

A Playbook for Place-based Processes

For Norwegian communities

NEB-STAR Deliverable D5.7
– The Norwegian Roadmap for
beautiful, inclusive, sustainable
and climate-neutral cities

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Author: Kristin Solhaug Næss (DOGA)

Contributions: All NEB-STAR-partners, with contributions from Jørgen Skatland (DOGA), Bjarne Uldal (NE), Ingjerd Jevnaker Straand (SK), Ane Dahl (Helen&Hard), Ingeborg Apall-Olsen (DOGA), Benedetta Crippa (Studio Benedetta Crippa AB)

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Annemie Wyckmans, Norwegian University of Science and Technology

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A Playbook for Place-based Processes

NEB-STAR Deliverable D5.7 – The Norwegian Roadmap
for beautiful, inclusive, sustainable and climate-neutral
cities

The Learning Model: An open framework
for Place-based Processes

Applicable tactics, based on the Key Areas of Action

Areas of use

A short introduction

Summary

A **roadmap** is generally defined as a **communicative strategic plan** that outlines a goal or desired outcome, including major steps, initiatives, or milestones needed to reach it over time. Today, we find different kinds strategies in most Norwegian municipalities concerning themes like social sustainability, quality of life, climate action, and area development. We describe co-creation, the use of culture as a tool, and neighbourhood development.

Making these strategic plans work becomes increasingly more complex and challenging when we move away from just accounting for the actions and resources inside a public administration, and consider a whole community. Because the fact is, that the transition we are up against cannot be solved only by using the standard tools in the municipal belt. Neither the climate crisis, the housing dilemma, nor the loneliness epidemic can be solved through planning processes and public money alone. We also need to partner up, do the hard things that build trust, support agency for actors and communities that would like to take action, and actively learn from what's not working.

A Playbook for Systemic Change

This challenge is at the heart of the **New European Bauhaus (NEB)** initiative: to make the European Green Deal a cultural, sustainable, and inclusive experience for all. The NEB encourages us to reimagine our living spaces and processes, demanding systemic and place-based change that is grounded in local resources, qualities, and challenges, moving beyond the built environment alone.

In Norway, the NEB values are often *latently present* within existing governance systems, but the structures sometimes render them invisible or disrupt their implementation when converting intentions into action. Furthermore, a misalignment of planning capacity and constraints on municipal finances can make it harder to prioritize these kinds of efforts facing other statutory obligations.

This document aims to address this critical disconnect: its primary role is to **bridge the gap between intentions/plans and action in norwegian communities**. It focuses on actions, practices, culture, partnerships, alternative finance models, and collaboration and innovation to catalyze change.

The Learning Model and Tactics

The base of the Roadmap is the **NEB Learning Model** — an open framework that illustrates the interplay between **formal structures** (like regulations, plans, and budgets) and **informal activities** (like co-creation and public meetings). This model highlights four interdependent **Key Action Areas** that communities can leverage to build collective capacity and achieve transformative goals: **Common Ground, Common Language, Common Action, and Common Infrastructure**.

Supported by this framework, the document presents a set of **Tactics** - action-oriented and responsive approaches to operationalize these Key Action Areas. These tools, developed through iterative learning in the NEB-STAR project, provide agents of change with practical means to strengthen collaboration and promote local initiatives. The remaining document explore various **Areas of Use** for the frameworks, such as a Diagnosis Tool and a 360 Process Planning tool.

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Introduction

How do we bridge the gap between people, place and system, so that different actors and communities get the agency they need to support the common acceleration towards climate-neutral, human-centred and smart cities and societies?

As we are reaching the five year mark towards 2030, there is a lot of work left to be done on tackling common complex challenges. Norwegian cities and communities are describing societal and systemic issues like the climate and nature crisis, the circularity gap, the demographic gap, loneliness challenges, housing inequality and rising polarization. Furthermore, the fast-paced world of 2025 has a shifting political landscape, with geo-political instability, and a rapid development of artificial intelligence.

Complex challenges like these demand a multifaceted approach that transcends traditional public administration. Global experts are raising their voice about the fact that these systemic issues cannot be solved solely through top-down planning processes and public funding. They necessitate a combination of **top-down strategic guidance** and **bottom-up initiatives**, making space for new ways of working together across fields and sectors.



From Smart City to Place based transformation

The Norwegian Smart City Roadmap

Back in 2018, various Norwegian actors co-produced the Norwegian Roadmap for Smart and Sustainable cities and communities. The Smart City definition emphasises citizens at the centre, and the use of new technology, innovative methods, collaboration, and co-creation to achieve sustainable, attractive, productive, and adaptable cities and local communities. The roadmap intended to serve as a guide, bridge-builder, value creator, and platform for smart city work in Norwegian municipalities and county authorities. The City of Stavanger led the way with their early “Smart with a Heart” strategy - meeting a demand for strategies and principles in urban development not only focused on the reduction of emission and solutions through technology, but also human centred and place based.



The original Norwegian Smart City Roadmap focuses on the “what, who and why” of smart cities, with principles, visions and target groups, but less on the “how”. Valuable experience in operationalizing these principles has been gained over the past five years through the Norwegian innovation program, "GNIST".

Visions

To concretely define the types of cities and communities we want to achieve, the various parties involved in the development of the roadmap established six common visions:

- Attractive Cities
- Inclusive Cities
- Effective Cities
- Climate-friendly Cities
- Resilient Cities
- Health-promoting Cities

Examples from the principles

Principles



The New European Bauhaus Initiative

The need for a more human centred and place based approach was also communicated from the initiators behind the New European Bauhaus (NEB) initiative.

The aim is to make the European Green Deal a cultural, sustainable, and inclusive experience for all. This European initiative encourages us to reimagine our living spaces and processes, demanding systemic and place-based change that is grounded in local resources, qualities, and challenges, moving beyond the built environment alone.

The initiative is placing a common set of values and principles in the centre, that defines what New European Bauhaus is all about. Through Research and development programmes, the movement supports and facilitates the creation of projects in line with the principles all over Europe. One of the first New European Bauhaus Lighthouse projects was the Stavanger based **NEB-STAR project**, establishing Stavanger as a large scale testbed for New European Bauhaus initiatives in Norway.



**Sustainable, inclusive
and beautiful**

The New European Bauhaus Compass

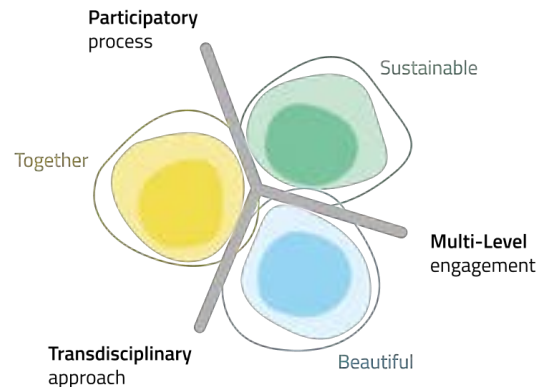
The New European Bauhaus values and principles are presented as a compass, compiling both a set of value based ambitions to be found in good projects and a set of working principles that is to be used to achieve the ambitions. In the centre of the compass lies the understanding of a place based approach.

BEAUTIFUL

Covers activating place qualities, connecting places, people, and their well-being, while integrating cultural and social values.

SUSTAINABLE

Emphasises repurposing materials, closing the circularity loop, and regenerating urban spaces.



TOGETHER

Addresses inclusion, social justice, and transformative ways of living together.

TRANSDISCIPLINARY APPROACH

Focuses on multi-, inter-, and beyond-disciplinary methods

MULTILEVEL ENGAGEMENT

Discusses place-based approaches, working across levels, and global engagement.

PARTICIPATORY PROCESS

Lessons learned cover consulting stakeholders, co-developing with them, and enabling self-governance.



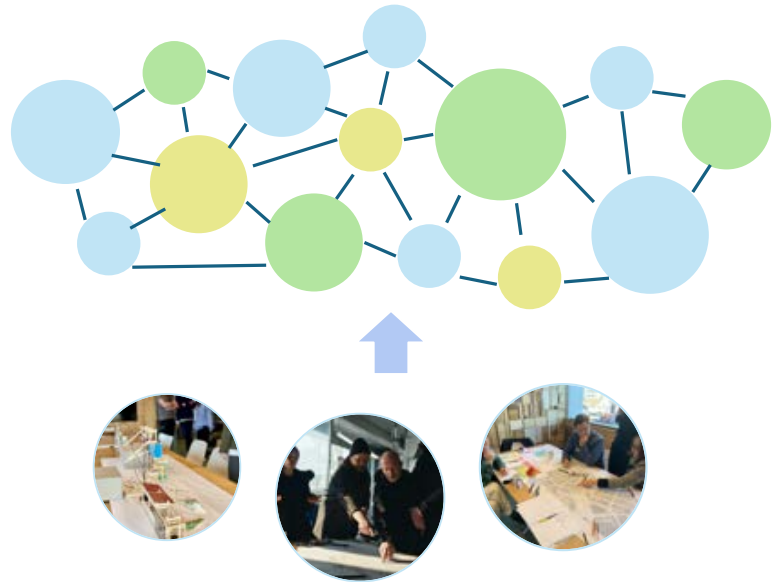
There are many good examples of projects in line with the New European Bauhaus (NEB) in Norway, but they often stand alone and can feel small in the larger context when we talk about climate cuts or urban transformation.

