# Participatory Budgeting in the Indische Buurt

**Theme [ssh.2013.3.2-1][Social Innovation- Empowering People, changing societies]**
**Project Full Title: "Transformative Social Innovation Theory project"**
**Grant Agreement n. 613169**

# transformative social innovation theory

## NOTE:

This case study on Participatory Budgeting in the Indische Buurt, Amsterdam is part of a more encompassing TRANSIT case study report on participatory budgeting. In the overall report it constitutes chapter 5. The complete report includes an introduction, a methodological section, the analysis of a transnational network on participatory budgeting (the International Observatory onf Participatory Democracy), the analysis of a first local manifestation of participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre, Brazil, the analysis of a second local manifestation of participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt, Amsterdam, The Netherlands and an overall synthesis. The methodological considerations and an outline of the methods on which this Dutch case study is based are also outlined in the overall case study report on participatory budgeting.

**tran**sformative **s**ocial **i**nnovation **t**heory

# Table of contents

# **tran**sformative **s**ocial **i**nnovation **t**heory

## Foreword: the TRANSIT Research Project

**TRANSIT** (**TRAN**sformative **S**ocial **I**nnovation **T**heory) is an ambitious research project that will develop a theory of transformative social innovation which is about empowerment and change in society. It is co-funded by the European Union under the Seventh Framework Programme and runs for four years, from January 2014 until December 2017. TRANSIT aims to involve and encourage feedback from social entrepreneurs and innovators, policy makers and academics to develop a theory with practical relevance. The theory has three pillars: It will be based on, and grounded in, insights from other theories such as transition theory, social movement theory and institutional theory. Secondly, it will be based on in-depth empirical research, and finally it will be tested through cross-comparative research. The research project studies whether and how social innovation can bring about societal transformation and empowerment.

As part of the second phase of the in-depth empirical work, TRANSIT-researchers have studied 8 selected transnational networks and 2 local cases for each network (see Table on next page for an overview). This document reports on the case-study of the transnational **International Observatory on Participatory Democracy – Participatory Budgeting** and on two local cases: Participatory Budgeting in Porto Alegre, Brazil, and Participatory Budgeting in the Indische Buurt in Amsterdam in the Netherlands.

This case-study report was guided by three empirical research questions based upon a framework for Transformative Social Innovation Theory of the TRANSIT-project (see Figure 0-1[1]). The three questions concern:

1. **Emergence of Social Innovation**: How does social innovation emerge? How do social innovation initiatives, social innovation networks relate and develop through space and time?
2. **Transformative social innovation dynamics**: How do social innovations interact with/ contribute to transformative change in a social context?
3. **Agency in Transformative social innovation**: Where lies the agency in transformative social innovation processes? How are actors, social innovation initiatives and/or social innovation networks dis/empowered in transformative social innovation processes?

**Figure 0-1: Cognitive Map for second phase of in-depth empirical work for TRANSIT project**
*(Source: Wittmayer et al. 2015)*



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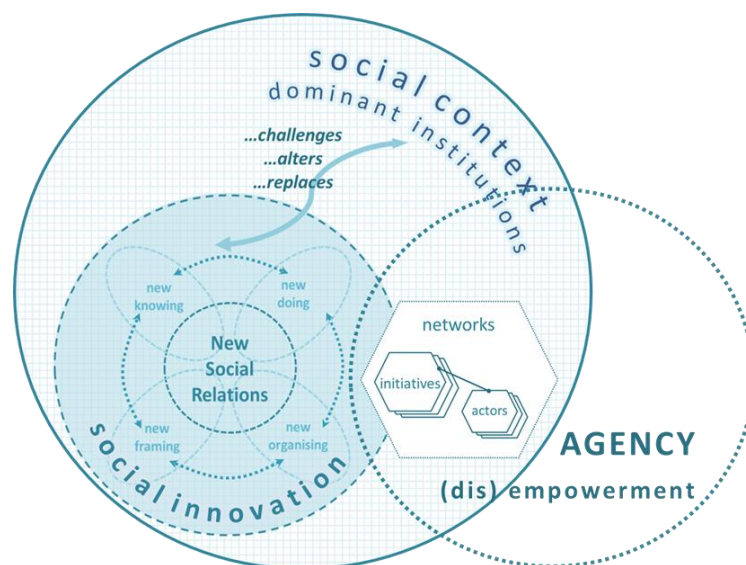
[1] For more information about this preliminary conceptual framework and underlying working definitions, see Haxeltine et al. 2015: http://bit.ly/1Z15KqS and Wittmayer et al. 2015: http://bit.ly/1IX7ND7

# transformative social innovation theory

| | Transnational Networks under study in TRANSIT project | Case Study Coordinator | Local Case 1 | Local Case 2 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **Slow Food** www.slowfood.com | UDC | ES – Vitoria (Basque country) slowfoodaraba.es \| UDC | DE – Freiburg \| BOKU |
| 2 | **Via Campesina** www.viacampesina.org | UNQ | ARG - MOCASE, Santiago del Estero \| UNQ | HU – Magosz \| ESSRG |
| 3 | **International Co-operative Alliance (Housing)** icahousing.coop | UNQ | ARG - Hogar Obrero \| UNQ | DE – Freiburg (Vauban) \| BOKU |
| 4 | **Int. Observatory for Participatory Democracy (Participatory budgeting)** www.oidp.net | UFRJ | BRA – Porto Alegre \| UFRJ | NL – Amsterdam \| DRIFT |
| 5 | **Shareable Network (Sharing Cities)** www.shareable.net | IHS | ES – Sharing City Barcelona \| IHS | NL – Sharing City Nijmegen \| AAU |
| 6 | **Living Labs** www.openlivinglabs.eu | IHS | NL- Eindhoven Living Lab \| IHS | UK - Manchester Living Lab \| SPRU |
| 7 | **Basic Income** www.basicincome.org | UM | DE - Netzwerk Grundeinkommen \| UM | NL – Dutch Network for Basic Income \| ULB |
| 8 | **Seed Freedom Movement** Network bricolage (5 networks) | ESSRG | HU – Maghaz \| ESSRG | UK - Seedy Sunday Brighton \| SPRU |

*Table 0-1. Overview of Transnational Networks under Study in Phase 2 of the TRANSIT research project*

## Position of this Report in the TRANSIT project:

This basic case-study report is part of the 2nd empirical phase of TRANSIT, and will be used as:

- Input for a cross-comparative analysis of all 20 networks and 40 local cases (of both phase 1 and phase 2 of the in-depth empirical work), resulting in a TRANSIT-deliverable that is published on the TRANSIT-website
- Basis for a short summary of each network and local case, which is published on the TRANSIT-website
- Possibly, a final version of the case-study report, published on the TRANSIT-website
- Basis for a essays/ blogs/ policy briefs to be published via the TRANSIT website
- Basis for academic papers to be submitted and published in scientific journals

## More information on the TRANSIT-project:

www.transitsocialinnovation.eu
www.facebook.com/transitsocialinnovation
Twitter: @TransitSI

# 5   Local Initiative #2: Participatory Budgeting in the Indische Buurt, Amsterdam

Participatory Budgeting in the Netherlands is not one thing but rather a broad term covering the involvement of citizens in municipal budgeting, which can take several forms and is done for several reasons and with different goals (see Table 5.1 for an overview of different forms). In an introductory publication for the Dutch context, Hofman (2011: 6 [2] ) defines participatory budgeting as "*the involvement of citizens in the distribution of budgets*", suggests to distinguish between three forms and introduces them along with the cities they originate from:

1)  Citizens set up the budget themselves (Porto Alegre, Brazil);
2)  Citizens assess the existing budget and adjust (Christchurch, New Zealand) and
3)  Citizens can make choices for a specific limited part of the budget (Deventer, The Netherlands).

The goals are also different, namely administrative legitimacy and transparency in Porto Alegre or increasing the responsibility of citizens in developing ideas and making choices with regard to the public budget in the Netherlands (Hofman 2011). The Netherlands seems to be a frontrunner worldwide regarding the third form: 46% of Dutch municipalities make use of village or neighbourhood budgets (IPP, quoted in Engbersen et al. 2010: 58). Its use is mainly related to issues of citizen dialogue, participation and government budget cuts (Hofman 2011, 2013).

In an evaluation publication on participatory budgeting practices in the Netherlands, also other forms of participatory budgeting are mentioned, namely quality-of-life-funds, voucher systems and budget advice for the neighbourhood (Engbersen et al. 2010). These are distinguished along various factors by different authors: 1) the degree of power citizens have in actually influencing the budget, 2) the democratic quality of the involvement process (ranging from more participatory to more representative approaches), and/or 3) the strength of the method to produce initiatives (ranging from self-organized citizen-led to municipality-led) (cf. Engbersen et al. 2010, Hofman 2011).

A review of secondary literature on different forms of citizen involvement in municipal budgeting in the Netherlands shows that this form of citizen participation has gained momentum around 2009/2010. This is when a number of experiments were financed by the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations with citizen budgets and voucher systems (Engbersen et al. 2010). This first wave of attention has been related to the national coalition agreement 'Freedom and Responsibility' with its focus on redistributing tasks and responsibilities between state and society in 2010 (Engbersen et al. 2010). It was followed by a second wave in 2014 along with the municipal elections across the Netherlands that same year. An analysis of municipal coalition agreements after the elections showed that participatory budgeting (or citizen budgeting) was related to realizing new relations between government and citizens and increased transparency (Engbersen and van Dijken 2014). It has also been identified as a way of dealing with enormous municipal budget cuts in the aftermath of the economic crisis of 2008 (Hofman 2011).

