improving the physical environment

When discussing opportunities for meaningful social impact in Venserpolder, issues related to the physical environment were mentioned frequently. The main input for this was the walking interview through Venserpolder with neighborhood manager 2, which offered valuable insights into how the physical environment affects residents' wellbeing. The following three sections explore how improvements in neighborhood infrastructure, housing, and facilities could lead to social changes that residents perceive as meaningful.

#### Neighborhood infrastructure

During the walking interview, neighborhood manager 2 pointed out that he believes the concept of "living blocks" significantly contributes to the lack of livability in Venserpolder. He mentioned that *"one of the things that is often heard in complaints about Venserpolder, for example, is that there is quite a lot of concrete and that it is also a bit anonymous."* This suggests that the physical infrastructure contributes to the lack of social cohesion and attractiveness. In contrast, the local municipality employee described Venserpolder as a green neighborhood. Observations during the walking interview provided insights into this contrasting perception. Certain areas of Venserpolder appeared relatively green, particularly the courtyards of the buildings and the neighborhood's outskirts. However, the public spaces between buildings consisted mostly of paved streets, much of which was used for car parking. Neighborhood manager 2 further noted that part of the neighborhood's infrastructure is not changeable in the short term, though there may be opportunities for incremental changes. At the same time, both the local municipality employee and Remco emphasized that Venserpolder's central location and good connectivity are important advantages of this neighborhood. From their perspective, these features make the area more attractive to live in, despite its other shortcomings.

## Housing

Several opportunities for improving the housing conditions were identified during the walking interview with neighborhood manager 2. Although the buildings in Venserpolder are relatively new, he explained that most of them have structural problems, including poor insulation, draught, and mold. Given that almost all buildings in Venserpolder have a flat roof and poor insulation, the upper-floor apartments are reported to become too hot in the summer, which neighborhood manager 2 described as *“truly scorching hot up there. That is not normal, it is unbearable.”* Improving insulation was therefore identified as an opportunity to create a social impact. In addition, the buildings seem to dilapidate quickly after renovations. During the walking interview, neighborhood manager 2 pointed out several repainted building blocks that were already showing signs of deterioration. He explained that such visible decay renders the neighborhood visually less attractive, which negatively impacts the livability of the neighborhood. Consequently, making the neighborhood visually more attractive was seen as an opportunity to create social impact. Another challenge concerns the accessibility of buildings in Venserpolder. Neighborhood manager 2 explained that most buildings in Venserpolder do not have elevators or space for scooters, which is a challenge as the average age of residents continues to increase. Enhancing housing accessibility was therefore also seen as an opportunity for social impact.

Despite these shortcomings, the interviewees also highlighted some positive aspects of Venserpolder’s housing. For example, neighborhood manager 2 pointed out some building courtyards contain playgrounds, which he believes improve the buildings. However, this appeared to be the case mostly for enclosed courtyards, which were perceived as more livable by neighborhood manager 2. Furthermore, regarding apartment size, all interviewees who discussed this topic were satisfied with it. Remco emphasized that affordability and housing size were key factors for choosing to live in Venserpolder, noting: *“We bought here because it was relatively affordable and we got 70 square meters, which is quite large for the city of Amsterdam, for the Netherlands as well. And the houses are not that bad if you think about it, like comparatively speaking, right?”* Similarly, the local municipality employee added that she appreciates that all housing in Venserpolder has a private balcony. These positive perceptions are important as they reveal what living conditions are considered valuable.

## Facilities

The facilities in Venserpolder emerged as a recurring topic in the interviews and were predominantly discussed negatively. All the Venserpolder interviewees except for the local municipality employee mentioned the lack of (suitable) facilities in the neighborhood. Notably, there appears to be a significant difference between homeowners and renters in how they perceive the Venserpolder shopping center. All three homeowners that were interviewed disliked the Venserpolder shopping center and its only supermarket, Tanger, which they felt did not meet their needs. Peter, for example, remarked that it sells too many foreign products and that they do not sell alcohol. The three homeowners said they would prefer to have an A-brand or B-brand supermarket in Venserpolder. However, neighborhood manager 2 emphasized that the Tanger fulfills an important function for many residents, particularly for renters, as many people in Venserpolder regularly go there. He further explained that other supermarket chains considered coming here, but decided against it due to concerns about potential theft.

Another point that came up in the interviews was the perceived lack of suitable hospitality in Venserpolder. Peter and Sebas noted that there are too many fast-food restaurants in Venserpolder, while they would prefer more diversity, including cafés. At the same time, both Sebas and neighborhood manager 2 acknowledged that the sandwich shop Walee is popular in Venserpolder and the rest of Amsterdam Zuidoost, although they did not express their own opinion. Remco, by contrast, argued that the limited range of local facilities was not a major concern for him as the shopping center Amsterdamse Poort, which is adjacent to Venserpolder, offers a broad selection of supermarkets and other stores. Nonetheless, Neighborhood manager 2 believes it is particularly important to improve the shopping center in Venserpolder, as the average age of residents continues to increase, often limiting their ability to shop outside the neighborhood. In conclusion, multiple opportunities for social impact related to Venserpolder's facilities were identified. However, Neighborhood manager 2 explained that improving the shopping center has been a focus for the municipality and the housing corporations for a while, but attracting entrepreneurs has been difficult due to residents' low spending rates.

### 5.3.2 Strengthening social and economic conditions

The interviews revealed that the social and economic conditions can be challenging for residents of Venserpolder, which is consistent with the socio-economic analysis from Chapter 4. Across the interviews, several opportunities for creating meaningful social impact were identified. The following three sections address the themes of poverty and inequality, social cohesion, and mental health and loneliness.