So how do we achieve more of these projects, which are both a contribution to climate transition, and at the same time add value to people's lives?



Insights from NEB-STAR

- The NEB principles is grounded in a place based approach, placing the **neighbourhood level** as a **crucial component** when working with livability and sustainable communities.
- The NEB principles support the need for **redefinition of value in place based processes**
- The NEB principles support **new ways of collaborating and working together** across disciplines and fields, to build mutual understanding and trust in local communities
- The NEB principles promote the creation of practical and common **narratives** of a future we actually want, forming new languages and engagement amongst stakeholders
- The NEB principles promotes **new and other roles** in urban development and territorial planning, to build bridges between fields and practices



Strategies or action?

Studying Norwegian municipal plans and strategies reveals that the principles of both Smart City initiatives and the New European Bauhaus (NEB) are already latently present. This presence is evident in existing frameworks, such as the purpose clause of the **Planning and Building Act** and strategic priorities within municipal master plans and territorial transformation plans.

These principles have gained momentum in Norwegian municipalities through several initiatives, particularly after the national resolution on Sustainable Development Goals, the launch of various place development and co-creation programs, and the emergence of new urban development strategies. For instance, several cities have recently appointed city architects, and a new national architectural strategy is now in place as a governance roadmap for architecture and planning, accompanied by the need for new planning tools targeting local authorities. Valuable experience in operationalizing these strategies has been gained over the past five years through the Norwegian innovation program, "**GNIST**".

All these experiences highlight a critical need: while intentions are strong, moving **from plans and intentions into tangible action** remains a significant challenge, particularly for municipalities.

The current economic context—marked by downturns, financial constraints, and global unrest—makes it difficult to invest in intangible values. Despite the clear strategic intentions, the transition to action is often stalled.



Pictures: Examples of Norwegian policy documents

Intention

Implementation



NEB values often embedded into planning documents

...but may lose its 'power' when converted into action



Key challenges:

1. Latent presence of NEB principles

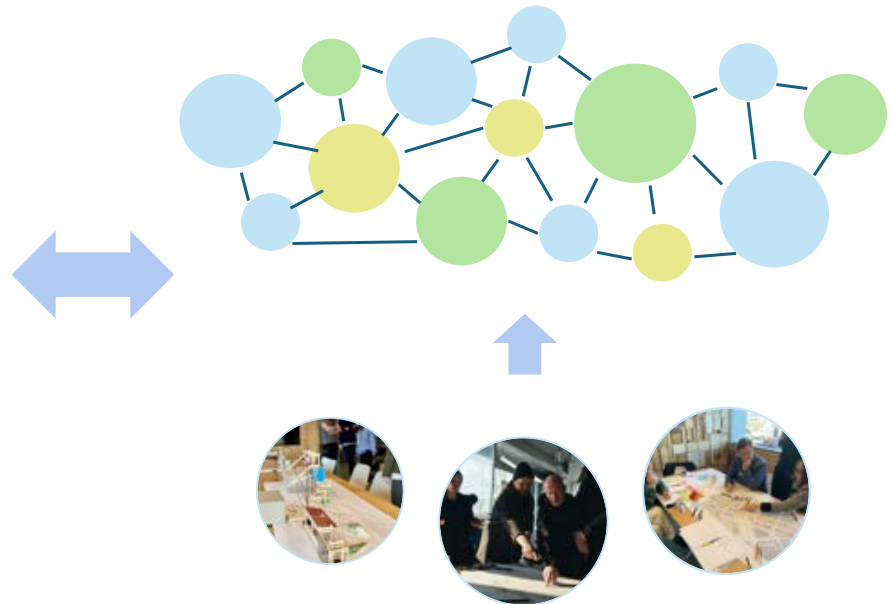
The NEB principles are embedded within the Norwegian and Nordic governance systems, yet existing organisational structures often render them invisible or allow other factors to disrupt their implementation.

2. Misalignment in planning capacity

A considerable share of resources devoted to planning is directed towards activities other than actions in line with the NEB-principles, and in some cases these efforts actively counteract them.

3. Constraints on municipal finances

Many Norwegian municipalities struggle to perceive NEB-related efforts as a priority and thus include them meaningfully in their budgets; this is exacerbated in times of raising costs, when municipalities face additional pressure to prioritise measurable, short-term results.



While formal structures like regulations and budgets provide a necessary framework, genuine progress also relies on informal activities such as co-creation, building trust, fostering agency within communities, and actively learning from failures.

This integrated approach, which bridges intentions with action, is crucial for achieving transformative goals and ensuring that strategic plans translate into tangible, place-based change.

Key objectives

This document aims to address this critical disconnect: its primary role is to **bridge the gap between intentions/plans and action in Norwegian communities.**

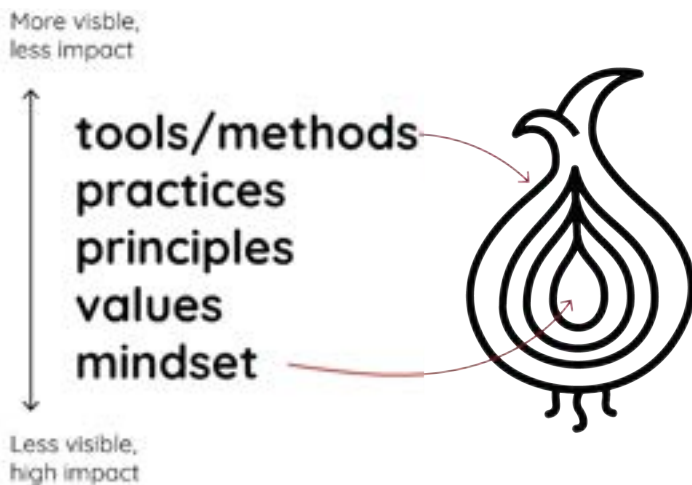
It focuses on bringing a tactical level into the conversation, where actions, practices, culture, partnerships, finance models, and collaboration supports the formal structures, plans and roles. This document is adding value to the original roadmaps and the new Architecture Strategy by bringing new key objectives to light.

- Contribute to **bridging the gap** between intentions/plans and action in Norwegian communities, by creating a framework for and **building a language** around this challenge
- Highlighting **tactics** that the municipality and other agents of change can use to "catalyze," strengthen, and contribute to increased collaboration in urban development and place based processes.
- The playbook also highlights the factors leaders can promote to contribute to more local initiatives and community development.

Development process

How the playbook was made

The different elements presented in this Playbook is the results of numerous Learning and Transferability activities organized through the NEB-STAR project between 2023-2025. It's developed in parallel with the Roadmap for the implementation of NEB to Stavanger:



The Stavanger way: The illustration presenting the shift towards mission-oriented work to solve complex problems.

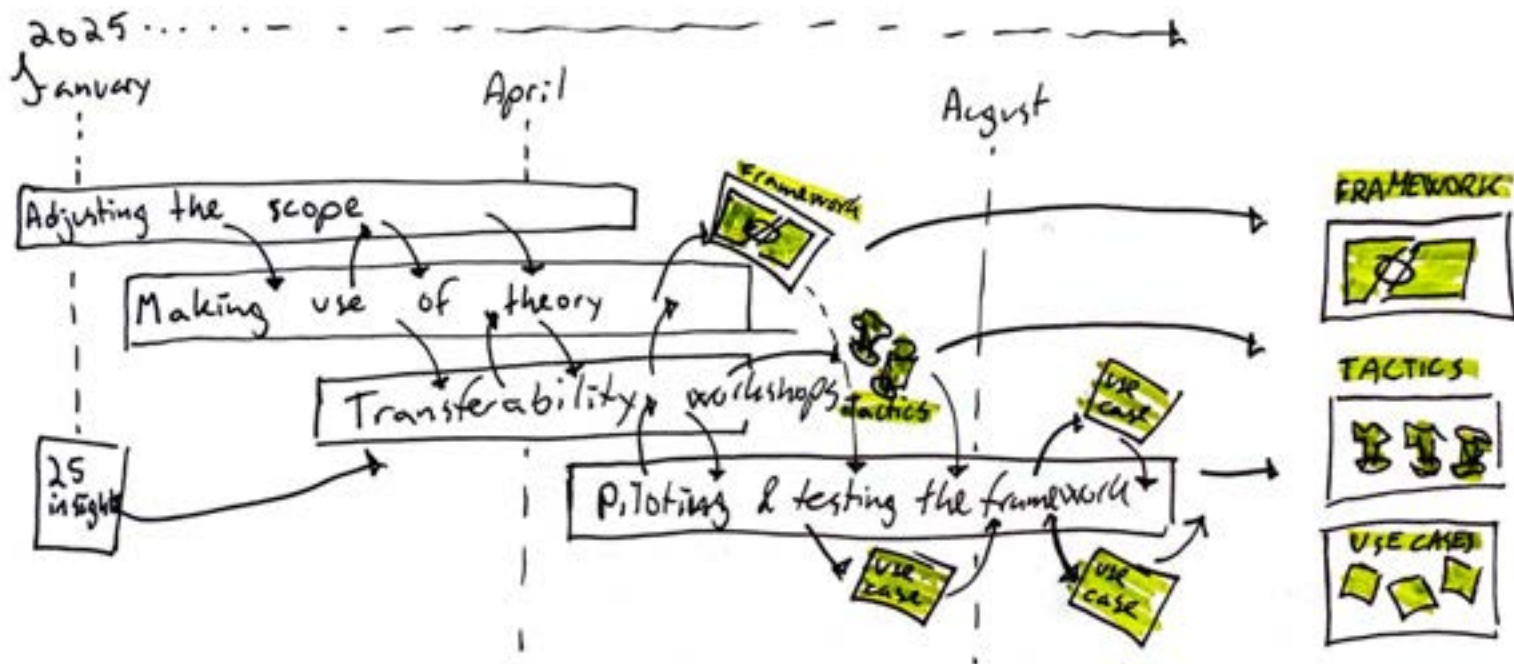
Place-specific learning:

Lessons learned from the large scale Stavanger based testbed of NEB-STAR, and knowledge from other NEB projects in Europe. Experiences and lessons learned from the Gnist Innovation programme and the Norwegian Mission cities.