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[2] Dutch original: "*het betrekken van burgers bij het verdelen van budgetten*"

# transformative social innovation theory

*Table 5.1: Overview of different forms of participatory budgeting in the Netherlands*

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|---|---|
| **Participatory budgeting** | Participatory budgeting is a decision-making process in which citizens think along and negotiate about the use and distribution of public money (of e.g. municipalities or other public bodies). This brings citizens closer to decision making with regard to the municipal budget. *(cf. Hofman 2011: 8, 2013)* <br><br> *In the Dutch discourse different words are used to refer to an umbrella concept of participatory budgeting, which then covers different forms such as those outlined in this table. Most commonly used terms are 'burgerbegroting' which translates directly as 'citizen budget' (Hofman 2011, 2013) and 'bewonersbudget' which translates as 'inhabitants budget' (Engbersen 2011). Also the terms 'participatiebudgettering' (participation budgeting) and 'participatief begroten' (particitatory budgeting) are used (Engbersen 2011).* |
| **Voucher system** | As part of the voucher systems (Dutch original: voucher systeem), citizens can issue proposals for initiatives they consider important. The intention is to increase the direct influence of citizens on the spending of money. Interesting is that the control over the distribution of money, the assessment of initiatives and the activation of inhabitants is led by a management group consisting of inhabitants. This system was revived in the context of a national initiative to improve some of the most deprived neighbourhoods in the Netherlands. *(cf. Engbersen et al 2010)* |
| **Neighbourhood budgets** | A neighbourhood budget (Dutch original: wijkbudget) refers to a specific limited budget that inhabitants can spend on neighbourhood level. It is implemented differently in various neighbourhoods and villages and the process of arriving at a common neighbourhood budget is usually driven by civil servants. At times, the neighbourhood reacts to planned policies and projects, and at other times the inhabitants can first feed in their needs, ambitions and plans. The goals are increased responsibility of inhabitants, development of ideas and commitment for policies. This type of budgeting is very popular in the Netherlands and was also used to involve inhabitants in decisions with regards to budget cuts. *(cf. Engbersen et al. 2010, Hofman 2011, 2013)* |
| **Quality-of-life-funds** | For the 'quality-of-life-funds' (Dutch original: leefbaarheidsfonds), municipalities (but also other public bodies such as housing cooperations) provide a fund and stimulate inhabitants to apply with ideas and projects. The actual selection process is non-participatory and mostly non-transparent. *(cf. Engbersen et al. 2010)* |
| **Budget advice for the neighbourhood** | Budget advice for the neighbourhood (Dutch original: budgetadvies voor de wijk) includes that a number of parties on the neighbourhood level (formal citizen organisations and professionals) exchange ideas and attune these. *(cf. Engbersen et al. 2010)* |
| **Budget monitoring** | Budget monitoring (Dutch original: budgetmonitoring) focuses on monitoring the public expenditure initially based on ideas of human rights, social justice and democracy. Citizens receive a training on public budgeting and its relation with human rights and then check the budgeting as well as the annual accounts. They also provide the municipal council with a prioritisation and an alternative budget estimate. *(cf. Cadat 2012, CBB and INESC 2012, CBB 2014, Mertens 2011)* |
| **Neighbourhood budget instrument** | Neighbourhood budget instrument (Dutch original: buurtbegroting) is a method for translating budgets from the central municipal level to the level of the neighbourhood and describe it along a number of policy areas indicating the goals, priorities and planned and budgeted activities for each area. The information is publicly shared and available via a searchable database on a website. *(cf. CBB 2014b, Van Roosmalen 2014)* |

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In the Dutch context, forms of participatory budgeting are socially innovative as they have the potential for renewing social relations between citizens and civil servants and/or policymakers as well as between citizens and elected municipal representatives (e.g. Aldermen). As outlined by Engbersen et al. (2010: 35[3]) in relation to general inhabitants budgets: "*Working with inhabitants budgets asks for a turn towards a municipal bureaucracy which stands next to the citizen instead of opposite him/her*". Participatory budgeting constitutes a new process of decision making for municipal budget allocation (doing), it includes hitherto neglected actors (i.e. citizens) in this process (organizing) and thereby relies on different kinds of knowledge and competences to draw up the budget (knowing). Such a process is also accompanied by new ways of framing, such as e.g. portraying the municipal budget as a terrain for citizen participation, for human rights or for dealing with government budget cuts. By focusing on one specific case of participatory budgeting in a neighbourhood in Amsterdam, we will further scrutinize and detail these aspects.

## 5.1  Emergence of Participatory Budgeting in Indische Buurt, Amsterdam

### 5.1.1  Participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt as social innovation

This report focuses on the Indische Buurt in Amsterdam as loci of the social innovation. The city of Amsterdam is divided into districts and within each district a number of neighbourhoods are distinguished. The Indische Buurt (English: Indonesian Neighbourhood) is a neighbourhood in the Amsterdam district Amsterdam-Oost (English: Amsterdam-East)[4]. In the Indische Buurt, there are two coinciding streams with regard to a more transparent public budget. On the one hand, there is a community-initiated stream that puts *budget monitoring* on the agenda, and on the other hand a municipality-initiated stream focusing on the *neighbourhood budget instrument*. While the former focuses on increasing citizen participation in municipal budgeting, the latter focuses on re-organizing local administrations in a way that makes budgets more transparent both inside for the administration and outside to the public. Taken together, they make for more budget transparency and accountability on the local level and strengthen participatory democracy by increasing the awareness, knowledge and influence of citizens regarding the budget for their neighbourhood. These two streams can be said to have emerged independently but co-evolved and proofed to be synergetic as an alternative local democratic practice. This coproduction, overlap and cross-pollination is outlined in Table 5.3 which distinguishes also between different iterations of the participatory budgeting as this was also done by our interviewees.

In the following, we first outline the specific form that budget monitoring (incl. its goals and activities) takes in the Indische Buurt (section 5.1.1.1) before we turn to do the same for the neighbourhood budget instrument (section 5.1.1.2). Due to the two streams being so intertwined in their current status, we analyse them together as one SI-initiative, i.e. a collective of actors that (aims to) work(s) on ideas, objects and/or activities that are socially innovative (cf. Wittmayer et

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[3] Dutch original: "*Werken met bewonersbudgetten vergt een omslag naar een ambtelijke organisatie die naast de burger staat in plaats van ertegenover*"

[4] We use the word 'district' in two ways: on the one hand to designate an area and on the other (and more frequently) to refer to the combination of district administration and district political representation (before 2014: District Council, as of 2014: District Board Commission). However, whenever we specifically refer to one of the three, we use the more specific term.

al. 2015a). We refer to this SI-initiative as 'participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt' (section 5.1.1.3). However, where it makes sense we still distinguish between the two.

### 5.1.1.1 Budget monitoring in the Indische Buurt

In 2011, budget monitoring in the Indische Buurt was introduced by the Institute of Socioeconomic Studies (INESC), a Brazilian NGO aiming to deepen democracy and promoting human rights, via a reversed development programme[5] of Oxfam Novib, called E-Motive (CBB and INESC 2012). In Brazil, budget monitoring is strongly framed in a human rights discourse, and focuses on governmental transparency, social justice, fighting corruption and gaining political influence (Cardoso et al. 2013, Gündüz and Delzenne 2013, Mertens 2011, Smouter 2014).

*Figure 5.1: Roadmap budget monitoring Indische Buurt (Source: CBB and INESC 2012: 18)*



In the Indische Buurt, the Centre for Budget Monitoring and Citizen Participation (CBB) was formed by active citizens and social workers to translate budget monitoring to the Dutch context. In the Netherlands, the main emphasis is on social justice and civic participation (Gündüz and Delzenne 2013, Mertens 2011). According to Gündüz and Delzenne (2013), both previously active at CBB: "*Budget monitoring contributes to civic participation because it facilitates citizens to screen, assess, and actively participate in decisions on public policy-making and government expenditure. Budget monitoring can act as a catalyst to start dialogues between citizens and local government about priorities, needs and tackling problems and therefore serves the right to ambition*''. As such it is also described "*as an instrument that provides the citizen with access to financial information, promotes civic participation in policy making, and controls or if desired influences, the spending of the agreed upon budget of different governmental organisations*" (CBB 2014b: 2[6]). According to the Director of the CBB, budget monitoring is not so much a technical tool to discover and make transparent complete budgets, but a tool for organizing commitment and involvement of citizens: "*we intend to bridge the commitment between citizen and government*" (Interviewee 3[7]). Budget

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[5] With reversed development, the idea is expressed that the Global North learns from the Global South, rather than the more traditional conceptualisation of development work where the direction of the flow of ideas and practices is from North to South (cp. Mertens 2011, see also section 5.2.1.6)

[6] Dutch original: *"als een instrument om de burger toegang te geven tot financiële informatie, om maatschappelijke participatie in de beleidsvorming te bevorderen, en om de besteding van de vastgestelde begrotingen van verschillende overheidsorganisaties te controleren en desgewenst te beïnvloeden"*

[7] Dutch original: *"Wat wij beogen, is de betrokkenheid tussen burger en overheid te overbruggen"*

monitoring is useful for groups of citizens who "*want to get a hold on the spending of all available resources in their streets and neighbourhoods*" (Mertens 2011: 55[8]). The overall goal of budget monitoring as outlined by CBB and INESC (2012: 19) is "t*o establish concrete relations between public budget, guarantee of rights and confrontation of social inequalities*".

This translation to the Dutch context was not a one-off thing, but an iterative process of doing and adapting. A first roadmap for budget monitoring was developed by INESC and the CBB together with E-Motive, University of Applied Science Amsterdam and knowledge institute Movisie in 2012 (CBB and INESC 2012, CBB 2014b). This roadmap guided the first iteration of budget monitoring in 2012/2013 and consisted of five steps (see Figure 5.1 for an overview of the steps; CBB and INESC 2012, Gündüz and Delzenne 2013). These steps include the localizing and analysing of public budget data. This was followed by the involvement of citizens who received a training on topics such as the budget cycle, annual report and annual budget as well as ways of influencing politics and making a plan for the neighbourhood. In step 4, the participants used a questionnaire to get to know the priorities of the neighbourhood, which were documented in a Citizens Perspective Paper and used to influence public and political debate. As part of the first iteration, a citizen spoke to the District Council commenting on the public budget. As this is the first time that this is happening, it is considered "*a unique moment in the Netherlands*" (Gündüz and Delzenne 2013) and it is reasoned that it "*led to a change in the way the local government determines the priorities of the prospective budget for 2014; namely co-creation with citizens.*" (ibid.).

*Figure 5.2: Adapted version of the roadmap of budget monitoring (Source: CBB 2014b: 8)*



To date, budget monitoring took place in three consecutive years and currently preparations for the fourth iteration (2015/2016) are ongoing (Interviewee 5, see Table 5.3 for an overview of the overall developments). The roadmap of budget monitoring has been adapted since, a development which can also be linked to the initiative by the district Amsterdam-Oost to draw up a neighbourhood budget instrument and the existence of a document that outlines the priorities of the neighbourhood, the Citizen Perspective Paper (see Figure 5.2 for an adapted version of the roadmap steps). The budget monitoring iterations are also increasingly in line with the municipal budget cycle, and the outcomes are increasingly taken up by the district. The third iteration resulted in an 'Agenda of the Neighbourhood', according to a trainer and developer of

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[8] Dutch original: *"grip willen krijgen op de besteding van de totaal beschikbare middelen in hun buurten en wijken"*

the CBB, "*The Agenda of the Neighbourhood shows the topics that citizens find interesting, where money plays a role and where we see a chance to organize it differently*" (Interviewee 10[9]).