#### Poverty and inequality

The local municipality employee and both neighborhood managers identified poverty as one of the most pressing challenges in Venserpolder. Neighborhood manager 1 noted that looking at the average income in Venserpolder can be deceiving, as there is quite some income inequality within the neighborhood. He illustrated this by explaining that while the average income of a particular building complex in Venserpolder might appear moderate, significant differences often exist between homeowners and social renters. Additionally, he argued that many of the social challenges are rooted in financial problems. According to this interviewee, growing up in a disadvantaged neighborhood such as Venserpolder limits someone's opportunities in life, e.g. when pursuing a career. He described the issue like this: *"Whereas if you come from the slums and want to achieve the same thing, you have to work four times as hard and face so many more setbacks. To become a director someday? Yes, that is almost impossible if you're born in Venserpolder in a social housing unit, so to speak."* He believes inequality and poverty are systemic issues, for which it might be better to address them at the national level. However, the local municipality employee does not fully agree with this but she does acknowledge that a lack of financial resources often plays a role in other social problems. She gives the example of residents being unable to afford activities such as visiting the zoo, which could worsen the feeling of exclusion and loneliness.

#### Social cohesion

The interviews also reveal that a lack of social cohesion is a key challenge in Venserpolder. Neighborhood managers 1 and 2 both shared the experience that connections between residents are generally weak and that the overall social cohesion is low. As neighborhood

manager 2 explained: *"I just showed you a porch where you can clearly see that there is still cohesion, but that is not the case with most porches where people do not talk to each other."* He added that the buildings with stronger social cohesion are typically buildings where residents have lived for a long time, in some cases since the buildings were built. In contrast, the lack of social cohesion seems to be the most significant between homeowners and renters. According to neighborhood manager 1, social cohesion tends to be the weakest in building blocks that have a mix between homeowners and renters: *"But now, the difference is simply too great, and that actually creates more distance, which in turn leads to more complaints about each other. I rarely see tenants and owners being friends or good neighbors. It is just that the complaints are often that they live in the same complex and use the same stairwell."* This is also exemplified by Peter, a homeowner himself, who reported having little contact with renters in Venserpolder. He emphasized that residents should adopt the idea that they are all residents of Venserpolder and work together on challenges, rather than focusing on their differences.

### Mental health and loneliness

The local municipality employee noted that mental health problems are significantly more prevalent among residents of Venserpolder compared to the rest of Amsterdam. Furthermore, she added that loneliness is also a persistent issue among residents. Similarly, neighborhood manager 2 observed that there are relatively many people experiencing psychological distress in Venserpolder. He attributed this in part to the allocation of the social housing to residents that were previously homeless or had lived in a healthcare setting. Even though these topics were not mentioned by other interviewees, these results suggest that addressing loneliness and mental wellbeing are perceived as meaningful in Venserpolder.

### 5.3.3 Enhancing livability

One overarching theme that emerged from the interviews is the lack of livability of Venserpolder. For residents and local professionals, enhancing livability is perceived as an important pathway for creating meaningful social impact. According to neighborhood manager 2, Venserpolder is labelled as an intervention neighborhood and development neighborhood by the police and the municipality respectively, which he suggested means in practice that it is one of the less popular and attractive neighborhoods in the city. Because of this, he remarked that it is quite hard to attract people who specifically want to live in Venserpolder: *"Sometimes you have a buyer and they're completely enthusiastic. And then a year later you meet them and say, wow, I want to get out of here."* Although both neighborhood managers reported striving towards a more livable Venserpolder, they also indicated feeling overburdened, leaving little time or capacity for initiatives to enhance the neighborhood's livability. Neighborhood manager 2 explained the situation as follows: *"I'm the neighborhood manager, and my focus is on cleanliness, completeness, and safety, and then we'll do some fun things. Well, here, that cleanliness, completeness, safety is a full-time job in itself."* This illustrates that for the neighborhood managers, there is limited capacity to address broader livability goals that create social impact. By contrast, in other parts of Amsterdam Zuidoost such as Gaasperdam, neighborhood managers are actively trying to increase area's attractiveness, for example by creating extra greenery.

Across the interviewees, several underlying causes for the lack of livability in Venserpolder were identified, including neighborhood tensions, street-level disturbances, criminality and

safety, and cleanliness. However, the local municipality employee also pointed out that improving livability requires reducing external disturbances caused by events in the ArenApoort area. In this regard, she emphasized the importance of addressing the current negative social impacts associated with the JCA's events. Her primary concerns are related to issues stemming from JCA visitors parking in Venserpolder, which she suggested could be mitigated in multiple ways. For instance, she suggested that the JCA could compensate residents for cleaning up garbage after football matches. Furthermore, she proposed that the JCA could employ staff to manage traffic and engage with visitors parking in residential areas. The local municipality employee referred to these interventions as "temporary band aids." However, she argued that interventions like these should not be dismissed, as Venserpolder urgently needs immediate relief.

### Neighborhood tensions

Both neighborhood managers reported that tensions between neighbors are frequent in Venserpolder. Neighborhood manager 1 illustrated this with an example of a resident regularly drying fish on her balcony: *"There are dead fish lying on the balcony because she dries them, because she sends them to Africa every year. This has been going on for years. It is normal for her, and it drives the neighbors crazy. They can no longer sit on the balcony."* Similarly, neighborhood manager 2 described a case involving a drug-addicted resident who disturbed his neighbors by repeatedly using drugs with friends of his in the shared hallway. Both neighborhood managers agreed that such incidents greatly undermine the livability of Venserpolder. However, they also reported that housing corporations and the police typically lack the capacity to effectively intervene in these situations.

### Street-level disturbances

Nuisance caused by people on the streets was another recurring theme in the interviews. Both neighborhood managers identified alcohol and drug use in public spaces as the main sources of disturbance, noting that these disturbances have become more prevalent over time. Neighborhood manager 2 explained that in the past, there used to be predominantly older people from Suriname, Ghana, and China drinking and smoking on the streets, which were generally not perceived as a major problem. He observed that the issue has shifted toward young Eastern European migrants, who more frequently inject drugs. This behavior is perceived as more disturbing, as well as unclean, as used needles can often be found on the streets nowadays. Furthermore, neighborhood manager 1 also referred to disturbances caused by street gatherings, describing this problem as follows: *"Every time the weather gets nice, the whole street is filled with scooters and fatbikes, and they just have some kind of street barbecue. And yes, we get a lot of complaints about the noise in the street, and when it is on the street, we cannot do anything. Then it is like, yeah, you have to call the police. The police, they come. Then all the people leave for fifteen minutes, but then they all come back again."* This also illustrates how difficult it is to address these issues. He further emphasized that groups of loitering youth can be particularly intimidating for residents. Similarly, Remco also mentioned instances of nuisance caused by people sleeping outside. Based on the interviews, it is clear that these street-level disturbances reduce Venserpolder's livability.