Iterative process:

The different elements of the Playbook has been developed through the combination of learnings from NEB-STAR and Stavanger, validations from Norwegian and Nordic experts, experiences and learnings from other Norwegian municipalities and theoretical grounds.

Documentation of the process can be found in the NEB-STAR Deliverable D5.11 Transferability Report 3, published at the NEB-STAR web page: www.nebstar.eu



The targeted and synthesis part of the development process, illustrated as shown in the NEB-STAR D5.11 Deliverable. The parallel streams show different activities during the spring of 2025, producing the elements of the Playbook as presented in this document.

The Playbook

This part presents the different elements of the revised version of the Norwegian Smart City Roadmap as a Playbook for place based transformation processes. It includes the Learning model, applicable tactics derived from practice, and practical ways to use the playbook elements in known situations for local authorities and change makers.

Elements:

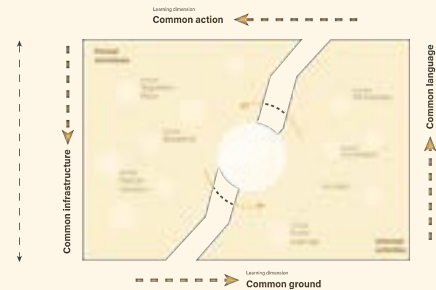
A - The learning model: the open framework for place-based processes

B - Applicable tactics for the Key areas of Action

C - Areas of use

A The Learning Model: An open framework for place-based processes

This chapter presents the Learning model as an open framework that proves to support building common **language** around how to **bridge the gap** between intentions/plans and action in Norwegian communities



B Applicable tactics, based on the Key Areas of Action

This chapter presents set of **action based tactics** that municipalities and other change agents can use to catalyse, strengthen, and contribute to bridging the gap between intention and action



C Areas of use

By testing different ways to apply the elements in this Playbook, we have gathered insights into **what works in different practical settings**, and how the elements solve different problems and needs among local authorities.



A The Learning Model: An open Framework for place based processes

This chapter presents the Learning model: An open framework that proves to support building common **language** around around how to **bridge the gap** between intentions/plans and action in Norwegian communities. It presents how the framework is put together, with different elements that provide diagrams and terms for discussions across sectors and levels of governance.

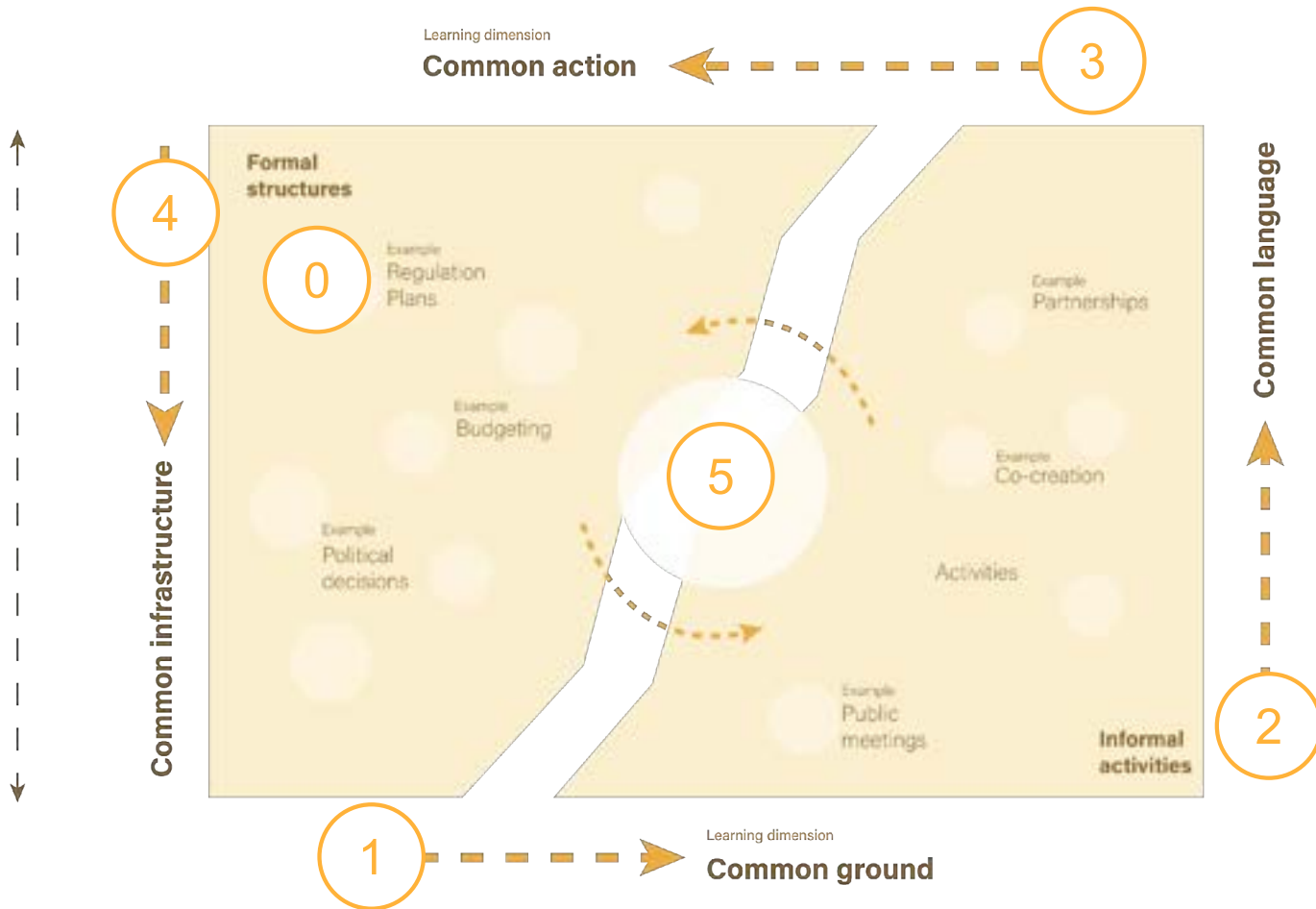
What is the Learning Model ?

On the next page you find an illustration of the visual framework. It consists of different elements:

The Backdrop (0) explains in simple terms the interrelation between formal structures and informal activities.

The Key Areas of Action (1-4) *Common Ground, Common Language, Common Action, and Common Infrastructure*, are different drivers that makes things happen.

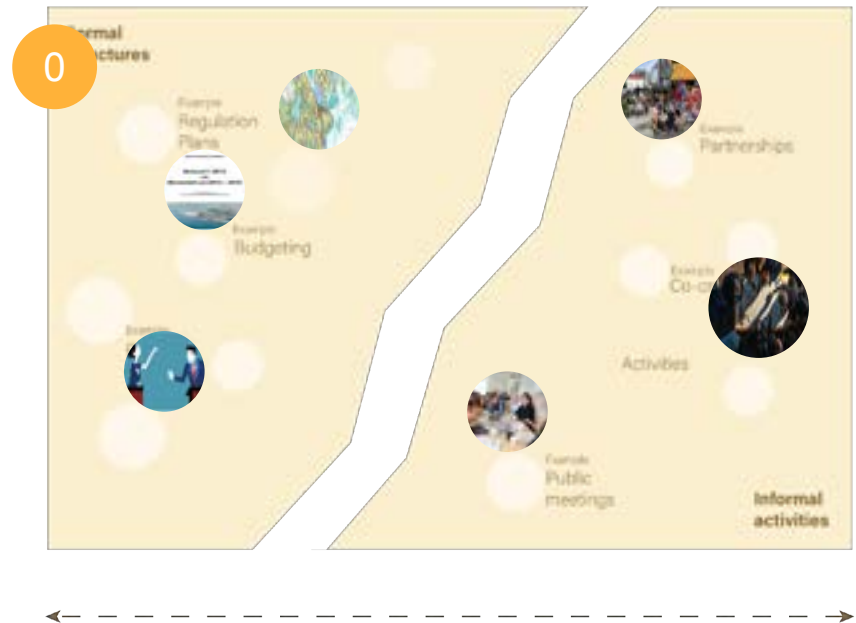
The Recursive Learning Loop (5) connects the drivers together, adding movement



0 The Backdrop

Formal Structures are the official, visible ways things are organized. Think of these as the written rules, official plans, procedures, and digital tools that a city or organization uses. They are the "how things are supposed to be done" on paper.