### 5.1.1.2   Neighbourhood budget instrument in the Indische Buurt

While for budget monitoring, citizens and community members are the driving force, the neighbourhood budget instrument is initiated by the district Amsterdam-Oost. As of 2010, there was both political will as well as administrative initiative. An Alderman, Jeroen van Spijk argued for transparency of public budgets (Moerkamp 2014, Smouter 2014) and two civil servants (one from the financial department and one from neighbourhood management) looked into the possibility of breaking down the municipal budget, which is organized according to policy areas (such as Youth and Growing Up, Green and Public Space and Economy) to the neighbourhood level. The motive for the latter was that activities and plans focused on the neighbourhood level but no corresponding budget breakdown was available (Interviewees 1, 2, CBB 2014b). The efforts started in 2011, with more sophisticated results following in 2012. As outlined by one of the civil servants: "*Together we developed the method 'neighbourhood budget instrument'. We wanted to provide insights into public money streams to businesses and inhabitants. Our intention is to make visible what we as municipality are spending money on.*" (I. Stoelinga, quoted in Van Roosmalen 2014[10]). In May 2012, together with the Perspective Nota 2013, a framework for piloting the neighbourhood budget instrument was presented – the intention was not to replace the actual budget but to provide information in different ways (Stadsdeel Oost 2012). As outlined in the framework: "*This neighbourhood budget instrument, divided along different policy areas, offers additional information about the activities developed in the neighbourhood by district Amsterdam-Oost. But it offers more. Each policy area is elaborated with operational, financial and neighbourhood related information. Together with other relevant information about the neighbourhood, we try to offer the most complete picture possible of the policy areas in the neighbourhood.*" (Stadsdeel Oost 2012: 2[11]).

Aims of the neighbourhood budget instrument are to increase understanding and the transparency of government budgets (CBB 2014b, Van Roosmalen 2014). Using the neighbourhood budget instrument provides insights into budgets for the neighbourhood for those within the municipal organisation: "*The goal was to provide insights into which budgets there are for the neighbourhood within the own organisation. We have a big budget, which is prepared along policy areas: what is there for the young, what is there for green spaces? But how can you take care that you know which budget is available for the young, for green and eventually in total for the neighbourhood*" (Interviewee 4[12]). It also helps the municipality to transparently account for its activities to the public. However, it can also lead to new dynamics between citizens and

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[9] Dutch original: "*Buurtagenda laat in wezen zien wat zijn nou de thema's die bewoners interessant vinden, waar geld een rol bij heeft en waar we perspectief zien om het anders te organiseren*".

[10] Dutch original: "*Samen ontwikkelden we de methodiek 'Buurtbegroting'. We wilden gemeentelijke geldstromen inzichtelijk maken aan bedrijven en bewoners. Wat we hiermee beogen, is dat mensen zien waar wij als gemeente geld aan uitgeven*"

[11] Dutch original: "*Deze buurtbegroting biedt uitgesplitst naar diverse programma's extra informatie over wat het stadsdeel Oost aan activiteiten ontplooit in de buurt. Maar het biedt meer. Elk programma is uitgewerkt met operationele, financiële en buurtinformatie. Tezamen met andere relevante informatie over de buurt proberen we zo een volledig mogelijk beeld van de programma's in een buurt te bieden.*"

[12] Dutch original: "*Met als doel om te kijken hoe [...] je per buurt inzichtelijk maakt welke budgeten er allemaal rond gaan [...] vooral eerst vanuit de eigen organisatie. We hebben een grote begroting, die is nog heel erg opgesteld vanuit de lijnen: wat is er voor jongeren, wat is er voor groen? Maar hoe kan je zorgen dat [...] je weet wat er in de buurt aan budget beschikbaar voor groen en voor jongeren, en uiteindelijk in totaal.*"

# **tran**sformative **s**ocial **i**nnovation **t**heory

*Figure 5.3a: Infographic on the budgets for policy areas in Amsterdam-Oost 2013 (Source: CBB and INESC 2012: 20)*
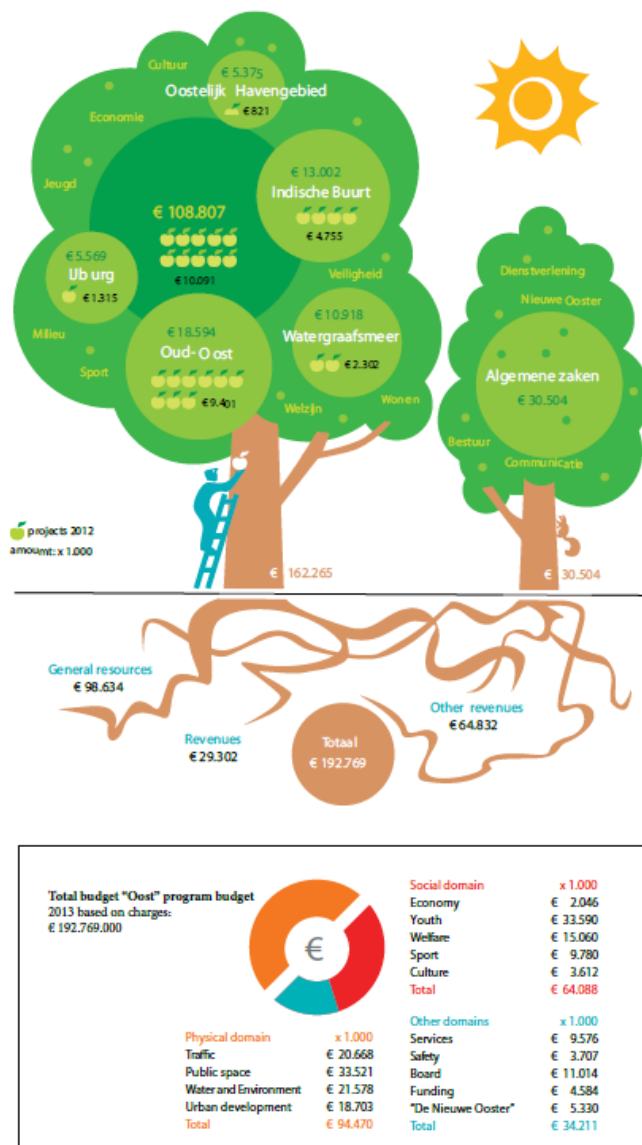


*Figure 5.3b: Focus map as part of the Perspective Nota 2014 outlining the municipal budget for the policy area 'Youth and Growing up' in Amsterdam-Oost (Source: Dagelijks Bestuur Stadsdeel Oost 2013)*
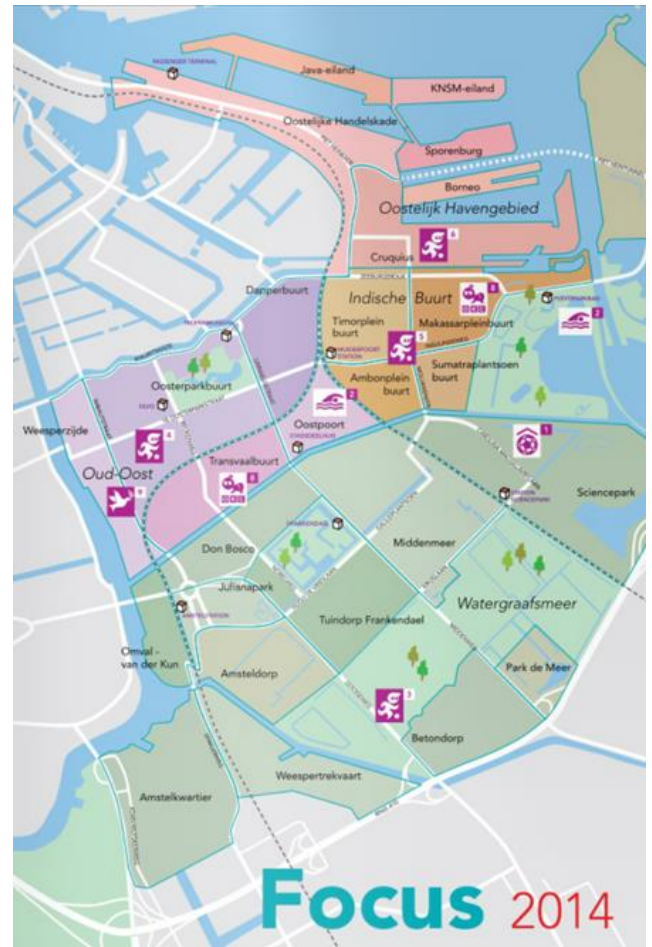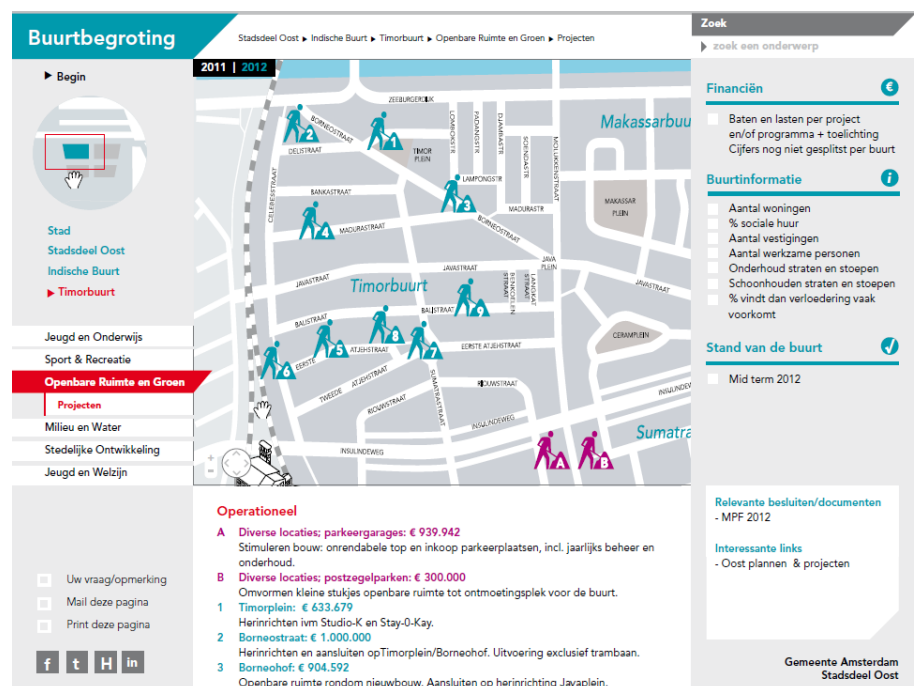


*Figure 5.3c: Framework of the pilot for the neighbourhood budget instrument 2012 (Source: Stadsdeel Oost 2012)*

municipality in that it eases efforts by citizens, entrepreneurs and other stakeholders to critically assess the municipality and more easily exert their influence (as is done through budget monitoring).

