

CARDS AND REFLECTION METHOD FOR CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

DESIGN THINKING METHOD FOR EASY AND EFFECTIVE
INVOLVEMENT OF CITIZENS IN CITY PLANNING PROCESSES.

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INTRODUCTION

Citizens live with the solutions that city planners create. Therefore, municipalities, architects, and other city development professionals often need to engage and involve citizens in planning and co-creating the development of an area. Involvement increases the chance of successful implementation by using citizens' real-life experiences as inspiration and it increases the local commitment to the solutions.

Inclusion is a complex problem requiring a comprehensive toolbox. The purpose of this document is to present an approach to involve citizens in a city co-design and development process.

The method was developed and tested with Høje Taastrup Municipality in Denmark in the summer of 2022 in relation to the Urbinat project funded by the EU.

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CARDS AND REFLECTION METHOD



Method in brief

The method has three components:

- A map of the focus area
- Cards with interventions
- Reflection capture techniques like templates and facilitators

Participants at a workshop using cards and reflections contribute by selecting intervention cards that are relevant to them, place them on the map where interventions are needed, and give reasons for placing them there.

Insights and interpretations

The insights for the facilitators consist of both specific spots in the area and their thoughts around the interventions. Firstly, they get insights into where in the area locals meet concrete problems or see concrete potentials for improvement. Secondly, they get insights into which interventions are likely to be appreciated and what the user group might consider valuable to them.

When participants choose intervention cards, it can be interpreted both as very specific preferences for certain interventions or be interpreted more broadly as signals of the underlying values that the participants have.

When participants place cards on the map, it can be interpreted as specific areas and problems to address or more broadly as signals on what constitutes problems and improvements according to them.

Conclusions based on interpretations	Placement specific	Placement broadly
Intervention specific	Implement this exact intervention at this exact place	Use this exact intervention at places in the area where similar problems might be present
Intervention broad	Do some intervention with certain characteristics in this exact place	Use interventions with certain characteristics and solve problems of a certain kind

USING THE METHOD WITH NATURE BASED SOLUTIONS IN HØJE TAASTRUP, DENMARK



Drop-in session

Høje Taastrup Municipality wanted to gain insights into the relevance of different nature-based solutions in specific urban development areas and chose a workshop with citizens as the format.

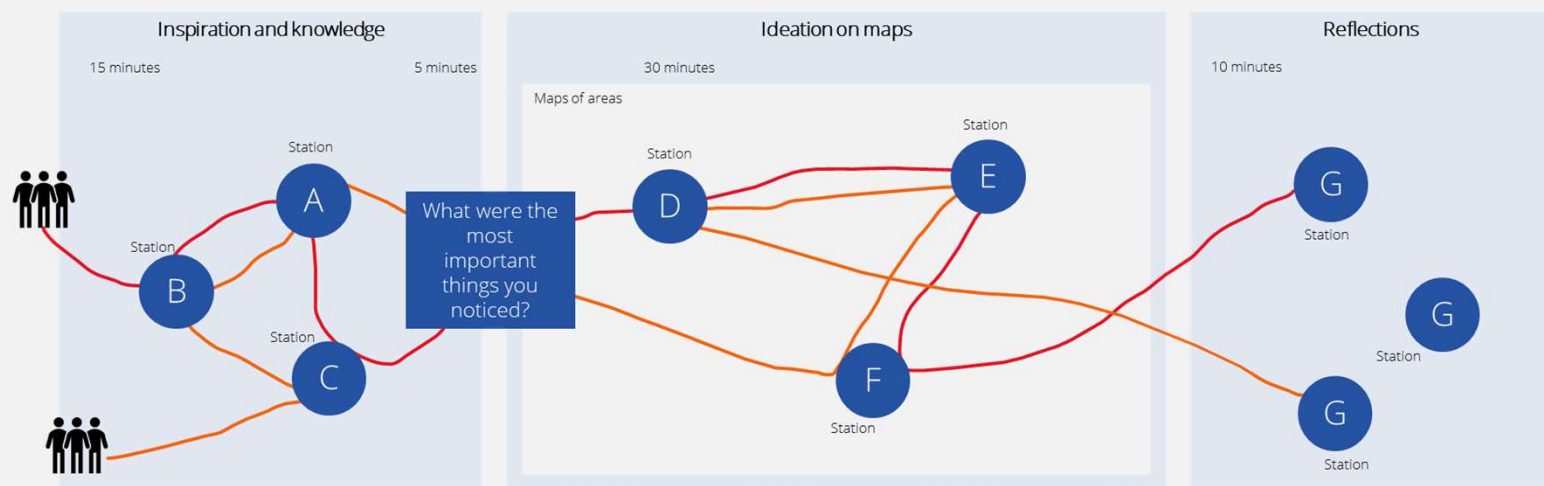
The workshop would need to cope with an unknown number of participants. Participants would be arriving and leaving at unspecified times in the afternoon and early evening.

