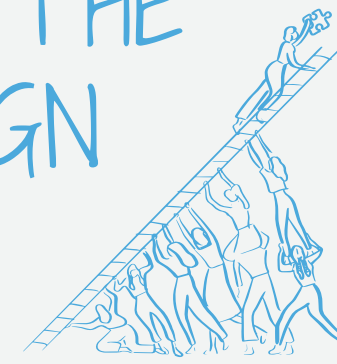


ARE WE MAKING

IMPACT

A tool for participatory design with citizens

WHAT IS IMPACT IN THE PARTICIPATORY DESIGN CONTEXT?



As a participatory designer, you involve residents because you **believe it is meaningful for them to have a say in these decisions**. Afterwards you wonder: **To what extent did this project succeed in giving those residents a real voice?** Were they allowed to make choices in the design plans? **Were those choices adopted by the client?** Could everyone who was interested participate in the process? All these questions relate to the impact of the participation process on the empowered citizenship of participants.

Empowered citizenship is a frame to look at impact, and can be understood as: **The enhanced ability of an individual or group to take control of their lives, claim their rights, and at the same time take a collective position within their community.**

HOW TO THINK ABOUT IMPACT IN PARTICIPATORY DESIGN PROJECTS

It is helpful to consider how empowered citizenship is part of your design practice. Three impact considerations were identified that are highly relevant for participatory designers. These considerations have an important role when designing the project with the client. If you want to create high social impact it is recommended to make deliberate choices on the role of the citizens, the kind of project and the time investment.

Position and role of citizens

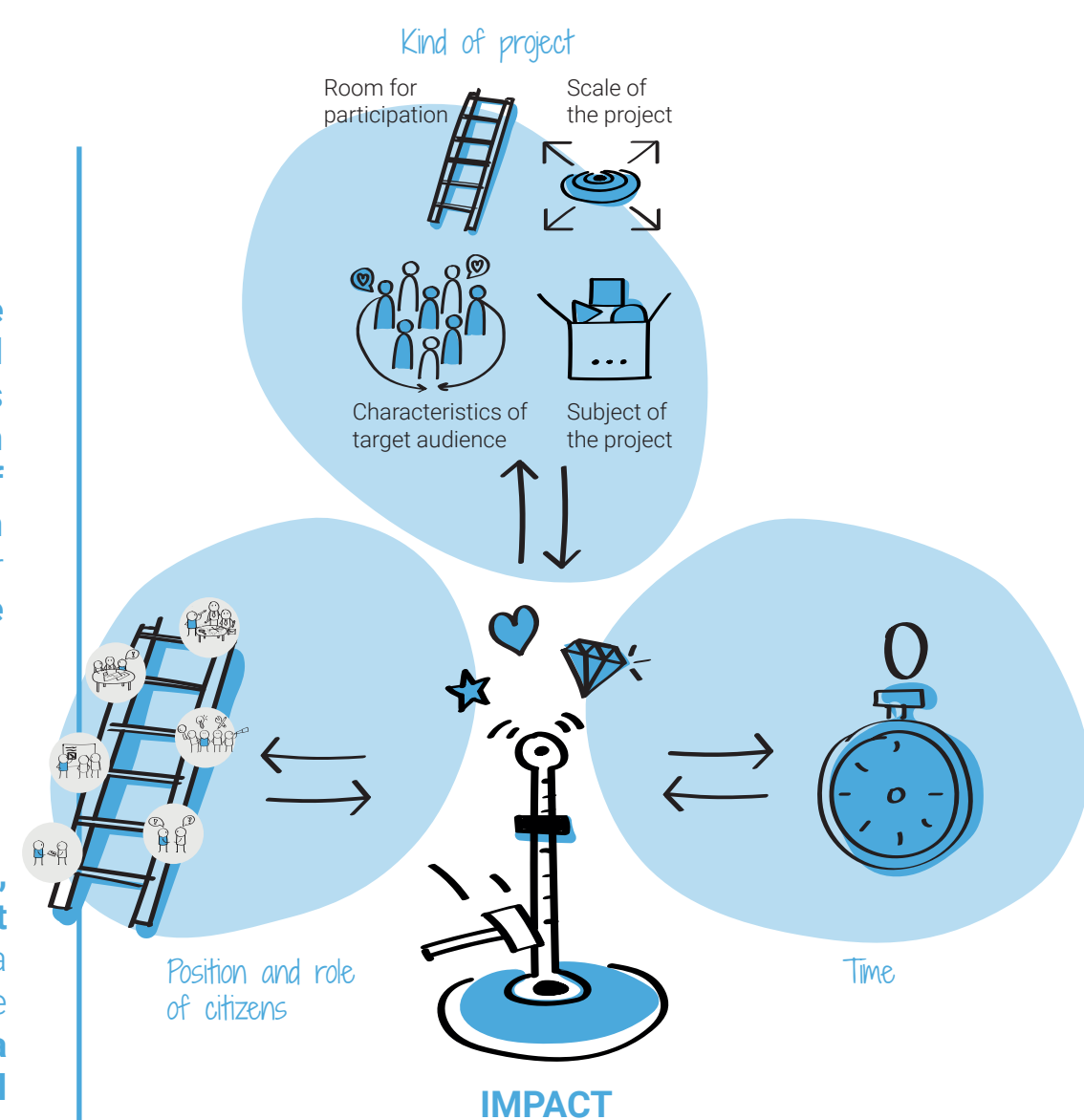
A **higher level on the participation ladder contributes to greater impact** in terms of **empowerment**. A position that is undesirable, however, can hinder that impact through feelings of insecurity. For participative designers, it is essential to find out **what knowledge residents and experts need from each other** to be able to make choices. With more knowledge, residents are able to bear greater responsibility. Based on the necessary knowledge exchange **a suitable form of interaction and role division can be chosen**.