The neighbourhood budget instrument is referred to as both, a method (I. Stoelinga, in Van Roosmalen 2014) and an online application (CBB 2014b). As a method it helps to collect data, break down budgets from central municipal and district municipal level to neighbourhood level, analyse and present it. As an online application it helps in opening up the conversation about the actual activities with regard to specific topics. However, as pointed out by two civil servants who were involved from the beginning, the neighbourhood budget instrument is more than just making data transparent, it is also about arranging data in specific ways, thus answering questions such as: what to include or how to cluster (Interviewees 1, 2).

*Figure 5.4: Website of the neighbourhood budget instrument of the District Amsterdam-East*
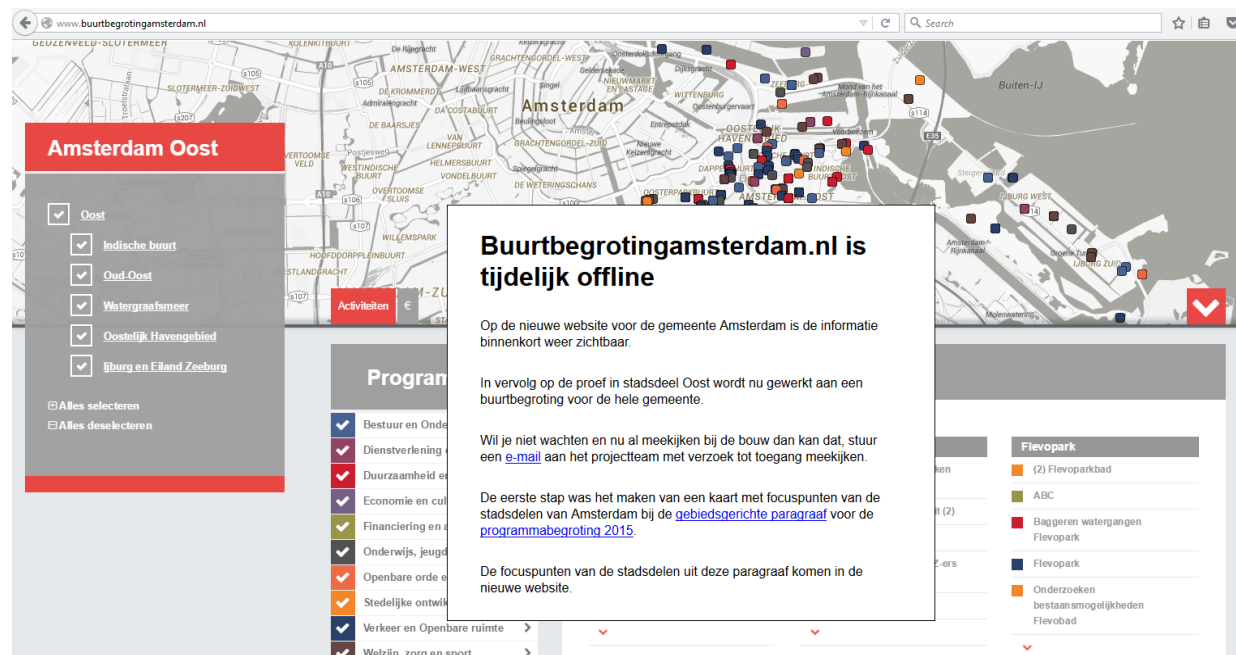


Also, the neighbourhood budget instrument is in constant development. Based on the version 1.0 of the online application in 2012, the two responsible civil servants developed a method to clarify what is needed (activity), why it is needed (challenge) and who is acting with what (resources) in a specific neighbourhood (Interviewees 1, 2). The budget information in the next version (version 1.1) was described along a number of policy areas indicating the goals, priorities and planned and budgeted activities for each domain (CBB 2014b). In doing so, the district Amsterdam-Oost is considered the first local government, who has made an area-focused budget (CBB 2014b). The information was presented online[13] using numbers, images and texts, where users can search information about their neighbourhood and also download reports (CBB 2014b). However, during the fieldwork period, the site had been down (see Figure 5.4) mainly due to the reorganisation of the Municipality of Amsterdam. Owing to this reorganisation, the finances of the municipality became centralized with activities related to the neighbourhood budget instrument are now being part of the central municipal activities. There are plans to launch a neighbourhood budget instrument website for all neighbourhoods (rather than only for those in the district Amsterdam-Oost). Also, the follow up version of the online tool (version 2.0)

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[13] The website is: oost.buurbegrotingamsterdam.nl (accessed September 2015)

is still offline at the time of writing as it aimed to serve too many target groups (municipal employees and citizens) and needs a revision before the next online launch (Interviewee 1).

In first instance, the neighbourhood budget instrument is thus an internal process within the municipal organisation to break down their budget to the neighbourhood level. The first online application (version 1.0) was produced without citizen involvement (Interviewee 1, Gündüz and Delzenne 2013). After the first online tool was refined and internal administrative support increased the next version (version 1.1) was produced in co-creation between citizens and district administration – which is where the dilution of the two streams that both form part of the SI of participatory budgeting becomes apparent: neighbourhood budget instrument and budget monitoring (Cadat 2015, CBB 2014a, 2014b, Moerkamp 2014).

### 5.1.1.3   Participatory budgeting as a social innovation

Both initiatives, budget monitoring and the neighbourhood budget instrument can be said to have developed first in parallel and then in close collaboration (see also the timeline in Table 5.3). Both started round 2010, when developments leading up to the neighbourhood budget instrument started within the district, on political initiative by an Alderman and administrative initiative of two civil servants and when engaged citizens of the neighbourhood learned about budget monitoring and its practice in Brazil. During the first round of budget monitoring, the contact with the district administration was difficult as the latter was not considered very cooperative (Interviewees 3, 4, Gündüz and Delzenne 2013). Or as put by a civil servant: "*They wanted to talk with the district in 2010/2011 and nobody at the district administration picked up the phone*" (Interviewee 1).

However, this changed quickly and already in the second iteration of budget monitoring, the neighbourhood budget instrument was tested as part of the process (CBB 2014b). Also the role of the district administration was greater: it helped citizens in formulating questions that could be answered with such a tool and to manage expectations through increasing knowledge about internal municipal working routines (Interviewee 1). In the latest iteration, the collaboration between district administration and citizens in the budget monitoring process was close and the results translated back to the administration (Interviewee 4, 5) – despite the fact that the neighbourhood budget instrument underwent a difficult period. This was due to a reorganisation of the Amsterdam municipal organisation which included a shift of budget responsibilities which made it difficult to get hold of data on the neighbourhood level (see section 5.2.1.2) and due to the increasing complexity of the online application as it wanted to serve too many target groups (Interviewee 1).

In Table 5.2 and Figure 5.5 we are looking at participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt and the extent to which it can be said to be a social innovation, i.e. referring to ideas, objects and/or activities which imply/demonstrate a change in social relations associated with new ways of – and/or new combinations between - doing, organising, framing and knowing (cf. Wittmayer et al. 2015a).

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*Table 5.2: Participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt as social innovation*

| | Budget monitoring | Neighbourhood budget instrument |
|---|---|---|
| New ways of doing *(technologies, practices, materiality)* | - Methodology for monitoring municipal budget and influencing policy<br>- Alternative municipal budget is drawn up through participatory process<br>- Citizens get involved in budgeting: learn about public budget, prioritize issues, draw up a citizen budget, presenting this budget; possibly to control the budget | - Budget is drawn up at the level of areas (i.e. neighbourhoods, districts) next to municipal level<br>- Budget information is arranged to be easily understandable (goals, priorities and activities per year per domain)<br>- Budget information is accessible online<br>- Civil servants orient their work along the available budget for their area |
| | - Collaboration of citizens and civil servants in drawing up area plan based on area agenda (municipality-led) and citizen agenda (citizen-led outcome of budget monitoring) | |
| New ways of knowing *(knowledge, competence, learning, appraisal)* | - Citizens gain knowledge about municipal processes (e.g. public budgeting, ways for influencing policy, human rights basis)<br>- Citizens gain skills through participatory process (e.g. negotiation skills, budgeting skills)<br>- Development of budget monitoring method | - Budget information is available on area level<br>- Development of the neighbourhood budget instrument method |
| | - Working with different kinds of knowledge and competences to collaboratively draw up an alternative municipal budget | |
| New ways of framing *(meanings, visions, images)* | - Linking public budget with human rights and social justice<br>- Opening up the municipal budget as a terrain for citizen participation and for human rights | - Linking public budget with transparency both within and outside the municipal organisation |
| | - Participatory budgeting as method for realizing participatory democracy, 'participation society' and new relations between government and citizenry | |
| New ways of organizing *(mode of organisation, governance)* | - Participatory process for monitoring and controlling budgets<br>- Inclusion of new actors in public budgeting process | - Using public budget as an interface for government-citizen interaction<br>- Neighbourhood budget instrument as a method requiring different working routines at local governments |
| | - Participatory budgeting as a collaborative or co-creative process between local government and citizenry to work on a budget proposal and/or area plan for the council requires new modes of organizing internal processes and participatory processes including their embedding in municipal procedures | |

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*Figure 5.5: Participatory budgeting as social innovation*



## 5.1.2 Relation local initiative and network

The link between the participatory budgeting activities in the Indische Buurt and the OIDP network are very weak. There is a formal link between the two through the Makkassarplein community, one of the four active citizen groups in the Indische Buurt. The Makkassarplein community is associate member of the OIDP and as such listed on their website.

The Makassarplein community, like the other citizen groups and organisations in the Indische Buurt, is also engaged in the budget monitoring. One of its board members has been very active in the first and second iteration as well as through publishing about it (Cadat 2012, 2014, 2015, Interviewee 6). They became member of OIDP to exchange practical and theoretical knowledge and experiences as well as for exchange and networking. Online platforms are considered a "*nice digital hold on*", while not asking for in-depth commitment (Interviewee 6[14]). However, there have not been any real-world effects of this membership other than the contact with us TRANSIT researchers, as pointed out by the board member (Interviewee 6). It can thus be said that the OIDP does not have any influence on the daily practice of the Makkasarplein community nor of the participatory budgeting activities in the Indische Buurt.