### Criminality and safety

Neighborhood manager 1 characterized Venserpolder as one of the most turbulent neighborhoods he has worked in. One particular issue raised by both neighborhood managers

and residents was criminal behavior, including car fires, robberies, human trafficking, and prostitution. Neighborhood manager 2 also added that the extent of criminal activity is likely much larger than currently known, as many incidents go unreported. He believes one reason for the non-reporting of this is the widespread mistrust of authorities among some groups of residents, including those from Suriname or Ghana. Furthermore, across the interviews, Venserpolder was predominantly perceived as an unsafe neighborhood. For example, Remco described Venserpolder as generally unsafe due to criminality. Similarly, Peter mentioned that he is worried about safety in Venserpolder as the number of explosions appears to be rising. Neighborhood manager 2 noted that Venserpolder feels relatively safe during the day, but that *“at night, it is a different world. And then there are times when people would actually rather not leave their homes.”* Overall, the interviews demonstrate that criminal behavior and low perceived levels of safety greatly undermine Venserpolder’s livability.

### Cleanliness

A further factor influencing livability is the persistent problem of trash and uncleanliness. Both neighborhood managers and some residents referred to the prevalence of litter in public places. In this regard, some interviewees noted differences between owners and renters. For instance, Peter argued that homeowners are more attentive to keeping their environment clean than renters, as they have a clearer stake in maintaining it well. Additionally, neighborhood manager 2 indicated during the walking interview that cleanliness issues can also occur in shared indoor spaces. He emphasized that the degree of cleanliness differs considerably between buildings: some hallways are “sparkly clean”, while others are perceived to be dirty. He suggested that this might be correlated with social cohesion in a building. He argued that hallways with long-term residents often have stronger social ties and, consequently, higher standards of cleanliness. The presence of litter and general uncleanliness negatively affects the attractiveness of Venserpolder, making it an important theme.

## 5.4 Collaboration opportunities between the Johan Crujff Arena and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder

This section explores potential ways for collaboration between the JCA and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder. In this section, the fourth sub-question is addressed: *“What opportunities for collaboration can be identified between the Johan Crujff Arena and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder to create meaningful social impact for residents of Venserpolder?”* In the interviews, various forms of collaboration were identified. These can broadly be divided into two groups: (1) collaboration opportunities originated from the Local Inclusive Fair Energy (LIFE) project, and (2) collaboration opportunities proposed by members of the Energy Cooperative. These collaboration opportunities are discussed below.

### 5.4.1 Collaboration opportunities from the LIFE project

During the interviews, the former LIFE researcher identified several potential ways for cooperation between the JCA and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder. He explained that one of the most prominent ideas was battery sharing, which would entail the JCA allocating a part of its battery capacity to store solar electricity generated in Venserpolder. All three JCA employees regarded this idea for creating social impact as relevant, but they noted multiple

barriers. JCA employee 3 explained that multiple regulatory and physical barriers make it infeasible to use the JCA's batteries for this purpose. Also, this employee emphasized that most of the time, the batteries are already employed for peak shaving, which helps to reduce grid congestion in Amsterdam Zuidoost. Furthermore, all JCA employees highlighted that dedicating battery capacity to social goals might change its business case, which is perceived as problematic, given its current commercial viability. Therefore, they emphasized that the deployment of their batteries should be a business decision supported by a clear business case. As an alternative, JCA employee 2 argued that it might be better to install batteries in Venserpolder, making them more self-sufficient rather than dependent on the JCA. According to this employee, *“you could also say, build a battery in Venserpolder that they could then use to trade on the grid for the rest of the time, for example, when the energy isn't stored there. That would also generate revenue for them.”*

Another proposed form of collaboration was electricity sharing. The former LIFE researcher explained that one of the ideas that was researched was energy4good, which would entail using the JCA's energy storage systems to accumulate and share surplus electricity with the public grid. However, JCA employees 2 and 3 emphasized that the JCA almost never has a surplus of electricity. As JCA employee 2 explained: *“It is simply important to use the solar energy we generate, which only accounts for 10% of our consumption. So, we really need to generate a lot more if we ever want to generate enough to sell.”* Additionally, this employee considered Energy4Good unrealistic due to regulatory limitations. The former LIFE researcher also mentioned the possibility of reusing JCA's solar panels in Venserpolder, which was researched in the LIFE project. However, according to JCA employee 3, this initiative was found to be financially unviable for the community. This employee explained that the costs of making solar panels legally reusable are currently too high, primarily due to the JCA's roof structure and legislative constraints. Finally, the former LIFE researcher discussed the idea of joint energy asset investments, in which the JCA and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder would jointly invest in solar panels in Venserpolder. However, JCA employee 3 explained that such collaborations are currently hindered by net congestion and regulatory barriers that complicate the transfer of electricity between local networks. Although these proposed collaboration ideas have the potential to contribute to positive social impact, all JCA employees emphasized the importance of considering their practical and regulatory feasibility.

#### 5.4.2 Collaboration opportunities from Energy Cooperative Venserpolder members

Members of the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder proposed several ways to collaborate with the JCA that would strengthen the Cooperative. These proposals were introduced after the interviews with JCA employees had already taken place. Consequently, no direct feedback from the JCA could be gathered on these proposals. Remco acknowledged that expecting financial donations from the JCA would be unrealistic, explaining: *“Yeah. I mean, the easiest thing is to say, OK, just give us money. But that does not go like this.”* Instead, he argued that it is important that collaboration opportunities are mutually beneficial (“win-win”). One promising proposal, according to Remco, would be for the JCA to invest in initiatives that educate residents of Venserpolder to do skilled work. He described it as follows: *“As the ArenA you train people in Venserpolder to do some skilled jobs. I'm not talking again about catering or whatnot, something for which there is not that much job stability in a way, but let's say you*

*train people to become electricians.*” He added that such initiatives could enable residents to do work for both the JCA and the Energy Cooperative, thereby benefiting both actors.