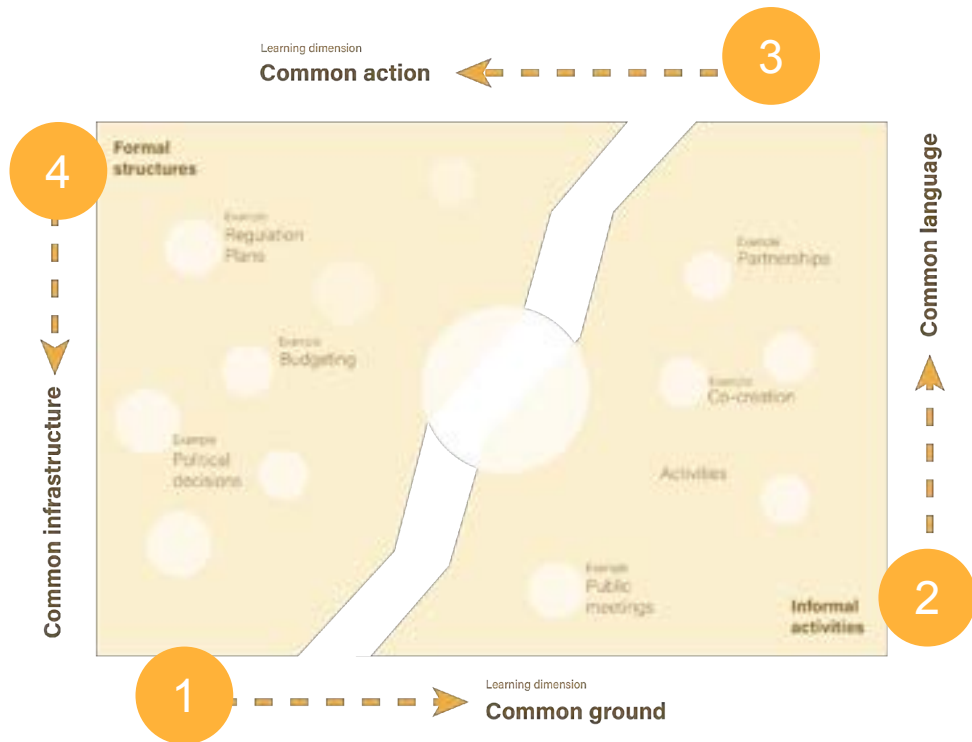
Informal Activities are the unwritten, often invisible ways things actually get done. These are the stories people share, the trusted relationships they build, the social cues they follow, and the unspoken routines that shape daily work. They are the "how things really get done" in practice. Is not controlled and regulated; it is relationship-based and often voluntary activity.



1-4 The Learning Dimensions

Building collective agency is not a single event but a continuous practice. The following four dimensions are the practical, interdependent levers that communities can use to build this capacity. They are not a linear checklist but a set of mutually reinforcing tools for navigating the journey of transformation.

Common Ground and **Language** shape a shared understanding of *why* and *what*, while **Common Action** and **Infrastructure** provide the means for *how* to act and make the learning last.

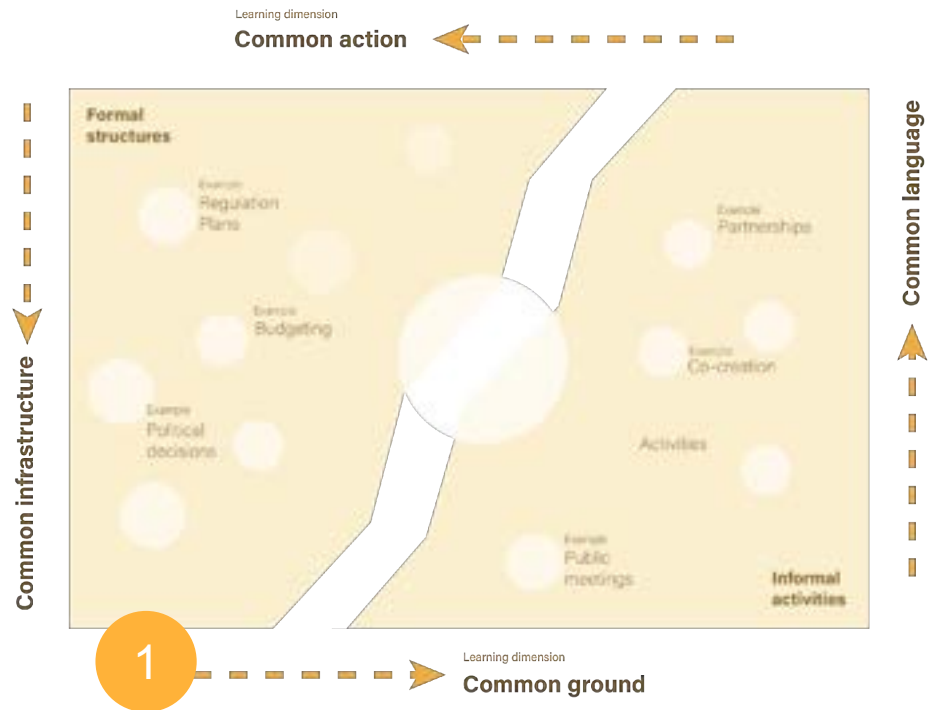


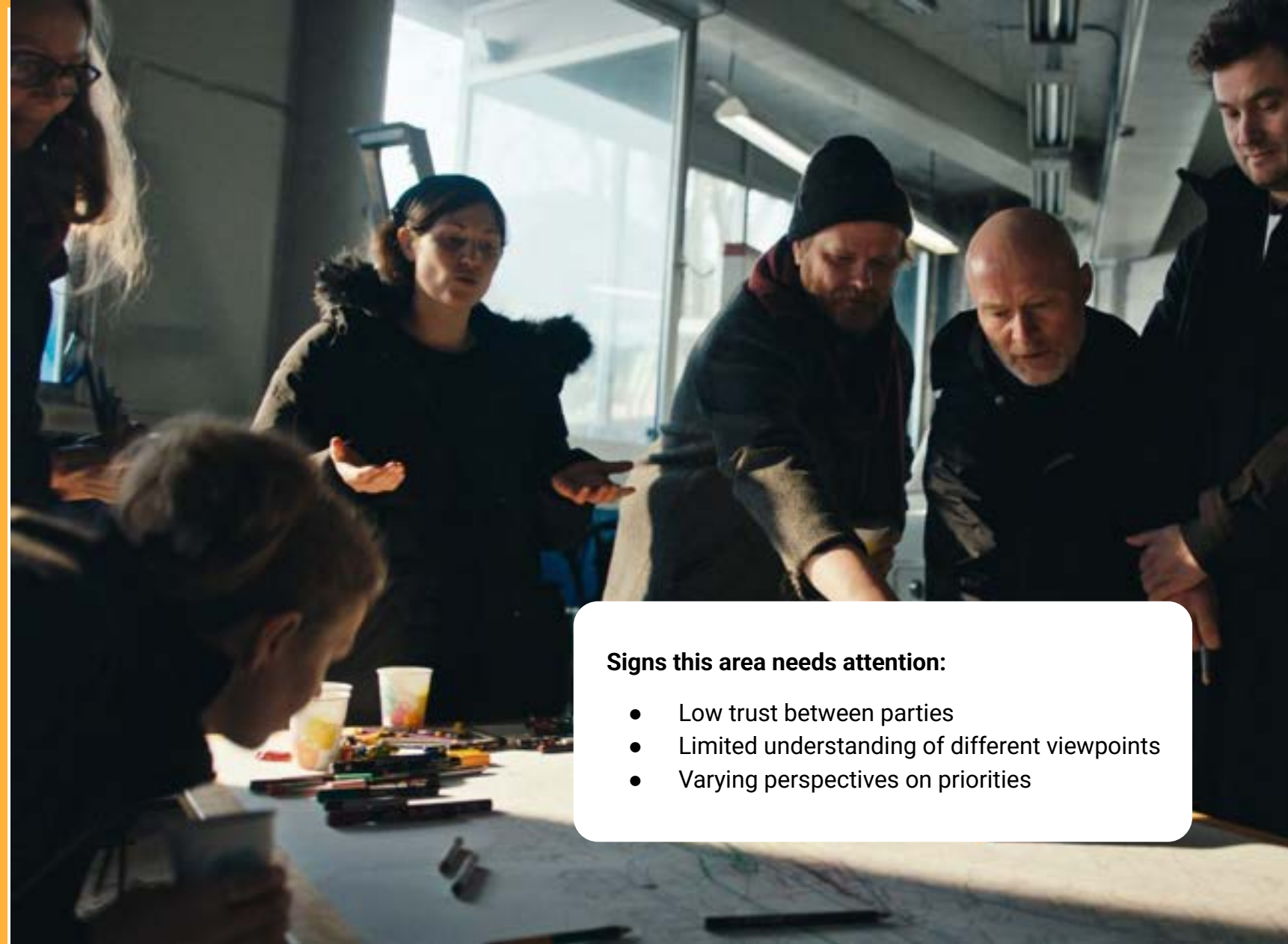
*The key drives for action (**Common Ground, Common Language, Common Action, and Common Infrastructure**)*

1 Common Ground

Imagine everyone in a group having their own unique map of a city. "Common Ground" is like bringing all those individual maps together to create big, shared maps that everyone can understand and agree on.