However, other networking that took place is the one with INESC. INESC itself is also part of a number of national and international human rights networks, such as Social Watch, International Budget Partnership (IBP), Dhesca Platform Brazil - the Brazilian chapter of the PIDDDH - Inter-American Platform on Human Rights, Democracy and Development (Cardoso et al. 2013).

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[14] Dutch original: "*mooie digitale houvast*"

# **tran**sformative **s**ocial **i**nnovation **t**heory

*Table 5.3: Timeline of the developments of participatory budgeting (including budget monitoring and neighbourhood budget instrument) in the Indische Buurt*

| Year/ Period | Important activities / changes /milestones in budget monitoring | Important activities / changes /milestones in the neighbourhood budget instrument | Sources |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Start-up and preparation phase** Merger of Amsterdam city districts | | | |
| 2010 | The idea of budget monitoring was introduced in the Indische Buurt via the innovation programme E-Motive by Oxfam Novib Start of the collaboration between INESC and a group of social entrepreneurs and active citizens in the Indische Buurt | 05/2010: the 14 districts of Amsterdam merge to become 7 districts, one of which is Amsterdam-Oost (merger of former independent districts Zeeburg and Oost/Watergraafsmeer) In Amsterdam-Oost, one Alderman is responsible for both Finance and Participation (Jeroen van Spijk) In one of the neighbourhoods of Amsterdam Oost (Watergraafsmeer), civil servants started experimenting with area-focused working | Gündüz and Delzenne 2013; Cadat 2012; CBB and INESC 2012; Interviewee 1 |
| 2011 | First travel of 2 Dutch representatives to Brazil to meet INESC team and learn about budget monitoring; this exchange continues throughout the year | Aldermen van Spijk promoted ideas on transparency and a civil servant of the finance department was internally working on the implementation of these ideas Extra pages added to the district budget 2012 with neighbourhood related information to increase transparency | Gündüz and Delzenne 2013; CBB and INESC 2012; Interviewee 1 |
| 06/2011 | Budget monitoring conference in Amsterdam, for community members and civil servants to deepen understanding of budget monitoring, on occasion of visit by INESC to Amsterdam | | CBB and INESC 2012 |
| 11/2011 | Travel of 3 community spokespersons accompanied by two social entrepreneurs to Brasilia, Brazil for training on budget monitoring | | CBB and INESC 2012 |
| 12/2011 | Launch of Centre for Budget monitoring and Citizen Participation (CBB) as a result of the year-long cooperation between active citizens and social workers with the aim to apply budget monitoring in the Indische Buurt | | Cadat 2015; Gündüz and Delzenne 2013; CBB and INESC 2012 |
| **Iteration 1: Developing budget monitoring roadmap and start of the neighbourhood budget instrument initiative** | | | |

# **tran**sformative **s**ocial **i**nnovation **t**heory

| Date | | Description | References |
|---|---|---|---|
| 02/2012 | | | A resolution called Participation 2.0 was accepted by the district council of Amsterdam East compelling the district's board to start a pilot of providing financial data online. | Cadat 2012; Stadsdeel Oost 2012 |
| 2012 | Pilot project of 12 months (start and end date unclear):<br>- realized by CBB in collaboration with E-motive, University of Applied Science Amsterdam, Movisie and members of local communities in the neighbourhood | Start of collaboration between civil servants of finance department and of neighbourhood management department on issues of open data and transparency | Gündüz and Delzenne 2013; CBB 2014b |
| 03-06/2012 | Roadmap budget monitoring developed (see Figure 5.1) and implementation started<br>- Budget monitoring roadmap methodology formally developed by University of Applied Science Amsterdam, INESC and the CBB together with E-Motive and Movisie<br>- Roadmap Phase 1 and 2 prepared by the CBB: the localization and analysis of budgets | | Cadat 2012; CBB and INESC 2012; Gündüz and Delzenne 2013 |
| 05 – 06/ 2012 | Roadmap Phase 3: a series of trainings for citizens focusing on budget cycle, annual report, and annual budget as well as the practice and theory of budget monitoring in Brazil. The group compared the budgets of 2011 and 2013.<br>Roadmap Phase 4: the group surveyed 150 inhabitants and analysed the results: there was a clear priority for projects for youngsters without school or work, supporting people in need and elderly. Drawing up of a citizens' perspective paper (see below). | Start collaboration with citizens working on budget monitoring: district administration provided information in the form of infographics (see Figure 5.3a)<br>Publication of brochure "Window to the neighbourhood" as annex to the Perspective Nota 2013 of the district, outlining the framework for the first pilot of the neighbourhood budget instrument for the Indische Buurt (see Figure 5.3c). | Gündüz and Delzenne 2013; CBB and INESC 2012; Interviewee 1 |
| 06/2012 | Roadmap Phase 5 including a public speech by Noureddine Oulad el Hadj Sallam (Participant Budget Monitoring) during the meeting of the Council Committee Social of the district Amsterdam-Oost addressing the budget 2013 | | Gündüz and Delzenne 2013; |
| 09/2012 | Activating neighbourhood research (surveys about inhabitants' perspectives on the neighbourhood) in collaboration between citizens and civil servants of the district Amsterdam-Oost during the 'Week of the Indische Buurt'.<br>Consolidation of the survey results by the Indische Buurt Community (a collaboration of citizen groups and organisations in the Indische Buurt) into a proposal, which was presented to the District Council and found its way into the neighbourhood budget instrument for 2014 | | CBB 2014b |
| 10/2012 | Citizens' perspective paper 2013-2014<br>- Future perspective for the Indische Buurt Communities outlining developments, challenges, priorities, opportunities and the role of inhabitants. The four top priorities are: employment, community, care, public space. The inhabitants made propositions to influence and support the district in budgeting (e.g. taking note of the needed budget cuts). | Version 1.0 of the neighbourhood budget instrument online<br>- District launched an online application with the budget for the neighbourhood based on the framework outlined in the 'Window to the neighbourhood' brochure. The website was not produced in collaboration with citizens, but is an outcome of internal municipal efforts for more transparency. | Gündüz and Delzenne 2013; Interviewee 1, 5; CBB 2014, 2014b; Burgerperspectieven nota 2012 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | - This paper has been send to the District Council as an official letter requiring an official answer (Dutch: raadsadres).<br>- City council approves resolutions and amendments enabling the implementation of the citizens' budget (originating from the citizens perspective paper) to be part of the city budget 2014 (exact date unknown) | | |
| 11/2012 | | Refinement of methodology underlying the neighbourhood budget instrument: focus is on data regarding what is needed (activity), why it is needed (challenge) and who is acting with what (resources) | Interviewee 1 |
| 05/2013 | | The Perspective Nota 2014 of the district is enriched with 'focus maps' (see Figure 5.3b for an example). It is the start for an integration of the budgeting according to policy areas and the focus on neighbourhoods. | Interviewee 1 |
| 09/2013 | | Version 1.1 of the neighbourhood budget instrument online: It is based on the refined methodology. The breakdowns of central and district municipal budgets to neighbourhood level is considered a crude estimate. | CBB 2014b, Interviewee 1 |
| **Iteration 2: Combination of budget monitoring and the neighbourhood budget instrument**<br>*in a coproduction of the CBB, the Indische Buurt Communities and District Amsterdam-Oost*<br>This iteration took place in a context of uncertainty about the future municipal organisation of the different districts of the Municipality of Amsterdam, with a reorganisation planned for 03/2014. | | | |
| 12/2013 – 02/2014 | Iteration with 15 participants including citizens, CBB and civil servants from the district Amsterdam-Oost<br>- 12 participatory sessions with three main foci: 1) Training of budget monitoring (including what is budget monitoring, how does municipal budgeting work, what are policy area budgets, budgets specific to the neighbourhood, party programmes and the Citizen Perspectives Paper), 2) analysing and testing the neighbourhood budget (related to task, activity and use of means) and 3) drawing up a citizen budget.<br>- The process followed the adapted roadmap combining budget monitoring and the neighbourhood budget instrument (see Figure 5.2): First the participants studied the Citizens' Perspective Paper 2013-2014 and translated the topics (e.g. healthcare, social cohesion, employment) into activities. Then, the group identified the budgets which relate to these activities on the basis of the neighbourhood budget instrument as provided by the District Amsterdam-Oost. As this constituted only one source for budgeting information, step four and five related to the monitoring of the budgets in terms of real estate, ground, cars, money and accommodations as well as in terms of subsidies to specific organisations. In the last step, an alternative budget was drawn up with one central point: the redistribution of 25% of the district budget for the social domain.<br>- Of a total of 200 million Euros district budget, 130 million have been made transparent | | Interviewee 5, Moerkamp 2014, CBB 2014, 2014b |
| 03/2014 | Presentation of citizens' budget for the neighbourhood by three participants of the process.<br>Statement of Intent titled: *Together stronger for the Indische Buurt*<br>- between District Amsterdam-Oost, housing cooperations: Ymere, Eigen Haard, De Alliantie and the Indische Buurt Cooperation (a cooperative association of citizens from Indische Buurt) | | Interviewee 5, CBB 2014 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | - | Goal was to collaborate on social and physical improvements of the neighbourhood using the Citizen Perspective Paper and the neighbourhood budget instrument as starting points. | |
| 03/2014 | | Reorganisation of the Municipality of Amsterdam and municipal elections<br>- This reorganisation meant that the districts lost most of their budgeting responsibilities to centralized departments on Amsterdam-wide level. Only a specific area-budget could be allocated by the District Board Commission.<br>- The Amsterdam City Council made the neighbourhood budget instrument, the availability of municipal data and the online accessibility of the public budget part of its reform agenda 2014-2018 | Interviewees 4, 5; Cadat 2014 |
| 07/2014 | Area plans of all areas of Amsterdam had to be finalized (as a consequence of the municipal reorganisation). The area plan for the Indische Buurt was one of the few that was already written based on input by citizens, namely on the input of the second round of budget monitoring. | | Interviewees 4, 5 |
| 2014 | | A milestone of 31 neighbourhood budget instruments had been put online (also for other neighbourhoods of the District Amsterdam-Ooost and for neighbourhoods of the districts South East, City Centre) (exact date unclear). Next version of neighbourhood budget instrument developed (version 2.0): further refined tool serving different target groups (citizens, civil servants). The website is still offline, awaiting political backing and a simpler model for presenting the data. | CBB 2014b, Interviewee 1 |