Remco further emphasized the potential value of JCA's expertise, particularly legal and technical expertise. This could include, for example, expertise in operating energy storage systems or in electricity trading. In addition, Remco and Peter noted that the Energy Cooperative currently lacks a meeting space. Remco remarked: *“How do we organize a meeting for 900 members? Maybe the ArenA can help us with this. Let's say not necessarily saying that it should be doing this, but that is one of the ideas.”* Peter added that the Energy Cooperative is also still searching for a registration address, which might be an issue the JCA could help with. According to the municipal housing project manager and Peter, the JCA could also make a meaningful contribution by assisting the Energy Cooperative in securing financing, which currently is a key challenge for the Cooperative. Finally, other ideas that were mentioned by Remco include the possibility of the JCA donating old equipment and the JCA using tax incentives to support the Cooperative's initiatives.

## 6. Discussion

In this chapter, the research findings and their implications are discussed. Section 6.1 analyzes and interprets the main results. In section 6.2, the findings are contextualized within the broader theoretical framework. Section 6.3 includes a reflection on the methodological design and its limitations. Finally, section 6.4 offers recommendations to stakeholders and suggestions for future research.

### 6.1 Discussion of the findings

In this section, the findings of this research are discussed per theme. By interpreting these findings, their significance to the research question is evaluated. This section discusses the findings on the actors' framings of social impact, how residents define meaningful social impact, and potential collaboration between the Johan Cruijff ArenA (JCA) and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder.

#### 6.1.1 Divergent framings of social impact

The findings reveal that the JCA and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder frame social impact in fundamentally different ways. While both actors aim to contribute positively to Amsterdam Zuidoost, their motivations and approaches differ significantly. For the JCA, social impact is primarily framed in an instrumental way, closely tied to its Net Positive ambition. Within this framework, social impact is conceptualized as a balance between negative and positive impacts. The JCA approaches social impact as part of its business strategy, emphasizing measurable and tangible outcomes. However, the interviews reveal a difference between the organization's framing and the way its employees frame it. While the JCA's framing of social impact in Amsterdam Zuidoost is largely strategy-driven, JCA employees described a more intrinsic, value-driven motivation "to do good." The findings demonstrate that the JCA's strategy for creating social impact in Amsterdam Zuidoost focuses on empowering local organizations and residents. At the same time, JCA strives to become the "clubhouse of Amsterdam Zuidoost" and improve its local standing. Its strategy emphasizes fostering self-sufficiency in Amsterdam Zuidoost through employment, education, local events, and support for local organizations.

In contrast, the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder frames social impact as a community-oriented process focused on improving residents' lives. Apart from increasing energy independence, the Cooperative does not explicitly pursue environmental sustainability goals. This highlights that it is primarily a socially-driven organization. The installation of solar panels is not regarded as a technical end in itself, but as a means to create social value. Its potential social impacts range from financial gains and improvements in housing to increased neighborhood satisfaction. The Cooperative's strategy focuses on community building and local self-sufficiency by reinvesting revenues locally. This approach is also seen as a pathway towards more employment and educational opportunities in Venserpolder. Finally, the Cooperative's framing of social impact centers on collaboration, as its capacity to create social impact depends heavily on cooperation with local actors, including homeowner associations and housing corporations.

Overall, the findings illustrate a clear contrast between how these two organizations frame and operationalize social impact. For the JCA, social impact primarily serves as a means to achieve its strategic objectives, whereas for the Energy Cooperative, social impact is the core purpose of the organization itself. Another distinction can be found in how they approach social impact and the scale of their operations. The JCA primarily employs a top-down strategy and operates at the scale of Amsterdam Zuidoost. By contrast, the Energy Cooperative adopts a bottom-up approach, and its scale is much smaller as it specifically focuses on Venserpolder. The Energy Cooperative's social reach may be smaller, but its approach is much more strongly embedded in the community.

### 6.1.2 Defining meaningful social impact

While the previous section focused on the institutional framings of the JCA and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder, this section examines what impact is considered meaningful by residents and how these perceptions align with the framings of these two organizations. The findings reveal that residents generally view meaningful social impact as immediate and tangible, rather than abstract, long-term, or symbolic outcomes. Residents typically associate meaningful impact with changes that directly improve their daily lives such as the availability of facilities or neighborhood cleanliness.

From the analysis, three broad categories of meaningful social impact were identified: (1) improving the physical environment, (2) strengthening social and economic conditions, and (3) enhancing livability. While certain themes within these categories, such as neighborhood infrastructure or safety, require large-scale systemic changes, most themes are linked to residents' everyday experiences. These findings suggest that even small-scale interventions can have significant social meaning for residents. However, several of the identified themes, such as criminality, safety, and street-level disturbances, extend beyond the mandate or responsibility of organizations such as JCA or the Energy Cooperative. Such themes generally require action from large institutional actors such as the national government, municipalities, or the police. As shown in Table 19, the identified categories of meaningful social impact only partially align with the ways the JCA and the Energy Cooperative frame social impact. While both actors' framings connect well to strengthening social and economic conditions, the Cooperative's framing also aligns with improving the physical environment.

The findings also reveal a key difference between organizational and resident perceptions of what constitutes meaningful social impact. The JCA employees primarily viewed local employment as a major positive contribution to the local community, as it creates economic opportunities. However, this idea was criticized by residents, who argued that not all jobs are "*good jobs*." They stressed the importance of job quality, stability, and wages. They suggested that low-wage jobs with little stability likely offer few social benefits. This points to a clear divide between organizations and residents. While organizations tend to equate impact with measurable outcomes, residents tend to define it in terms of perceived improvements in wellbeing.