This shared map includes different people's understanding of a situation, the people involved, what resources are available, and any challenges that exist. It's about making sure all perspectives are seen and valued, from residents to planners to businesses, so that everyone has a clear and unified picture of the situation. One of the main goals are to increase trust amongst actors.





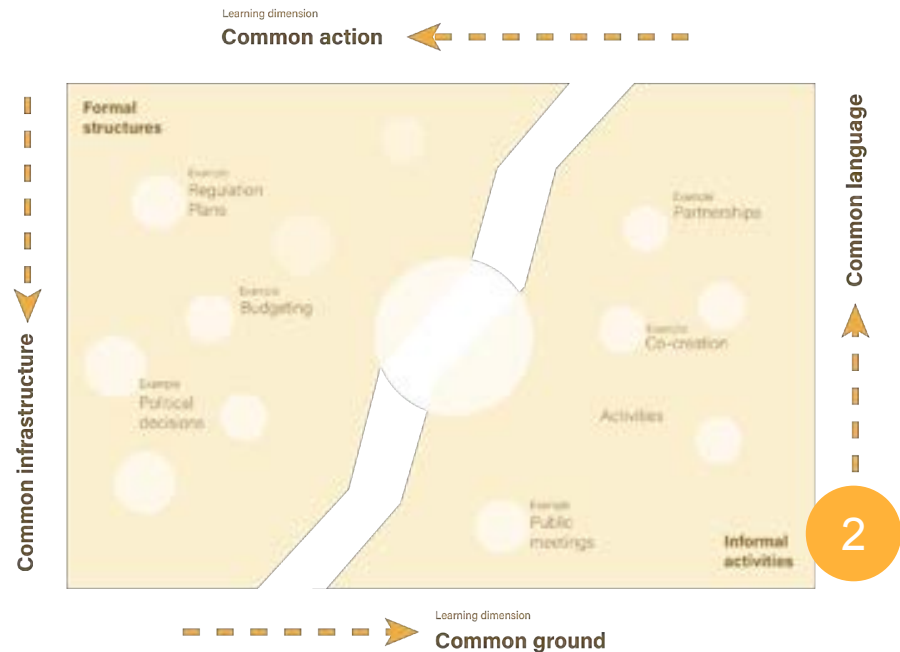
Signs this area needs attention:

- Low trust between parties
- Limited understanding of different viewpoints
- Varying perspectives on priorities

2 Common Language

If "Common Ground" is like everyone having a shared map, then "Common Language" is like having a shared compass that helps everyone agree on a direction. It means using simple, agreed-upon words, visual elements and ideas to talk about choices and define what "beautiful" or "sustainable" means in a specific local context.

This helps people coordinate their understanding and work together towards common goals, making sure everyone is on the same page about *how* to move forward.





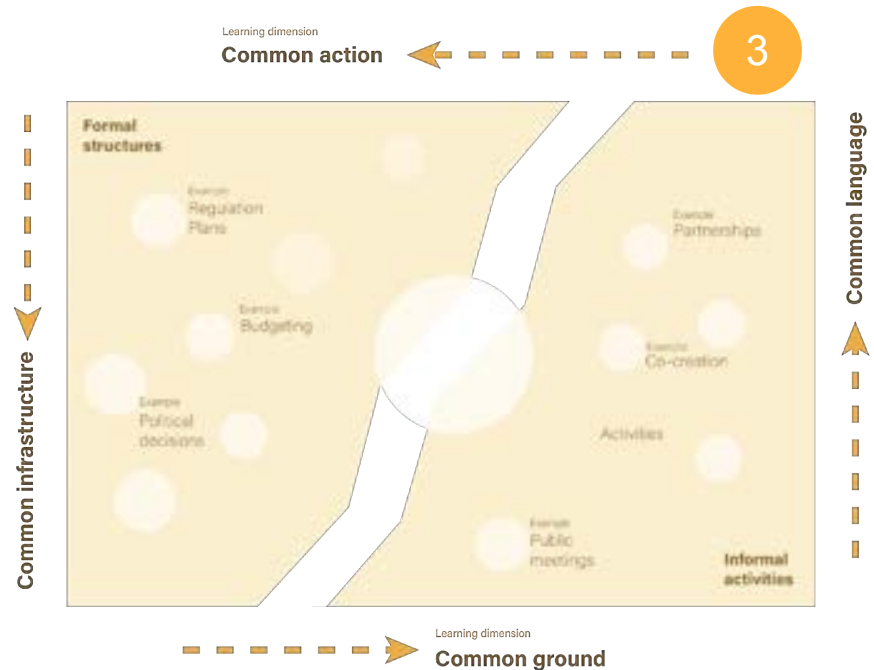
Signs this area needs attention:

- Lack of direction or engagement
- Difficulty communicating about collaboration
- Low degree of organization

3 Common Action

"Common Action" is about actually taking those first steps to materialize projects and initiatives where possible. It's about moving from just talking and planning to doing and learning. Think of it like trying out a new route on your shared map to see if it works, and then adjusting based on what you learn.

This helps a community achieve its goals by continuously testing ideas and adapting, rather than sticking to rigid plans and never getting things out there.





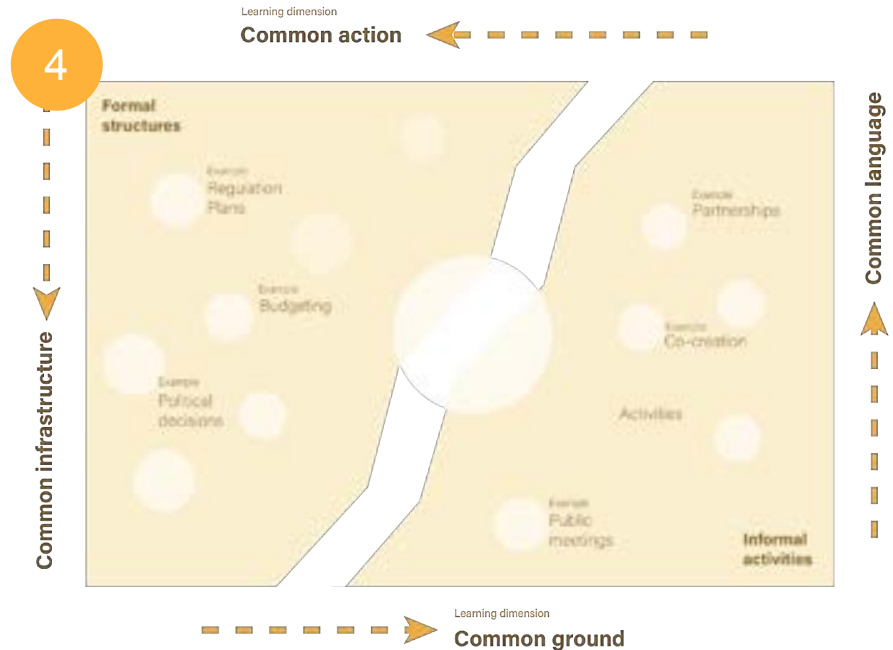
Signs this area needs attention:

- Lack of concrete outcomes
- Need to visualize resources and projects
- Gap between plans and implementation

4 Common Infrastructure

"Common Infrastructure" is all the lasting routines, roles, tools, and places that help a community or an organisation remember what it has learned and keep moving forward. It's like building durable trails and signposts so that valuable insights don't disappear when a project ends or people change.

This ensures that the community's efforts to be beautiful, sustainable, and together become a permanent part of how things are done.