**Iteration 3: Participatory budgeting, building upon successful second iteration**
The intention was to focus on controlling the annual accounts rather than merely focusing on the planning. However, the reorganisation of the Municipality of Amsterdam meant that less of the budgets (which are now handled centrally and not at district level anymore) could be made accessible. The central municipal administration was not yet prepared to share budgets transparently. Another intention was to synchronise the participatory budgeting with the planning cycle of the municipality.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 2014 - 2015 | Iteration with 25 participants including citizens, CBB and civil servants from the district Amsterdam-Oost<br>- Session every two weeks, including training and this time a higher homework load for the participants and less involvement by civil servants<br>- Intended focus on controlling annual accounts and on synchronisation with municipal planning cycle<br>- Only 2.3 million Euros (the specific area budget) could be made transparent – the policy-area based budgets handled centrally could not be broken down to local level; the neighbourhood budget instrument website was not updated due to the municipal reorganisation<br>- Due to the lack of access to financial data, a larger focus on content and priorities resulting in an 'Agenda of the Neighbourhood' | Interviewees 4, 5; Gündüz and Delzenne 2013; CBB2014b |
| 09/2014 | CBB appointed new director Martijn Kool | Moerkamp 2014, Interviewee 3 |
| 10/2014 | The CBB trainings are co-financed by the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations and the municipalities where the trainings take place (on | Moerkamp 2014, CBB 2014b, Interviewee 6 |

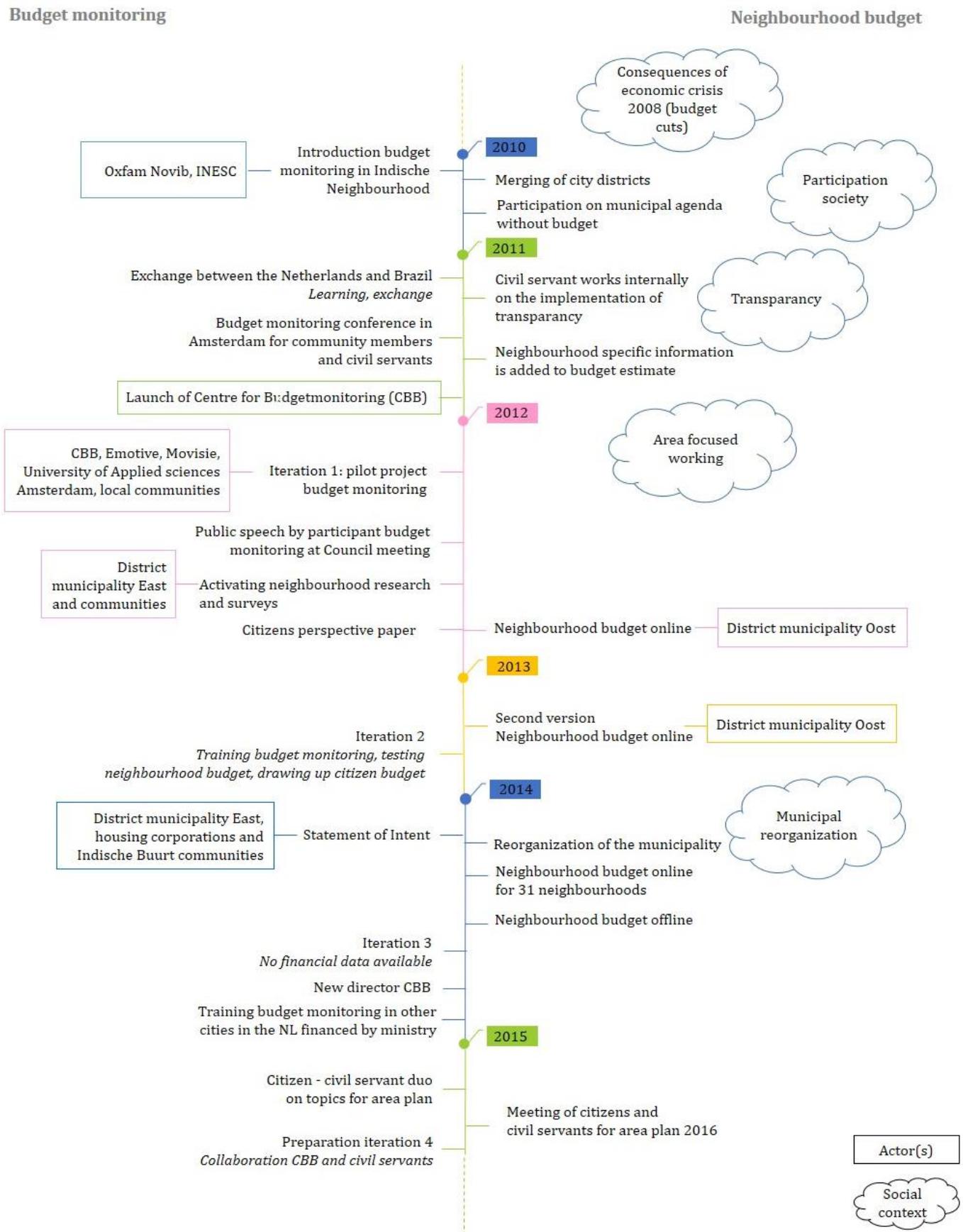| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | a basis of 50 percent each up to a total of €20.000). The CBB organized trainings regarding budget monitoring for six municipalities and citizen organisations across the Netherlands. These included two pilot projects in Amsterdam and the municipalities of Emmen, Hoogeveen, Amersfoort, Utrecht and The Hague. | |
| 04/2015 | Conversation between CBB and District Committee resulted in the wish for collaboration to continue pushing budget monitoring and neighbourhood budget instrument. | Interviewee 4 |
| 07-09/ 2015 | Collaboration district area team and citizens on an increased number of topics (education and employment, local economy, participate and being of importance, concerns about care, educational climate, youth). For each topic, a citizen-civil servant duo was responsible and worked out the priorities, activities and challenges. Started in 07/2015 with one meeting immediately after the summer and one on September 29th 2015 (80-90 participants). Preparation of the Area Plan 2016 based on the Area Agenda (civil servant led) and Agenda for the Neighbourhood (as result of 3rd iteration) by a team of civil servants. The collaboration of the neighbourhood in drawing up an Area Plan is a requirement. | Interviewee 4, 7, 8; Internal document B |
| 11/2015 | Meeting of citizens and civil servants to discuss the translation of the input of the Agenda of the Neighbourhood and of the working groups to an Area Plan 2016. | Interviewee 4, PO |

| **Iteration 4: in preparation** | | |
|---|---|---|
| 10-11/ 2015 | Intended focus on making the central budget transparent and checking the annual accounts<br>Additional theme's for working groups: more than just green (about the potential of a park in the neighbourhood) and strength of the neighbourhood. | Ideas about developing the neighbourhood budget instrument into a supportive tool for neighbourhood managers, as an infrastructure on which they can add and remove data (being activities, priorities and budgets) in monthly cycles rather than yearly ones. Efforts to spread the neighbourhood budget instrument to other municipalities. | Interviewee 1, 5, 8; Internal document A 2015 |
| 28-11-2015 | Citizen organisations from three neighbourhoods in the Dutch cities Emmerhout, Arnhem and Hengelo and civil society organisations LSA Bewoners, the Open State Foundation, CBB and Movisie declare a 'Citizen deal open Government'. This declaration aims to link open data to citizen participation. | | Bewonersagenda 2016; Interviewee 6 |
| 12/2015 | Meeting planned between civil servants working on the neighbourhood budget instrument and the CBB to discuss collaboration in other cities | | Interviewee 1 |

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*Figure 5.6: Timeline of the process*



Budget monitoring

Neighbourhood budget

**Consequences of economic crisis 2008 (budget cuts)**

**2010**

Oxfam Novib, INESC — Introduction budget monitoring in Indische Neighbourhood

Merging of city districts

Participation on municipal agenda without budget

**Participation society**

**2011**

Exchange between the Netherlands and Brazil
*Learning, exchange*

Civil servant works internally on the implementation of transparancy

**Transparancy**

Budget monitoring conference in Amsterdam for community members and civil servants

Neighbourhood specific information is added to budget estimate

Launch of Centre for Budgetmonitoring (CBB)

**2012**

CBB, Emotive, Movisie, University of Applied sciences Amsterdam, local communities — Iteration 1: pilot project budget monitoring

**Area focused working**

Public speech by participant budget monitoring at Council meeting

District municipality East and communities — Activating neighbourhood research and surveys

Citizens perspective paper — Neighbourhood budget online — District municipality Oost

**2013**

Iteration 2
*Training budget monitoring, testing neighbourhood budget, drawing up citizen budget*

Second version Neighbourhood budget online — District municipality Oost

**2014**

District municipality East, housing corporations and Indische Buurt communities — Statement of Intent

Reorganization of the municipality

Neighbourhood budget online for 31 neighbourhoods

**Municipal reorganization**

Neighbourhood budget offline

Iteration 3
*No financial data available*

New director CBB

Training budget monitoring in other cities in the NL financed by ministry

**2015**

Citizen - civil servant duo on topics for area plan

Meeting of citizens and civil servants for area plan 2016

Preparation iteration 4
*Collaboration CBB and civil servants*

Actor(s)

Social context

transformative social innovation theory

## 5.2 TSI dynamics

In this section, we zoom in on the relation between participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt and its social context. In first instance, we take stock and describe dominant aspects in the social context which enable and/or inhibit participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt (section 5.2.1) – and also outline how the initiative plays into these social context factors[15]. The identification of the dominant aspects of the social context enables us to study how and to what extent participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt challenges, alters and/or replaces these dominant institutions (i.e. contributes to transformative change) (section 5.2.2).

### 5.2.1 Relevant aspects of the social context

We identified a number of aspects of the social context which enable and/or inhibit the development of the SI-initiative in Amsterdam using the TRANSIT distinction between institutions and structures; societal events, trends and framework conditions; and discourses and narratives of change. Important are more local social context factors such as the context of the Indische Neighbourhood (section 5.2.1.1) and the Municipality of Amsterdam (section 5.2.1.2), as well as the embeddedness in a Dutch local government structure (section 5.2.1.3). Relevant broader societal trends and discourses are the changing welfare state (section 5.2.1.4), developments regarding transparency, digitalization and open data (section 5.2.1.5) and finally the international embedding in human rights and reversed development (section 5.2.1.6).