Therefore, the workshop design was built on the following principles:

- The groups should visit stations in an arbitrary order to give flexibility in coping with high numbers
- Participant should be led in small groups
- Stations should be grouped to ensure an appropriate progression from gaining knowledge to ideating to reflecting.

The model below shows the workshop design as it would be followed by two groups being formed at the same time.

Notice that the workshop could also be facilitated as a shared experience for a group in a fixed timeframe for a committed and well-established group.



PLACEMENT OF CARDS

Cards with interventions

Cards are a great tool to facilitate ideation. Participants are assisted in starting their thought process in a desired direction with a short description that still leaves room for using imagination.

The cards used in Høje Taastrup Municipality were designed to be simple to understand and easy to produce. They contained a title, a symbol indicating the type of intervention, and a short description to give direction.

We used a Danish version of the URBiNAT Nature Based Solutions catalogue for the content of the interventions.

Participants would first select the interventions that were meaningful to them and discard the rest. They would then walk around the map with the facilitator to place them.



Translation: Firepit. A Firepit is built from stones and gravel, so the fire does not spread.

Thoughts behind placement

What can people do with the solution at that exact spot?

What will people feel when using it?

What does it do to the way people interact with each other in the area?

Reasoning from participants

The facilitator used a template to capture the thoughts behind the placement. The facilitator would ask questions and open a dialogue with the group, note down their thoughts, and validate the notes by reading them aloud and check whether the group agreed.

The questions are framed using the jobs-to-be-done framework of uncovering functional, emotional and relational reasons. They are formulated using simple words to cope with participants of different backgrounds.

The thoughts behind the placement are then attached to the map together with the intervention.

REFLECTIONS FROM PARTICIPANTS

Flip-chart

With all your contributions, what kind of area do you envision?

From your experience in the area, what does it take for your ideas to be respected and used in a good way, when they have been implemented?

Reflections from participants

At the end, participants were invited to reflect on their experiences. The reflection had three purposes:

1. Summarize contributions at a higher level to make sense of all the inputs
2. Further elicit insights for instance into their priorities and a deeper understanding of what motivates them.
3. Give ideas for implementation to increase the chances of successful interventions

Facilitators were ready with a flip chart to capture their thoughts and start a dialogue around the questions.

Conclusions from workshop

Based on inputs from citizens, Høje Taastrup Municipality is now better able to design appropriate interventions and focus on specific locations within the focus areas.

The table shows an example of different conclusions that can be drawn from the workshop.

Conclusions based on interpretations	Placement specific	Placement broad
Intervention specific	A shelter at an empty field of grass	Implement campfires in the area where people lack places to hang out at night.
Intervention broad	Use cosy interventions to increase the feeling of being safe at a specific path.	The area lacks places to hang out with friends and do low-involvement activities.

Observations and feedback

Participants gave positive feedback. Some observations in the feedback and from the workshop:

The cards were regarded as an easy and fun way of giving input

- The discussions were regarded as interesting and relevant
- The process of first selecting cards was valuable in setting up the group for the later ideation on the map.
- The method can easily be scaled down to be more manageable by using a smaller map for instance A3-papers from a normal printer.
- The method can easily be used in other contexts by changing the content of the intervention cards or be updated with more cards if new types of interventions emerges.

Evaluation

What worked?

What did not work?

Do you want to contribute in later stages? Contact info.

Ideas for other people or groups that should be included in the process?