Signs this area needs attention:

- Initiatives fade after pilot phase
- Lack of institutional support
- Difficulty scaling successful projects

5 The Recursive Learning Loop

The **Recursive Learning Loop** is the engine that drives learning and adaptation, ensuring that a community's efforts evolve through practice rather than getting stuck in rigid plans. Local progress rarely follows a straight line; instead, it loops through cycles of inquiry and reflection

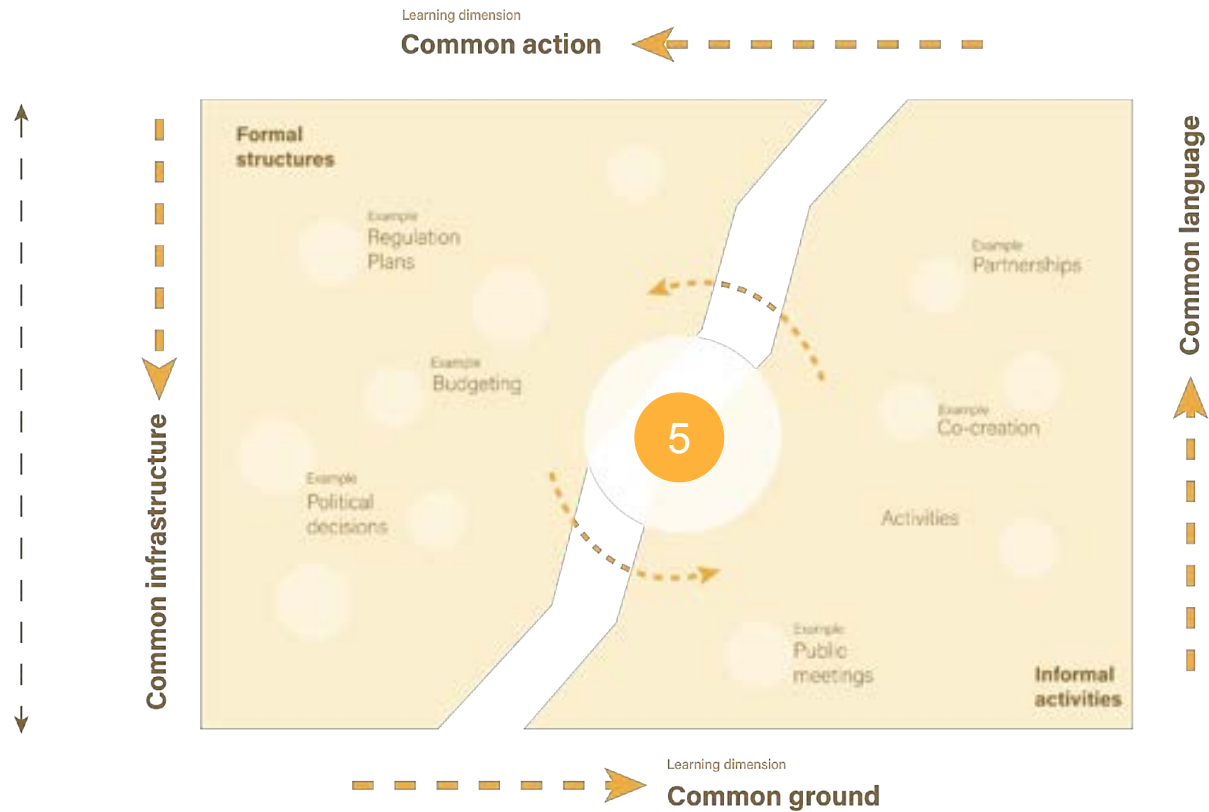
The Four Dimensions provide the toolkit for collective agency, but a toolkit is **static** without a process for using it. That's why the model also shows a circular movement, called the Learning Loop.

Imagine a continuous cycle of learning and improving, much like how you learn from your experiences in daily life. This loop is constantly active, ensuring that a community's efforts evolve and improve over time, rather than getting stuck in old ways.

The Loop connects to the "Four Dimensions of Learning" by using:

- The shared understanding (Common Ground) to recognize issues
- The shared language (Common Language) to develop hypotheses
- The shared actions (Common Action) to materialize them
- The shared infrastructure (Common Infrastructure) to make successful learnings last and be durable.

Directional movements:



B The Tactics

This chapter presents a set of tactics that responds to different barriers and challenges we face in different parts of our systems, working with place-based processes.

For each Key Area of Action, you will find a set of **usable tactics** and examples on methods from the NEB universe that operationalize them.

We also present a couple of examples, and show how the different tactics are aligned with the NEB compass.

What is tactics?

A tactic is understood as a more action-oriented and responsive approach than traditional strategy, an approach that starts from where you stand, acting from that very moment.

They all answer to different challenges, and are..



Use citizen insights to provide new perspectives beyond the “territory debate”.

General Tactics



The Urban belonging app

Specific Tools

How to understand the Tactic cards

1 Sustainable

2 Participatory Approach



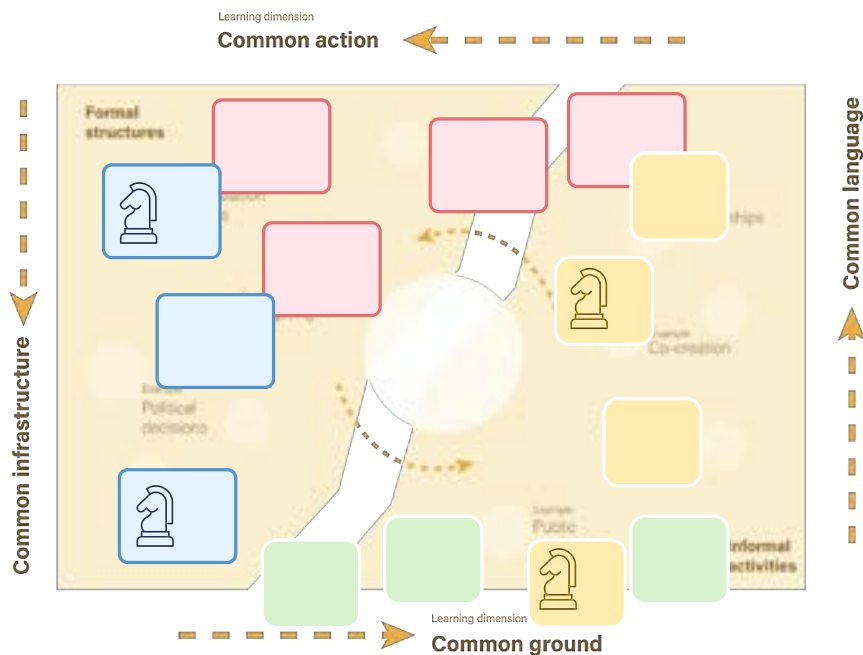
Tactic

Common
Ground

Invest in bridge-builders – involve those who have trust – people who know the local community, the professions or the place.

Communities also need
renegation

A matter of place governance



Based on the results and the mapping of relations between different tactics and New European Bauhaus ambitions, we have created a set of Tactic cards presented in this Playbook, compatible with NEB-STAR methods and examples. The illustrations show how the tactics can be presented as actionable playing cards, and how they relate to the framework and Key Areas of Action.

Tactics for Common Ground

The tactics presented in this Key area of action are especially effective when there is a need to gain a higher level of trust amongst different actors, stakeholders and groups. Whenever the tolerance for different perspectives and views are low, and there is gaps in how actors and groups view prioritizes, these tactics support the creation of a common ground

Signs this area needs attention:

- Low trust between parties
- Limited understanding of different viewpoints
- Varying perspectives on priorities

These tactics:

- Promotes mutual understanding and a transdisciplinary approach.
- Important for setting a common direction and including the "beautiful" aspect in NEB.
- Connects local knowledge and engagement with formal structures.
- Institutionalizes the voice of citizens and insists on a holistic approach.
- Reduces power imbalances and promotes multi-level engagement.



Employ An Artist



Urban Belonging



Jammerdalen



Partnership- and Business Models



Barcode

Examples from the NEB-STAR Tools and methods



Tactic

Common Ground

Create awareness of conflicting interests, different perspectives and interpretations. "We are looking at the same picture, but from different angles."



Tactic

Common Ground

Highlight shared/important intangible values through "representations" (visions, ambitions, qualities).



Tactic

Common Ground

Establish collaborative platforms where sustained effort is required

→ trust takes time.



Tactic

Common Ground

Invest in bridge-builders – involve those who have trust – people who know the local community, the professions or the place.



Tactic

Common Ground

Tip the experience of power imbalance by considering where meetings take place and how dialogue arenas are conducted. Talking about the neighbourhood? Then meet in the neighbourhood.



Tactic

Common Ground

Use citizen insights to provide new perspectives beyond the "territory debate".



Tactic

Common Ground

Actively use storytelling to reinforce the narrative around the projects, to highlight the vision or make it easier to understand abstract values.



Tactic

Common Ground

What's your best tactic?

2

Shared Direction & Values

Tactics for Common Language

In this section, the tactics can be used to support the creation of a common language. This can be the case if there is an experience of lacking common direction, or that the engagement and response to processes and projects are low. Other symptoms can be that actors find it hard to organize around tasks, or that they find it challenging to talk about what you are supposed to do together.

Signs this area needs attention:

- Lack of direction or engagement
- Difficulty communicating about collaboration
- Low degree of organization



Practical model making



Common visual visions



Utopian future workshops



Using creative, visual elements



Citizen deal

Examples from the NEB-STAR Tools and methods

These tactics:

- Shifts mindset from limitation to innovation.
- Art can help manage uncertainty and open up for more solutions.
- Helps challenge established truths and expand the scope of action.
- Creates a stronger common narrative and engagement.
- Elevates friction into a driving force for innovation.
- Encourages viewing disagreements as a source of learning and development.



Tactic

Common Language

Translate challenges and costs into opportunities. For example, is the climate challenge a cost or an investment opportunity?



Tactic

Common Language

Actively use storytelling to reinforce the narrative around the projects, to highlight the vision or make it easier to understand abstract values.



Tactic

Common Language

Practise standing in uncertainty and relating to alternative futures by using various methods and tools for this – use fiction to broaden understanding.



Tactic

Common Language

Makes space for new roles, and utilize architects, artists, and other creative fields to translate words into visuals as a process aid, not solely for the final outcome.