Table 19: The identified categories of meaningful social impact and their alignment with the institutional framings of the JCA and Energy Cooperative Venserpolder

Categories of meaningful social impact	Social impact themes	Alignment with JCA's framing	Alignment with Cooperative's framing
<b>Improving the physical environment</b>	Neighborhood infrastructure, housing, and facilities	Low – outside strategic scope	Medium – directly connected to rooftop solar projects
<b>Strengthening social and economic conditions</b>	Poverty and inequality, social cohesion, and mental health and loneliness	High – through events, employment, and educational programs	Medium – through financial benefits, local reinvestment, and gatherings
<b>Enhancing livability</b>	Neighborhood tensions, street-level disturbances, criminality and safety, and cleanliness	Low – outside strategic scope	Low – perceived as outside of responsibilities

Furthermore, perceptions of meaningful impact can differ significantly among residents. In particular, interviewees frequently pointed out that differences between homeowners and renters strongly shaped what is considered meaningful. As these groups have distinct needs and priorities, their understanding of meaningful impact also differs. For example, while the homeowners that were interviewed disliked the neighborhood supermarket, it was reported to meet the needs of local renters who value different aspects of this supermarket. Similarly, the findings indicate that the potential social impacts of the Energy Cooperative might be unequally distributed among residents, in particular between homeowners and renters. Renters, who generally have no decision-making authority and do not own their homes, might be structurally limited in accessing benefits from the Cooperative's initiatives. This creates the risk that the Energy Cooperative's initiatives reproduce existing inequalities, unless it ensures they are inclusive.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that meaningful social impact is highly contextual and subjective. Most residents consider impacts meaningful when they are grounded in everyday life, such as reduced nuisance or better housing conditions. Importantly, the findings highlight that an organization's perception of social impact can diverge significantly from residents', underscoring the importance of incorporating residents' perspectives when designing social initiatives.

### 6.1.3 Collaboration between the Johan Cruijff ArenA and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder

The feasibility of potential collaboration between the JCA and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder is shaped by their fundamentally different framings of social impact. The findings indicate that the JCA positions itself as a reliable partner to social organizations in Amsterdam Zuidoost within its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategy. Importantly, rather than offering financial support, it seeks to contribute to these organizations in ways that align with

its core business and business strengths. In this light, collaboration with the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder appears compatible with the JCA's CSR strategy under certain conditions.

As shown in Table 20, several collaboration opportunities were identified. However, the findings suggest that the proposed collaborations originating from the Local Inclusive Fair Energy (LIFE) project are currently deemed unfeasible. These initiatives, such as battery sharing, currently face major regulatory and financial barriers, including grid congestion. More fundamentally, these technical initiatives do not align with the JCA's core business of hosting events. Similarly, the financial contributions are also deemed unfeasible, because the JCA primarily creates social impact through initiatives with a business case rather than philanthropy. In contrast, some collaboration ideas proposed by members of the Energy Cooperative align more closely with JCA's CSR approach. For instance, the provision of expertise to the Energy Cooperative aligns well with the JCA's commitment to encourage JCA employees to do volunteering work, while offering meeting spaces connects directly to its core business. Given that Cooperative members regarded both forms of collaboration as valuable, they could offer the JCA practical pathways to contribute to meaningful social impact in Venserpolder. For other proposals, such as donating old equipment or offering a registration address, it is not yet clear whether they are feasible or align with JCA's CSR strategy.

*Table 20: Overview of potential collaboration opportunities between the JCA and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder, and their alignment with JCA's CSR strategy*

<b>Collaboration opportunities</b>	<b>Alignment with JCA's CSR strategy</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Providing a meeting space</b>	Yes	Explicitly mentioned by the JCA
<b>Sharing expertise</b>	Yes	Connects well to the idea of JCA employees doing volunteer work
<b>Battery sharing</b>	No	Regulatory and financial barriers
<b>Energy4good</b>	No	JCA rarely has an electricity surplus
<b>Reusing solar panels</b>	No	Financially unfeasible
<b>Joint energy asset investments</b>	No	Regulatory and financial barriers
<b>Donating money</b>	No	Explicitly mentioned by the JCA that this is not feasible
<b>Investment in educating Venserpolder residents</b>	Maybe	Feasibility unsure
<b>Offering a registration address</b>	Maybe	Feasibility unsure
<b>Help with obtaining finance</b>	Maybe	Feasibility unsure
<b>Donating old equipment</b>	Maybe	Feasibility unsure
<b>Using tax breaks for support</b>	Maybe	Feasibility unsure

Despite the contrasting framings of social impact, the differences between the JCA and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder also create opportunities for synergy. While the JCA possesses institutional resources and expertise, the Energy Cooperative is more strongly embedded in the local community. Therefore, collaboration between these two actors could bridge the gap between top-down capacity and bottom-up legitimacy. However, if the JCA contributes to social impact through such a collaboration, its role would be largely indirect. This indirect contribution may complicate determining the share of social impacts for which it is responsible, hindering the development of measurable metrics to monitor its progress towards Net Positive.

## 6.2 Relation of the findings to theory

This section discusses the theoretical significance of the findings by relating them to the theoretical perspectives presented in the theoretical framework. It examines how the findings of this research align with existing debates on social impact, while also highlighting potential gaps and areas for improvement in the existing literature.

To begin with, the findings of this research confirm the importance of framing. In line with the literature that conceptualizes social impact as a socially constructed concept, the findings demonstrate that stakeholders frame it differently. The JCA frames social impact from a business-oriented CSR perspective with a strategic focus on employment, education, and partnerships, often tied to a business case. In line with CSR literature, the JCA frames social impact primarily through measurable metrics. In contrast, the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder places emphasis on strengthening the local community by keeping all revenues local. These findings align with existing research that social impact is not universal but defined and pursued in different ways by stakeholders. However, the findings also extend existing debates by showing how these different frames of social impact could potentially interact, including its limitations and synergies. Furthermore, this study also reveals the importance of micro-level impacts, such as nuisance or parking issues, which are often overlooked in literature.

The different perceptions of social impact between organizations and residents have implications for measuring social impact. Much of the CSR impact literature focuses on quantifiable indicators, such as the number of jobs created. However, the findings reveal the limitations of such metrics. This was demonstrated by the fact that residents questioned whether all jobs created by the JCA are “good jobs”, highlighting the need for qualitative dimensions when measuring social impact. Thus, measuring social impacts solely based on quantitative indicators might not yield meaningful results. This highlights the relevance of the stakeholder-based approach to assessing social impacts, which entails ensuring metrics are meaningful by co-creating them with the relevant stakeholders.

## 6.3 Methodological reflections and limitations

This section reflects on the methodological framework. A key part of this reflection involves identifying research limitations and assessing their impact on the validity of the findings.