Time

Designers should carefully consider **what time investment is appropriate** for their project. It should always be considered whether the benefits outweigh the additional costs. A greater impact can be achieved by **increasing the involvement of residents** and by creating **infrastructure** to sustain the impact in the long term. However, this greater impact comes at the **cost of a higher time investment and corresponding budget**.

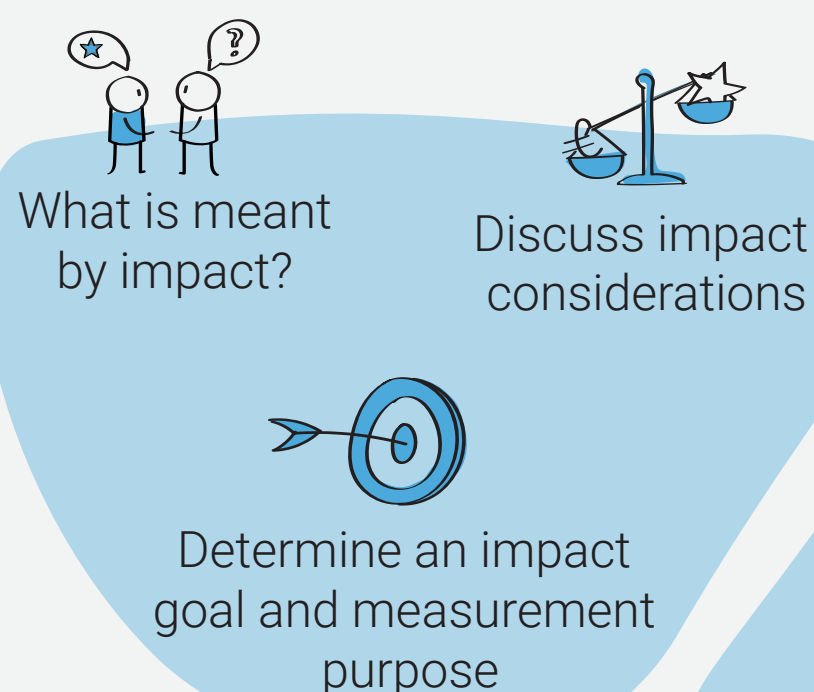
Kind of project

The **room for participation, scale of the project, characteristics of the target audience and subject of the project** all influence the potential impact of a project. Furthermore, a trade-off must often be made in participatory projects between **pursuing a widespread effect that is smaller on an individual level or a less widespread effect that is greater on an individual level**.

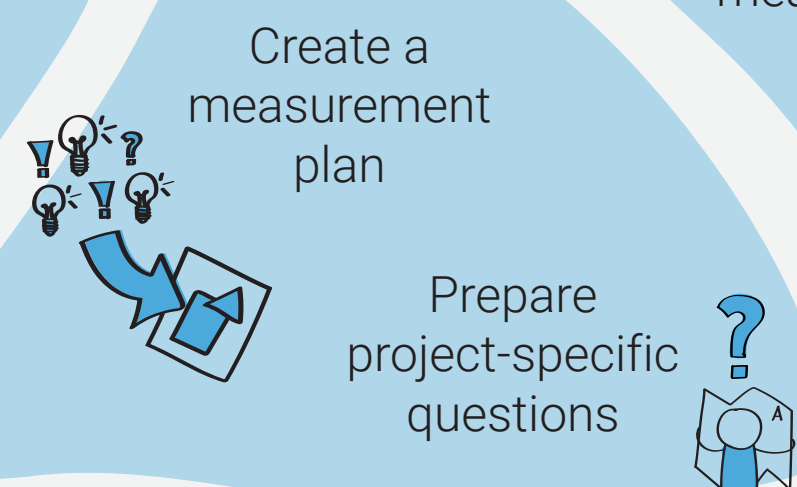


DEMONSTRATING IMPACT, STEP BY STEP

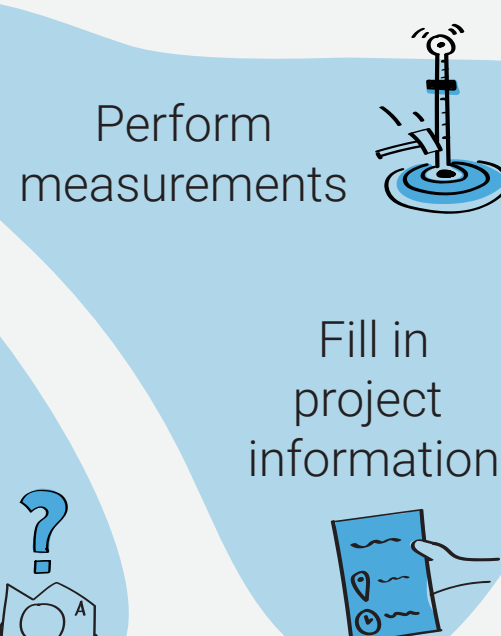
1 Discuss with the client



2 Prepare



3 Measure



4 Interpret