Tactic

Common Language

Champion friction as a driving force for innovation (language).



Tactic

Common Language

Navigate complexity by using creative fields like design, architecture and art to speak through these languages



Tactic

Common Language

Spend time and do common walks an area, at a site or in the space that is being transformed, as a way to form common references.



Tactic

Common Language

What's your best tactic?

3 Tactics for Common Action

In the Key area of Action named Common Action, it's all about moving away from concepts and ideas, and into concrete actions and projects. If there is a lack of concretization, or visible resources to turn a discussion into a project and do something specific, these tactics might be helpful.

Signs this area needs attention:

- Lack of concrete outcomes
- Need to visualize resources and projects
- Gap between plans and implementation

These tactics:

- Represents the operational job of "doing and coordinating" in the system.
- Helps achieve results that are not only dependent on increased budgets, but rather common sustainable value creation.
- Motivation is important for catalyzing change and collaboration.
- Makes resources available and shares responsibility with local communities.
- Promotes circular transformation of existing structures.



Agile Piloting



Temporary projects



Youth Involvement



Co-financing models

Examples from the NEB-STAR Tools and methods



Tactic

Common Action

Using co-financing models to realize projects (longer time horizon, added value)



Tactic

Common Action

Gather and highlight the package of incentives that can motivate all types of actors to collaborate, including those beyond pure financing.



Tactic

Common Action

Materialize the discussions by making something physical or tangible together.



Tactic

Common Action

Keep the door open regarding who could “do the the work”. Not all projects needs to be led by the public sector.



Tactic

Common Action

Choose experimentation and temporality where appropriate to get started. Do something!



Tactic

Common Action

Prioritize and elevate a “shared portfolio” - manage the municipalities’ “innovation portfolios” of measures in collaboration with businesses and residents.



Tactic

Common Action

Put forward an ambition where demolition is the last resort in urban development.



Tactic

Common Action

What’s your best tactic?

Tactics for Common Infrastructure

Lastly, the tactics identified that are related to the Common infrastructure dimension, as the tactics that highlight what to do when there is a lack of support towards learning and re-distribution of resources in the formal structures. This might be the case if there is a lack of structures supporting how to implement learning from ongoing processes, or the experiences of an organization also to the same pilots and projects over and over again, without evaluating impact or taking action based on the previous experience.

Signs this area needs attention:

- Initiatives fade after pilot phase
- Lack of institutional support
- Difficulty scaling successful projects



Participation
Forum



Learning Loops



VIS DET -
measurement



Impact Model

These tactics:

- Ensures that valuable insights and projects persist after the project is concluded.
- Consolidates learning and anchors the community's identity and purpose.
- Helps channel organizational energy towards reinforcing NEB principles, rather than undermining them.
- Ensures that learning loops do not just happen by themselves, and that insights are implemented in formalized routines.
- Addresses the difficulty of quantifying "soft" values and ensures they are considered on par with economic factors.

Examples from the NEB-STAR
Tools and methods



Tactic

Common Infrastructure

Thinking out of the box on what measurement and evaluation can mean - when it comes to intangible values.



Tactic

Common Infrastructure

Assign someone the role responsible for learning outcomes in key projects, to ensure added value across the organization.



Tactic

Common Infrastructure

Act as if the projects have a life span, and plan accordingly. Who will use it? Who will maintain it? When is the project over? How can the life cycle be circular?



Tactic

Common Infrastructure

Engage in new ways to collaborate and create Multi-level governance dialogues, to tackle regulatory barriers.



Tactic

Common Infrastructure

Use learning forums, learning loops, and shared capacity building to ensure connection to other sectors and units.



Tactic

Common Infrastructure

Test out and develop new maintenance models, also together with stakeholders, to make good projects last and become durable



Tactic

Common Action

Adapt methods that enables citizen engagement to be connected to the institutions, using forums, digital platforms, assemblies or other.



Tactic

Common Action

What's your best tactic?

Example from NEB-STAR: Co-creating urban space

The Building Site is a co-created wooden structure composed of circular and reused materials, based on a non-profit joint workshop initiative. Its primary focus is to connect various users and partners to jointly create, design and build a meeting space with shared equipment and knowledge at Site 4016 area in Stavanger.



1 Beautiful

2 Multi-level engagement



Tactic

Common
Language

Visual languages

Navigate complexity by using creative fields like design, architecture and art to speak through these languages

Context-dependent aesthetic languages

Art, artists, and artistic practice

Dynamic and informal neighbourhood visions

Example

This tactic is all about how **the artistic fields** support the creation of a common language through the use of visual and experience based aids.

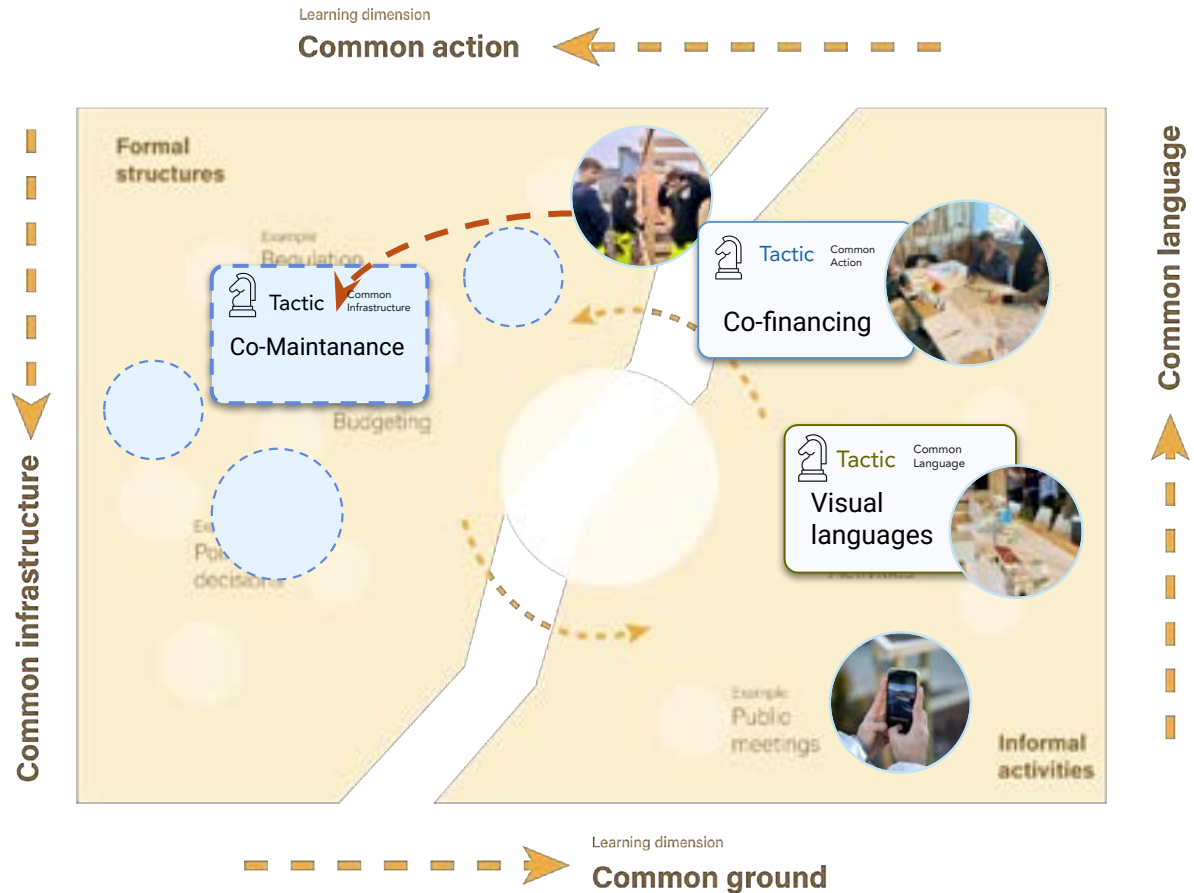
This tactic relates both to the **Value of Beauty**, but also to the working principles of **Multi-level engagement** and to **Transdisciplinary approaches**.



Practical model
making



Common visual
visions



In this example, different methods and tools have been used to create a co-creation process and results, and as the project just opened in the Spring of 2025, the maintenance and continuance of the project opens up important discussions about co-production of public space. The illustration shows how different tactics have been used during the co-creation process, and how new tactics can be applied to solve remaining challenges.

1 Sustainable

2 Participatory Process



Tactic Common
Infrastructure

Co-maintenance

Test out and develop new maintenance models, also together with stakeholders, to make good projects last and become durable

Communities also need renegotiation

A matter of place governance

Example

As shown on the previous page, this tactic focuses on the partnership- and financial side of co-creation, as initiatives and interventions often also has a life span to care for. This tactic related especially to to the **sustainability** and **co-production** principles of NEB.



The CID-model



Partnership- and
business models

This tactic is an important element in private public partnership models like e.g. the CID model.

C Areas of use

By testing different ways to apply the elements in this Playbook, we have gathered insights into what works in different practical settings, and how the elements solve different problems and needs among local authorities. The framework is flexible and can be adapted to a variety of applications within your organization and your projects.

In this chapter, we explore four core ways the framework can be leveraged. In addition to these areas of use, the playbook contains the elements for a National Place based Learning programme.