Through its qualitative design, this study provided valuable insights into how actors perceive and assign meaning to social impact. At the same time, the interpretation and the synthesis of qualitative results are inherently subjective and shaped by the researcher's personal background and knowledge. These factors may have influenced how the findings were understood. While this is inherent to qualitative research, this risk was minimized by, for example, using an iterative coding process and transparent reporting on the research process.

The use of the Wellbeing Dashboard also influenced the results in notable ways. On the one hand, it provided a structured framework that helped participants to articulate potential social impacts, which was valuable because some had not explicitly reflected on this topic before. On the other hand, the use of the Wellbeing Dashboard may have constrained participants' thinking or limited discussions. Consequently, it is possible that some forms of social impact were overlooked.

A case study enabled the collection of in-depth and context-specific data, which is a key strength of this type of research. However, a limitation of this case is that the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder was not operational during data collection. As a result, the focus was on its anticipated social impacts, rather than its realized social impacts. Consequently, it was not possible to study how residents perceive and experience these impacts, unlike in the case of the JCA. At the same time, this limitation also presented an advantage, as some of the identified ways to collaborate are most relevant in the Cooperative's early stages of development.

A final limitation concerns the representativeness of the data. The relatively small number of interviewees per interview group limits the depth of the data, particularly for the residents' perspective. In addition, it was not possible to gather in-depth results on all relevant groups of residents in Venserpolder. In particular, the direct perspective of renters is missing from the results. Despite this limitation, the study provides valuable exploratory insights that can serve as the basis for future research.

## 6.4 Recommendations

### 6.4.1 Practical recommendations

The findings point out that while renewable energy initiatives such as the Energy Cooperative might accelerate the local energy transition, it also risks reinforcing existing inequalities if their benefits are distributed unevenly among residents. In particular, renters often have little decision-making authority regarding the installation of solar panels and fewer opportunities to benefit from such initiatives. To realize the ambition of a social energy transition in Amsterdam Zuidoost, the municipality should adopt a stronger coordinating role by developing strategies for how local initiatives can effectively engage marginalized or disadvantaged groups. By doing so, the municipality can ensure that the energy transition delivers both environmental

progress and meaningful social benefits. Solar panel projects are a relatively low-barrier way to engage residents in the energy transition, as they provide visible and tangible benefits for residents. Moreover, the trust and engagement of renters might be important for the long-term success of the energy transition, as for other sustainability measures, such as insulating housing, renters' consent is required.

For the JCA, it is recommended to adopt a stakeholder-based approach to assessing social impacts across its three social target groups: visitors, employees, and the surrounding community. In the case of Amsterdam Zuidoost, this would involve co-developing social impact metrics with local residents to ensure that they reflect what residents perceive as meaningful. Incorporating these perspectives is crucial, as this research has shown that organizations and residents can perceive social impacts differently, illustrated by the contrasting perceptions of JCA's social impact through its employment in Amsterdam Zuidoost. Such an approach would strengthen the monitoring system of the JCA's Net Positive ambition by ensuring that assessments of social impact are more legitimate in the eyes of the community. In addition, for the JCA, it is also important to recognize that not all social impacts can be meaningfully captured through metrics. While measurable impact indicators remain valuable, the JCA should not neglect initiatives that generate intangible outcomes, such as pride or social cohesion, even when such effects cannot be quantified within existing measurement frameworks.

For the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder, the findings highlight the importance of strengthening the inclusiveness of its approach. It is recommended that the Cooperative determines together with different groups of residents how its initiatives can create a social impact that is actually widely perceived as meaningful. The findings indicate that groups of residents value social changes differently, particularly homeowners and renters. By incorporating the perspectives of all groups, it can ensure that its initiatives are inclusive and meaningful to the community. Finally, this research identified several opportunities for collaboration between the JCA and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder to collaborate. Some, such as providing meeting space and sharing expertise, align with the JCA's core business activities and are regarded as valuable by the Energy Cooperative. The findings also highlight which forms of collaboration are unlikely to be viable at this moment. It is recommended that these actors further explore new collaboration opportunities and assess the feasibility of the options presented in this research, especially those that are mutually beneficial.

#### 6.4.2 Recommendations for future research

This thesis opens several areas for further research. To begin with, there is a clear need for larger-scale quantitative studies of how different groups of residents perceive social impact. A systematic investigation could be done using methods such as surveys or Q-sorts. Such an approach would strengthen the empirical basis of the findings of this research and allow for a comparison of perceptions across neighborhoods and social groups, thereby supporting the design of social impact initiatives that are better tailored to residents' needs and priorities.

Furthermore, future research should pay more attention to the qualitative dimensions of social impact. The existing literature often prioritizes quantitative indicators, while neglecting qualitative dimensions such as job stability and satisfaction. Incorporating these qualitative

elements into impact assessments could allow for a more holistic understanding of which social impacts are meaningful.

Once the Energy Cooperative becomes operational, research should focus on assessing its realized social impacts. Different groups of residents should be engaged in this research to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the extent and distribution of social impacts. This could also provide insights into how the expected social impacts are realized in practice.

Finally, future research should explore co-creative approaches to social impact research. Whereas this research studies stakeholders separately, future work could focus on participatory processes in which actors such as the JCA, the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder, and residents would jointly define what constitutes meaningful social impact. Connected to this, research should focus more on how different institutional framings of social impact can complement each other rather than on their conflicts.

## 7. Conclusion

Growing attention to the social dimension of the energy transition highlights the need to understand how organizations define and contribute to local social impact. This research addressed the following research question: *“How do the Johan Crujff ArenA and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder frame and contribute to meaningful social impact for residents of Venserpolder?”* This study explored how these two organizations frame social impact, what impact residents consider meaningful, and collaboration opportunities between these two actors.

The findings demonstrate that the JCA and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder frame social impact in fundamentally different ways. The JCA adopts an instrumental and strategic framing, positioning social impact as part of its Net Positive ambition and broader Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategy. For the JCA, social impact functions primarily as a means to achieve corporate objectives, emphasizing measurable metrics. Its CSR strategy for Amsterdam Zuidoost emphasizes creating opportunities and fostering self-sufficiency through employment, education, local events, and support for local organizations. In contrast, the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder is a socially-driven organization that frames social impact as an end in itself. The Cooperative’s goals are rooted in improving residents’ lives, with potential social impacts including financial gains, improved housing, and neighborhood satisfaction. Its approach is bottom-up and community-oriented, emphasizing reinvesting revenues within Venserpolder.