#### 5.2.1.1    Local structures and institutions: Indische Buurt

To accommodate harbour labourers and a growing population in Amsterdam the Indische Buurt was built in the beginning of the 20th century as part of municipal extension plans (Temmink 2014). Located to the East of the city centre (see Figure 5.7) the Indische Buurt today counts 22800 inhabitants. When harbour activities moved away from the city centre in the 1960s most of the original inhabitants left with it. The neighbourhood impoverished and was characterized by vacancy, drugs and criminality (Schravendeel 2015, Temmink 2014). While the vacant houses resulted in squatting and dilapidation, they also provided housing for newly arriving migrant workers, who still account for a large part of the population (Schravendeel

*Figure 5.7. Indische Buurt (own image, based on google maps data 2016)*



2015, Temmink 2014). In the 1980s, urban renewal projects aimed at improving the physical situation in the neighbourhood. In the last years, the neighbourhood gentrifies at a rapid pace –

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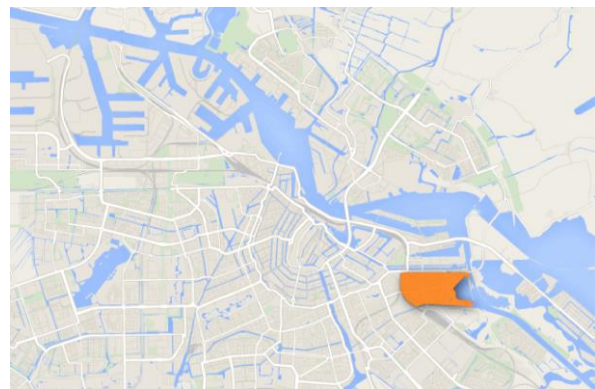
[15] In TRANSIT theory development, this aspect is considered as a strategy of a SI-initiative and therefore as part of the agency aspect (see also section 2.3.2). However, to prevent too many repetitions in the report, we decided to outline already in this section the cases where participatory budgeting plays into social context factors.

visible in the newly emerging shopping and restaurant facilities for the urban creative next to the more typical ethnic or telephone shops (PO, see Figure 5.8).

The population is culturally diverse with 37% being autochthonous Dutch inhabitants [16], 10% originating from a non-Dutch western background and the remaining 53% originating from a non-western background (CBS 2013). Of the latter, approximately 10% are of Turkish, 20% of Moroccan, 9% of Surinamese origin and the rest of other non-western origin (OIS, 2014). According to a 'neighbourhood analysis' by the Municipality in 2015, the Indische Buurt deals with high unemployment (15%, compared to an Amsterdam average of 11%) and people with low education (23%, compared to an Amsterdam average of 15%) (Gemeente Amsterdam 2015a). Currently, unemployment increases and the unemployed are having a harder time finding a job which makes employment a key priority of the Citizens' Perspective Paper (BPN, 2012). The housing stock is quite uniform in terms of the kind of apartments, with predominantly small (generally below 60m$^2$) apartments. However, with regard to the building period it is quite diverse consisting of buildings build before World War 2, during the '80s urban renewal period and only recently. Of this housing stock, 64% are social housing (compared to an Amsterdam average of 46%) (Gemeente Amsterdam 2015a).

*Figure 5.8: Street view in the Indische Buurt (pictures taken by authors)*



Due to its social and physical structure the neighbourhood was labelled as 'Focus neighbourhood' in 2007. As such, it became part of a long-term national government programme aimed at improving impoverished neighbourhoods throughout the Netherlands by giving them special financial and policy attention. The following issues were focused on: Housing and Liveability, Neighbourhood Economy and Employment, Learning and Growing up (Ministerie BZK 2011). Physical investments

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[16] A person is considered autochthonous Dutch, when both of his/her parents have been born in the Netherlands, without regard for his/her own birthplace.

from the 'Focus neighbourhood policy' are received positively by the local population: "*our neighbourhood which was mainly perceived as deprived is now more and more perceived as a trendy area*" (Burgerperspectievennota, 2012: 1[17]). The last years have also seen the surge of "*many active citizen groups, called communities, [who] have been working hard to improve the liveability of this neighbourhood and to develop instruments in order to improve social participation*" (Gündüz and Delzenne 2013; for more information on these communities see section 5.3.1). Important challenges as defined by the district administration are: youth unemployment, poverty, social cohesion and liveability (CBB 2014b).

The main reasons for choosing the Indische Buurt to set up budget monitoring relate to a high degree of social capital in the Indische Buurt. Cadat (2012: 18[18]) describes the Indische Buurt in this respect as "*a deprived area with a strong creative class, which works with vulnerable groups on the quality of life and social cohesion*". The presence of many active citizens and citizen groups who work on improving the area is favourable for the introduction of participation formats such as budget monitoring (Interviewee 3, CBB and INESC 2012, Burgerperspectievennota 2012). Experiments in other neighbourhoods have shown that a lack of a certain degree of organisation is disadvantageous for the process (Interviewee 3). Knowledge about community building is therefore one of the preconditions for those providing trainings (Interviewee 3, 4). The CBB and INESC (2012: 21) argue that "*[b]udget monitoring can not function without active citizens and communities*". As outlined by Gündüz and Delzenne (2013) "*(…) the method of budget monitoring seems to fit active neighbourhood organizations as well as those communities that want to get a grip on the utilization of available resources in their neighbourhoods*" and "*[b]udget monitoring is meant to be used by active citizens and communities in their participation process*". Thus, budget monitoring and other participatory budgeting methods build on existing social capital and blend in with the broader discourses on 'active citizens' and 'active citizenship' (see section 5.2.1.4). Another reason for choosing the Indische Buurt relates to the 2014 reorganisation of the Municipality of Amsterdam, through which the CBB and INESC (2012) expected more room for participative democracy.

Another important precondition for budget-related participatory methods is professional guidance and/or the existence of informal or formal organisation of citizens and inhabitants in the neighbourhood (ibid., Interviewee 3). We see the latter back in the Indische Buurt, where the processes have been facilitated by the CBB and where the existence of active communities, i.e. active citizen groups is presented as reason for choosing the Indische Buurt to experiment with budget monitoring.

### 5.2.1.2   Institutional context: Municipality of Amsterdam and 'area-focused working'

The institutional organisation and the priorities of the Municipality of Amsterdam in terms of choosing for an 'area-focused policy approach' are two other important context factors for the participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt.

A first reorganisation of the Municipality of Amsterdam had taken place in 2010, when the 14 districts merged to result in a remaining 7 districts. Until March 2014, these 7 districts, one of which is Amsterdam-Oost had their own District Council and Executive Board, next to the Central City Council and Board. They were semi-autonomous units with policy making and budget authority for

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[17] Dutch original: *"Onze buurt die vooral bekend stond als een achterstandwijk wordt steeds meer gezien als een "hippe" buurt."*

[18] Dutch original: *"een achterstandsgebied met een sterke creatieve klasse, die samen met kwetsbare groepen werkt aan leefbaarheid en sociale cohesie"*

matters like housing, maintenance of public space, local welfare, sport, education, arts and culture. These districts in turn are divided into neighbourhoods: Amsterdam-Oost is divided into 19 neighbourhoods, one of which is the Indische Buurt.

After 2014, the District Councils were replaced by District Board Committees, which consist of thirteen or fifteen members elected every four years. Candidates for the District Board Committee can be political parties, other groups and individuals. This municipal reorganisation meant that budget authority became more centralised and held by the Municipality of Amsterdam with only a specific district budget being allocated to the districts to be spent on public space, collection of domestic waste and social work in the districts (Gemeente Amsterdam 2015d). In addition, the districts also lost most of their policy-making authority.

These District Board Committees were introduced as "*the eyes and ears of the neighbourhoods and the link to the city hall*"[19] (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2015d), and were supposed to be better grounded in the local community and to be better able to support citizen initiatives. Each district is still subdivided into a number of neighbourhoods, with a dedicated area team consisting of three municipal employees. Firstly, the 'area broker' who is the contact person for citizens with initiatives. Secondly, the 'area coordinator' who works more strategically and composes, together with citizens, institutional organisations and entrepreneurs a programme for the neighbourhood and finally, the 'accountmanager', who is the contact person for entrepreneurs (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2015b). This area team also has the task of channelling information from the neighbourhood to their city district. As the collaboration between civil servants and citizens had already been good in the Indische Buurt, the envisaged effects of the reorganisation in terms of participation were less important.

The former municipal structures meant that the District Councils had budgets at their disposal: a conducive environment for developing the neighbourhood budget instrument. Through the reorganisation most of the budget for the neighbourhood was administered at municipal rather than district level. This meant that civil servants at central municipal level only were in a position to provide budget details (Interviewee 3, 5). However, during the third iteration 2014/15, the central municipal units (referred to as RVEs, Dutch abbreviation for 'result responsible units') were not prepared to break down the budget to the area level and share the crude estimates that this would deliver. In earlier iterations, the district administration of Amsterdam-Oost shared budget estimates with an accompanying disclaimer about the accuracy and reliability of the information. As put by one of the interviewees: "*There is resistance from the 'result responsible units' 'yes, but we have to have the full information before we can put it online'. The districts did not share this attitude. They thought one surely can put things down with a disclaimer and get the conversation with the neighbourhood going [...] The departments, 'result responsible units', want to have entirely complete information before we can put it online. You can imagine, that this will happen next to never, because you will never have the complete full information.*" (Interviewee 4[20]).

In a similar vein, Amsterdam-Oost seems to prioritize their activities differently than other districts which became clear at an information meeting about the (possible) introduction of the neighbourhood budget instrument for the whole of Amsterdam (Interviewee 4). While the other districts see the advantages of having budgets split out on the neighbourhood level, they are not

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[19] Dutch original: *"De bestuurscommissies zijn de ogen en oren van de buurt en de schakel naar het stadhuis".*

[20] Dutch original: *"Vanuit de RVE's dat daar de weerstand is 'ja, maar we moeten wel de volledige informatie hebben voordat we het online kunnen zetten'. Bij stadsdelen was niet zo, die hadden wel zoiets je kan best met een disclaimer dingen neer zetten en juist het gesprek aan gaan met de buurt." And "De diensten – RVE's – die willen echt eerst volledig zijn voordat we dat online zetten. Je kunt je voorstellen dat dat bijna nooit gaat gebeuren want je zal nooit helemaal volledig kunnen zijn''.*

prepared to dedicate the man-hours necessary but prefer to have this time being spent in the neighbourhood: "*But they were primarily resisting 'who is going to do this. This costs a lot of time and energy. If we put this [neighbourhood budget instrument] in here, then we cannot invest it in the neighbourhood'. So then you choose: 'what do we find more important?' and then it seems that they found it more important to be working in the neighbourhood*" (Interviewee 4[21]).