Diagnostics: Facilitate conversations and create a common language around challenges and barriers in projects and situations.

Empathy and perspectives: Practice empathy and understand different actor perspectives in a structured way to systematically **explore, articulate, and bridge** diverse viewpoints

Adaptive process planning: The framework and tactics allows for planning processes that are adaptive, capable of learning from experiments, and resilient to unforeseen challenges.

As a Documentation and evaluation Tool: Capture and visualize the "invisible" results—such as informal activities, relationship building, and learning loops—that are often overlooked in traditional reports.



Diagnostics

Identifying challenges and barriers

The Open Framework functions as a visual "canvas" that facilitates conversations and create a common language around challenges and barriers in projects involving many stakeholders. Project activities can be visualized in relation to the axes of formal structures/informal activities and the four dimensions.

- The team or stakeholders **place their activities** (e.g., zoning plans, co-creation, public meetings, partnerships) on the canvas to highlight where efforts are actually taking place.
- **Barriers, tensions, or bottlenecks** (e.g., budget cuts, low trust, understanding gaps) are added to the canvas

This immediately **reveals "blind spots" or imbalances** in the project – for example, if there is too much emphasis on formal plans without

corresponding informal activities, or if there are barriers preventing the learning loop from functioning. By observing **where the barriers arise** in relation to the four dimensions, one can diagnose the type of dysfunction the project is experiencing.



Empathy and perspectives

Put yourself in other people's shoes

The framework, particularly through its emphasis on Common Ground and Common Language, is highly effective for practicing empathy and understanding different actor perspectives. The framework provides a structured way to systematically **explore, articulate, and bridge** diverse viewpoints, which is essential for successful place-based transformation.

Actors can individually or in groups **map out a project** from a specific actor's perspective (e.g., a municipal planner, a local resident, a developer, a social entrepreneur). They place *their* perceived activities, priorities, and most importantly, *their* barriers onto the canvas.

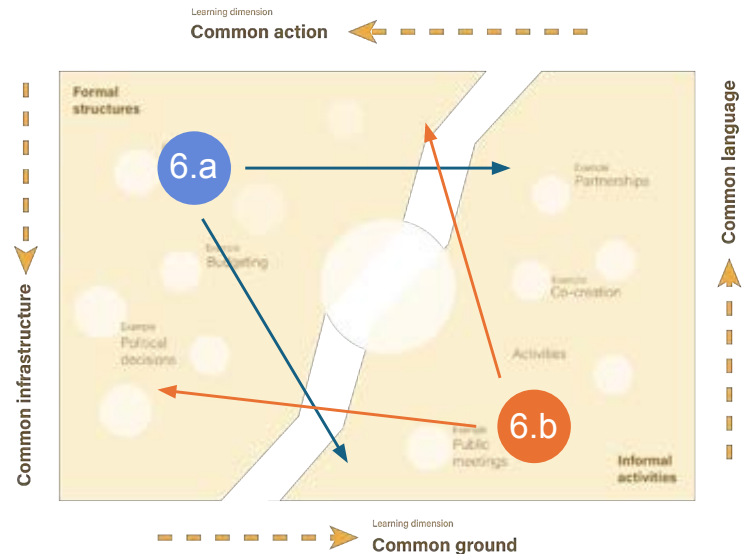
By explicitly stating "We are looking at the same picture, but from different angles," the framework encourages an acknowledgment of subjective

The citizens lens

The urban developers lens

The Planning Lens

realities. When multiple such maps are overlaid or compared, it vividly illustrates where "Common Ground" is lacking—where priorities clash, where trust is low, or where different groups simply don't understand each other's operating logic.



Adaptive process planning

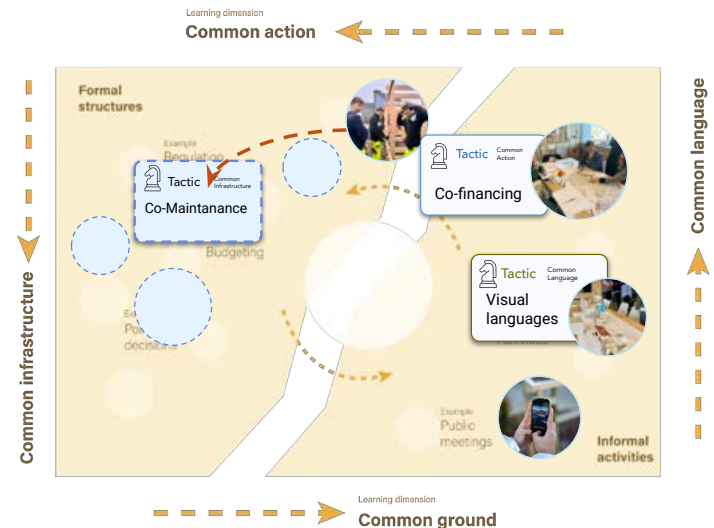
Choose the right actions

Traditional linear plans often break down in complex environments. The framework and tactics allows for planning processes that are adaptive, capable of learning from experiments, and resilient to unforeseen challenges.

Process facilitators, leaders and teams can **add their planned activities**, together with other, parallel activities and element, and then **discuss different tactics** eligible for the situation.

Tactic cards can be used to **discuss and to simulate** what will happen in a given process, and elements can further be add or remove as the real situation progresses. When combined with identified challenges and barriers, actors can **match** the most relevant tactics to the barriers to **create movement** (e.g., matching the barrier "*Low trust*" with the tactic "*Invest in bridge-builders*").

Role-play/Simulation: Participants simulate how chosen tactics change the process and whether they shift activities from the informal side to influence formal structures (via Common Infrastructure).



Documentation and evaluation

Highlight the invisible

The framework makes it easy to highlight process based aspects of **progress** in new ways. In projects and situations where process based factors are crucial impact indicators, we often lack ways to document and evaluate the progress.

Different stakeholders can use the framework as a basis and structure to document actions, tactics and things that happened underway, to better evaluate more holistically.

*Did the actions lead to movement and progress?
What actions were particularly important?*

This kind of process mapping and documentation can also be used as a way to reflect on what actually happened in a process; as a group discussion.



GNIST examples: documenting innovation processes

Resources

Need support for the next steps?

This Playbook booklet is a written presentation of practices that is best learned through exploration, testing and dialogue.

To make the findings and results from the development of the Playbook as available and applicable for different actors as possible, the elements are being incorporated into the revised GNIST Learning programme for Local Authorities, and included in the portfolio of learning and capacity building tools in DOGA.

See more: <https://doga.no/gnist>

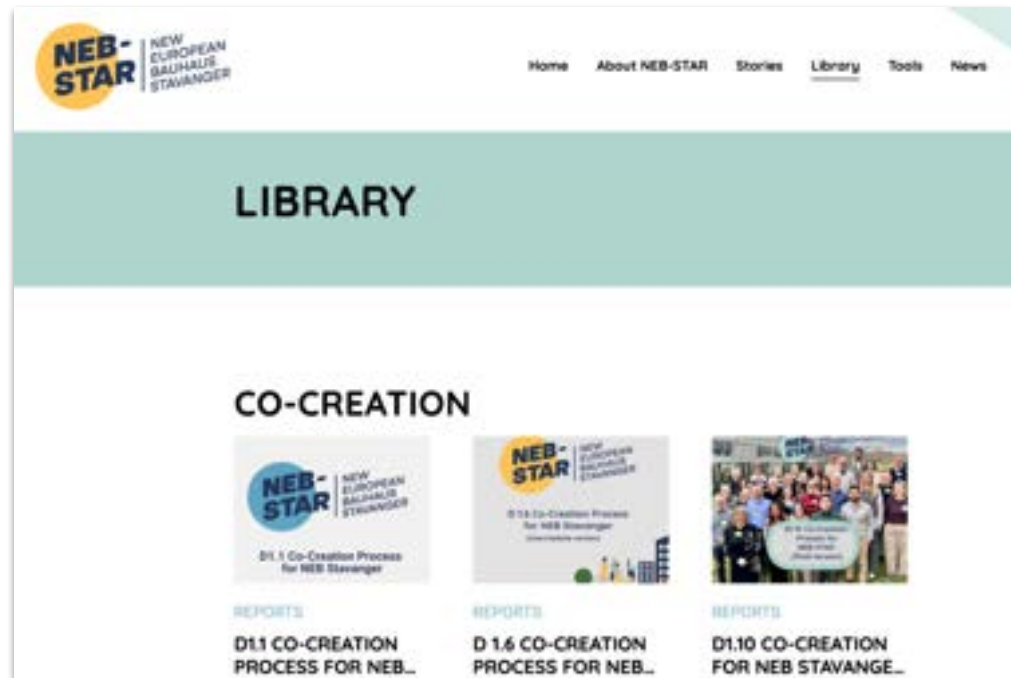


NEB-STAR Resources

In the digital NEB-STAR Library you can also find more compatible learning resources like:

- NEB-STAR Tools
- Solution booklets
- The Stavanger Roadmap
- Learning Reports
- Documentation from the project results
- Progress Stories
- Contact information for project coordinators

Web page: <https://nebstar.eu/library/>





Website: www.nebstar.eu

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