The findings reveal that residents’ understanding of meaningful social impact contrasts with these institutional framings. For residents, meaningful social impact is immediate, tangible, and rooted in their everyday experiences, such as clean streets or good facilities. Three main categories of meaningful social impact emerged: (1) improving the physical environment, (2) strengthening social and economic conditions, and (3) enhancing livability. The findings demonstrate a divide between how organizations measure social impact and how residents experience it. For example, while the JCA tends to operationalize impact with measurable metrics, residents define impact through their experiences and perceived improvements in wellbeing. Moreover, the findings indicate that in the case of the Energy Cooperative, social benefits are distributed unevenly, as homeowners and renters experience and value impacts differently. Renters face structural barriers that may limit their participation in and benefits from the Energy Cooperative’s plans.

Despite their contrasting framings, there are feasible pathways for collaboration between the JCA and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder. Collaborations that connect their top-down and bottom-up approaches could create synergies between the JCA’s capacity and resources and the Energy Cooperative’s local embeddedness. Collaboration does not require large-scale investments, but the type of collaboration should align with the organization’s strategy and framing. For example, the provision of expertise to the Energy Cooperative aligns well with the JCA’s commitment to encourage JCA employees to do volunteer work, while offering meeting spaces connects directly to its core business. For all the identified technical or financial forms of collaboration, such as battery sharing or reusing solar panels, regulatory or financial barriers were found. Moreover, they do not align with the JCA’s core business

operations of hosting events. That said, an indirect contribution to social impact might complicate the development of measurable metrics for the JCA's Net Positive ambition.

Based on these findings, several recommendations can be made. For the JCA, it is recommended to co-create its social impact metrics with their social target groups: visitors, employees, and the surrounding community. This would ensure that they are measuring social impact in a meaningful way. For the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder, it is essential to strengthen the inclusiveness of its plans if it aims to create social impacts that are widely perceived as meaningful. This primarily entails engaging renters in its plans, which could also be important to the long-term success of the local energy transition. Furthermore, the JCA and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder are encouraged to continue exploring collaboration pathways, including those presented in this research. Future research could focus on larger-scale quantitative studies, further develop the qualitative dimensions of social impact indicators, or map the real-life social impacts once the Energy Cooperative is operational. Furthermore, future research could explore more co-creative ways to define what constitutes meaningful social impact.

Overall, this thesis demonstrates that meaningful social impact emerges through the alignment of organizational framings of social impact with the lived realities of residents. When CSR initiatives incorporate shared definitions of social value, they can create social benefits for residents while also advancing CSR objectives. In the case of Amsterdam Zuidoost, a potential collaboration between the JCA and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder represents a promising opportunity to stimulate the local energy transition, while at the same time improving the wellbeing of Venserpolder residents.

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# Appendix

## Appendix A: Full list of interviewees and participants

<b>Pseudonym interviewee / participant</b>	<b>Job/role description</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Relevance to sub-questions</b>	<b>Online or in person</b>
<b>JCA employee 1</b>	Operational manager	Johan Cruijff ArenA	SQ1, SQ4	Online
<b>JCA employee 2</b>	CSR specialist	Johan Cruijff ArenA	SQ1, SQ4	Online
<b>JCA employee 3</b>	Project manager	Johan Cruijff ArenA	SQ1, SQ4	Online
<b>Neighborhood manager 1</b>	Neighborhood manager in Venserpolder	Local housing corporation	SQ1, SQ4	In person
<b>Neighborhood manager 2</b>	Neighborhood manager in Venserpolder	Local housing corporation	SQ1, SQ4	In person
<b>Local municipality employee</b>	Municipality employee working in Venserpolder	Municipality of Amsterdam	SQ1, SQ3, SQ4	In person
<b>Peter</b>	Homeowner in Venserpolder and founding member Cooperative	Energy Cooperative Venserpolder	SQ1, SQ2, SQ3, SQ4	In person
<b>Sebas</b>	Homeowner in Venserpolder and founding member Cooperative	Energy Cooperative Venserpolder	SQ1, SQ2, SQ3, SQ4	In person
<b>Remco</b>	Homeowner in Venserpolder and founding member Cooperative	Energy Cooperative Venserpolder	SQ1, SQ2, SQ3, SQ4	In person
<b>Employee of an environmental organization</b>	Project manager energy transition	A regional environmental organization	SQ2	Online
<b>Municipal housing project manager</b>	Project manager for housing and sustainability	Municipality of Amsterdam	SQ2	In person
<b>Former LIFE researcher</b>	Researcher, formerly for the LIFE project	TU Delft	SQ4	Online

## Appendix B: Interview protocol

### 1. Introduction

At the beginning of each interview, I explain that I am doing research for my master thesis. I explain what I am researching and why their perspective is relevant to my research. Also, I note that I am doing an internship at Energielab Zuidoost.

### 2. Informed consent

I ask the participant for verbal consent to participate in this interview. I explain that if they wish to participate, their interviews will be used as data but that their names will be anonymized in the report. Secondly, I ask if they allow me to record the interview. I explain that if they accept, the recording will be used to transcribe and code the interview. For this, it is important to note that if direct quotes from the interviews are used, explicit consent will be asked later.

## Appendix C: Semi-structured interview guide Johan Cruijff ArenA employees

- Could you tell me what kind of role you have within the JCA?
- Could you tell me something about the JCA's relationship with Amsterdam Zuidoost?
- Could you tell me something about JCA's CSR strategy?
- How does Amsterdam Zuidoost fit in the JCA's CSR strategy?
- What does Net Positive mean for the JCA?
- What are the biggest challenges you face in achieving Net Positive?
- In the social dimension of Net Positive, on which target groups are you focusing?
- What kind of social impact do you think is the JCA currently creating on Venserpolder specifically? Any negative social impacts as well?
- In what way does the JCA want to create social impact? And specifically in Amsterdam Zuidoost?
- What role do the JCA's batteries play in its CSR strategy?

## Appendix D: Semi-structured interview guide Venserpolder residents and Venserpolder professionals

### General questions

- How long have you lived/worked in Venserpolder?
- What kind of neighborhood is Venserpolder?
- Could you tell me some things you personally like about Venserpolder?
- What do you not like about Venserpolder?
- In what ways could Venserpolder be improved?
- Do you feel that different groups of residents get along well? Which groups do not? And why not?
- Do you have the feeling that many residents of Venserpolder are engaged in the energy transition?
- Is there anything you notice about living so close to the ArenA?

### Specific questions for neighborhood managers and local municipality employee

- In your current job in Venserpolder, for what are you responsible?
- In your current job, on what kind of challenges are you working?
- How would you describe the social dynamics in Venserpolder?
- With what kind of problems do social renters come up to you?
- Do you notice a difference between renters and owners?
- What are the main challenges related to sustainability in Venserpolder?
- What are the main challenges related to citizen engagement in Venserpolder?

## Appendix E: Semi-structured interview guide other experts

### Questions for the municipal housing project manager

- What role do you have in your current job?
- What is the difference between the position of renters and homeowners in the context of the energy transition? Why does this matter?
- What is the role of homeowners associations in the energy transition? And housing corporations? What challenges are these actors facing?
- What is the potential of energy cooperatives in the local energy transition?

### Questions for the LIFE researcher

- What role do you have in your current job?
- What things did you research in the LIFE project?
- What role did the JCA play in the LIFE project? In what projects was it involved?
- What kind of social impact do you think the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder could have on residents of Venserpolder?
- What possible collaborations between the JCA and the Energy Cooperative Venserpolder were researched? What are the outcomes of this exploration?

## Appendix F: The indicators of the card sorting exercise

The indicators of the card sorting exercise were based on the Wellbeing Dashboard Venserpolder (Wellbeing Dashboard Amsterdam, n.d.). Not all the indicators were used. Below, a list of all the indicators from this dashboard is shown. All the indicators that were not included are marked in **red**. The indicators that were merged are marked in **orange**. How the merged indicators are called can be seen on the next page. The indicators in black are used without modification.

- Satisfaction about life
- Satisfaction about work situation
- Possibilities for exercise and healthy food in Venserpolder
- Amount of free time
- How often is loneliness experienced
- Sense of connection with other residents
- Experience of emotional stability
- How often is stress experienced
- The offer of social services in Venserpolder meets my needs<sup>1</sup>
- The amount of social services in Venserpolder<sup>1</sup>
- In the environment of Venserpolder, nothing is lacking (like art or culture)
- The offer of neighbourhood activities in Venserpolder is sufficient<sup>2</sup>
- The amount of neighbourhood activities in Venserpolder<sup>2</sup>
- Frequency of nuisance experience
- Feeling of safety at the streets
- Amount of housing<sup>3</sup>
- Quality of housing<sup>3</sup>
- Price of houses<sup>3</sup>
- Satisfaction with current house<sup>3</sup>
- Satisfaction with the neighbourhood
- Municipal policies match what the neighbourhood needs<sup>4</sup>
- Feeling involved by the municipality, in decisions about Venserpolder<sup>4</sup>
- Feels being heard by the municipality<sup>4</sup>
- Participation in political activities (e.g. voting, demonstrating/protesting, getting informed about political decisions and debates)
- The amount of educational opportunities offered in Venserpolder and surroundings<sup>5</sup>
- The educational opportunities offered in Venserpolder and surroundings align with what I am looking for<sup>5</sup>
- Experience of own educational opportunities<sup>5</sup>
- Satisfaction with range of shops in Venserpolder
- Satisfaction with facilities in Venserpolder, as a library or restaurants
- Having a paid job
- The jobs offered in Venserpolder and immediate surroundings fit what I am looking for
- Financial problems because of fixed expenses
- Making ends meet on income
- A computer and internet at home
- Self-assessment: rating on scale from 1 (low) to 5 (high)

- 1: The offer and amount of social services in Venserpolder meets my needs
- 2: The offer and amount of neighbourhood activities in Venserpolder is sufficient
- 3: Satisfaction with housing in Venserpolder
- 4: Residents feel heard, involved, and think that the municipal policies match what the neighborhood needs
- 5: Satisfaction with educational opportunities

## Appendix G: Results of the card sorting exercise

Theme	Indicator	Employee of env. org.	Peter & Sebas	Remco
Financial situation	Financial problems because of fixed expenses	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Making ends meet on income	-	Yes	Yes
Work and education	Satisfaction about work situation	-	Maybe	Yes
	Having a paid job	Yes	Maybe	Yes
	The jobs offered in Venserpolder and immediate surroundings fit what I am looking for	-	Yes	Yes
	Satisfaction with educational opportunities	Yes	Maybe	Maybe
	Amount of free time	-	-	-
Loneliness and connection	Loneliness	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe
	Sense of connection with other residents	Maybe	Maybe	Yes
Health	Possibilities for exercise and healthy food in Venserpolder	-	-	-
	Experience of emotional stability	-	-	-
	How often is stress experienced	-	Maybe	-
Social services and neighborhood activities	The offer and amount of social services in Venserpolder meets my needs	-	Yes	-
	The offer and amount of neighborhood activities in Venserpolder is sufficient	-	Yes	-
Neighborhood and housing	Satisfaction with public space (e.g. art or culture)	-	Maybe	-
	Satisfaction with the neighbourhood	-	Maybe	Yes
	Satisfaction with housing in Venserpolder	-	Yes	Yes
Shops and facilities	Satisfaction with range of shops in Venserpolder	-	-	-
	Satisfaction with facilities in Venserpolder, as a library or restaurants	-	Maybe	-
Life satisfaction	Satisfaction about life	-	Maybe	Maybe
	Feeling of safety at the streets	Maybe	-	-

Safety and nuisance	Frequency of nuisance experience	Maybe	-	-
Municipal policies and political participation	Residents feel heard, involved, and think that the municipal policies match what the neighborhood needs	-	-	Yes
	Participation in political activities (e.g. voting, demonstrating/protesting)	-	-	Yes