Already before the municipal reorganisation, 'area-focused working' had been developed to respond better to local needs of neighbourhoods since there is a large diversity in neighbourhood characteristics all over Amsterdam (CBB 2014b). 'Area focused working' is a way of working where the municipality acts more in the background and the initiative for solving local problems becomes much more the responsibility of local actors like citizens, entrepreneurs and institutional actors. The municipality stimulates collaboration with and between all these partners to come up with an approach which fits the area best. Since the introduction of the District Board Committees, the planning approach for 'area focused working' has changed into a four-step process called the 'Area cycle'. In a first step and on a yearly basis, issues are identified and analysed (area analysis), and then scored against a prioritisation which is renewed every four years (step 2, area agenda). Yearly, the issues are translated into an action plan (step 3, area plan) and results are monitored so as to adjust the process if necessary (step 4, area monitoring) (Interviewee 4, Gemeente Amsterdam 2015c). In Amsterdam-Oost area management is embedded with the existing practical implementation of e.g. neighbourhood platforms or participation brokers (CBB 2014b). The neighbourhood budget instrument was chosen as "*an extra method to support area-focused working*" (CBB 2014b: 3[22]). The Indische Buurt has been one of the few areas in which already the first area plan of 2014 was based on a close collaboration with its citizens (Interviewee 4). Budget monitoring has played a major role in this by coming up with a Citizens' Perspectives Paper.

A publication consolidating the experiences of civil servants across cities in the Netherlands with citizen budgets and voucher systems also establishes a strong link between 'neighbourhood-focused working' and participatory budgeting: "*Municipalities give real substance to neighbourhood-focused working through the introduction of inhabitants budget. Neighbourhood-focused working means that inhabitants are independent makers, who are co-responsible for the quality of life in the neighbourhoods*" (Engbersen et al. 2010: 47[23]). This publication also outlined two critical factors for the development of citizens and neighbourhood budgets related to the institutional context (Engbersen et al. 2010). Firstly, the municipal structure in terms of policy making and implementation, this includes, costs involved, different speeds of municipal organisation and citizenry and juridical constraints. Secondly, they point to the attitude of local politicians which can be encouraging, putting a brake on developments, fending off or taking over. We can see those factors also in the Indische Buurt, where an enthusiastic Alderman acted as a driving force within the district municipal organisation and where the reorganisation of the municipality led to tensions with its policy aims.

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[21] Dutch original: *"Maar daar [bij de stadsdelen] zat vooral heel erg de weerstand in: 'wie gaat dit doen? En dit kost heel erg veel tijd en energie, als we die hier in stoppen dan kunnen we het niet in de buurt inzetten'. Dus dan maak je de keuze 'wat vinden we belangrijker?' en dan vonden ze het belangrijker dat we toch gewoon in de buurt aan het werk waren".*

[22] Dutch original: *"een extra methode om het gebiedsgericht werken te ondersteunen"*

[23] Dutch original: *"Met de invoering van bewonersbudgetten geven gemeenten daadwerkelijk vorm aan wijkgericht werken. Wijkgericht werken betekent dan dat bewoners zelfstandige makers zijn, medeverantwoordelijk voor de kwaliteit van leven in de wijken"*

### 5.2.1.3   Institutional context: Dutch local government structure and local democracy

The strong focus of this initiative on the municipal level does make the Dutch local government structure and the related (changing) understanding of democracy an important part of the institutional context. In a nutshell, Dutch local governments function as follows. The Dutch municipal councils are elected every four years. Within a council, coalitions are formed to nominate members to the Municipal Board consisting of the mayor and aldermen. Each of the aldermen is responsible for specific policy areas and the allocated budget. In their work the Municipal Councils and Boards are supported by civil servants as part of the municipal administration, which prepares and implements policies. The budget authority lies with the Municipal Council, meaning that "*citizens can never formally decide*" (Hofman 2011: 8[24]). Also aldermen cannot shift money between policy areas without the consent of the council.

At the end of the 20th century the social infrastructure in the Netherlands was cut back and room was made for private initiative (Interviewee 6). This development was reinforced by the national coalition agreement in 2010 with the leitmotif 'More citizens, less government', which was then also adopted by local governments (Engbersen et al. 2010). This meant a shift in attitudes: citizens were considered responsible for taking initiative to contribute to society and municipalities should give room and trust those citizens (Engbersen et al. 2010). These developments are accompanied by a diversifying understanding of democracy, adding to the dominant understanding of the representative democracy, ideas about participatory democracy or direct democracy. Currently Dutch citizens hold various possibilities to influence and/or participate in policy making: introducing a citizen initiative to the municipal council, speaking at a municipal council meeting, participating in advisory boards to the council, becoming a member of a political party, and informal ways like approaching the media or starting a societal initiative (Kennisland 2015).

The budget monitoring initiative does play into changing attitudes about democracy without threatening existing structures. As put by the director of the CBB: "*The representative democracy, as we imagined it 150 years ago, needs necessary maintenance, this is where we try to contribute our part. Not by undermining the representative democracy, but by adding something to ensure that there will be a connection [between government and citizen] again*" (Interviewee 3[25]). According to one of the trainers of the CBB it is a "*search process*" where "*you have to find the transition between participative and representative democracy*" (Interviewee 10[26]). S/he continues: "*as soon as what you does influences in one way or the other the living environment of others who are not at the table, you have to ask the question: how do I involve these people? And how do I ask for their opinion and how far do I dare to walk upfront? And what is my field of action? [...] If what you do has a certain impact, you have to ask upfront 'do I have the right to do this here?' And then you see that the participative democracy seamlessly becomes representative democracy*" (Interviewee 10[27]).

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[24] Dutch original: *"burgers kunnen nooit formeel beslissen"*

[25] Dutch original: *"De parlementaire democratie, zoals we die 150 jaar geleden ongeveer hebben bedacht, daar is wel enig onderhoud noodzakelijk. Dat is waar wij proberen een steentje bij te dragen. Niet door de representatieve democratie systeem onder uit te schoppen, maar om er iets aan toe te voegen om te zorgen dat de verbinding er weer komt"*

[26] Dutch original: "*Zoekproces* [...]" and: "*ergens moet je de overgang zien te vinden tussen de participatieve democratie en de representatieve democratie*"

[27] Dutch original: *"zo gauw wat je doet invloed op enige manier invloed heeft op de leefomgeving van anderen die niet aan die tafel zitten, moet je de vraag stellen: hoe betrek ik die mensen er bij? En hoe vraag ik hun mening en hoe ver durf ik vooruit te lopen? En wat is mijn handelingsruimte? [...] "Als het een zekere impact heeft, moet je van tevoren vragen 'mag het wat ik hier doe?' En dan zie je dat die participatieve democratie ineens naadloos overloopt naar de representatieve democratie".*

One of the initiators of participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt outlines that while it is the task of politicians to prioritize the spending of public money, the politicians "*need us for this. We are their eyes and ears. As neighbourhood residents we are vigilant about how this money is spend*" (F. Azarhoosh, quoted in Smouters 2014[28]). Budget monitoring is thus about being the eyes and ears and re-establishing (lost) connections between citizens and their representatives. In the Netherlands, participatory budgeting is generally seen as a form of citizen participation, and as such supporting a stable and well-developed representative democracy rather than questioning or challenging it (cf. Hofman 2013). As put more generally by Engbersen et al. (2010: 58[29]): "*Citizen participation is not a hollowing out, but a complement to the representative democracy. The role of the City Council is not played out, but changes indeed*".

A number of implications for participatory budgeting are that there is no intention for a devolution of formal decision making power to citizens, this remains with the chosen representative body. However, this body can 1) choose to relegate some of their budget responsibility to citizens – as is the case with neighbourhood budgets, where citizens get the say over the spending of a specific amount; or 2) enter into a collaboration process with citizens with regard to spending priorities, as we see in the Indische Buurt or 3) be advised by them. However, participatory budgeting can also be used to control the representative body and its administration – albeit with no immediate consequences.

### 5.2.1.4    Broader societal trends and discourses: the changing welfare state

A societal event with major influence on European welfare states is the economic crisis of 2008. It can be related to changing interpretations of the welfare state as well as government budget cuts. In the Netherlands, the austerity policies coincide with a decentralisation of social policies. The latter is in form of the Social Support Act (Wet Maatschappelijke Ondersteuning, 2007) which has three major themes: 1) enhancement of social participation of vulnerable groups, 2) call on citizens to voluntarily provide informal care to these groups and 3) devolution of tasks and social support from central to local government (Verhoeven and Tonkens 2013). This led to local governments being faced simultaneously with overall budget cuts and the challenge to provide more services, together this invigorated a debate on the relation between government and citizens.

This debate is referred to under the signifiers 'active citizenship' (Marinetto 2003, Newman and Tonkens 2011) or 'participation society' (Putters 2014, Tonkens 2014), the latter as coined by King Willem Alexander in 2013. Both discourses emphasise the necessity for more active citizens and the devolution of power to the local level, and can be closely linked to the 'Big Society' discourse in the UK (Kisby 2010, Ransome 2011). They intensified with the economic crisis and the consequential budget cuts and became part of a welfare state reform agenda: motivated by the changing face of the welfare state, every citizen needed to take responsibility for his/her personal life as well as social responsibility for the common good. These new ideas about a changing social fabric are reflected in the national and local activities on neighbourhood level. Illustrative is the following quote from a report on the current neighbourhood approach of the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations: "*We search for different relationships between governments, institutions and citizens.*

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[28] Dutch original: *"hebben ons daarbij nodig. We zijn hun ogen en oren. Als buurtbewoners houden we goed in de gaten hoe dit geld besteedt word"*

[29] Dutch original: *"Burgerparticipatie is geen uitholling van, maar een aanvulling op de representatieve democratie. De rol van de gemeenteraad is niet uitgespeeld maar verandert wel"*

*Attempts to give concrete shape to these, often still in rudimentary form, occur precisely in these neighbourhoods*" (Deetman et al, 2011: 7[30])[31].

Searching for new forms of citizen participation (as described in section 5.2.1.3) and the new role of the government, as well as being confronted with the call for more responsibility and control for citizens, municipalities across the Netherlands consider participatory budgeting one adequate instrument (Engbersen et al. 2010: 7; Engbersen and van Dijken 2014: 13, Buitendijk in Hofmann 2011). This has also been identified for the development of budget monitoring in the Indische Buurt. Here the move towards a "*government, which supports self-management of citizens with as a basic principles 'less government, more citizen'*" (Cadat 2012: 18[32]) contributed to the realisation of budget monitoring.

Participatory budgeting is also considered an interesting entry point for involving citizens in budget reductions. There are examples of Dutch cities, such as Zeist, where participatory budgeting was used to involve citizens in realizing the necessary budget cuts and where it led to a budget reduction of 6,2 million Euros (Van Roosmalen 2014). According to Hofman (2011: 7[33]) this is just one of numerous examples: "*The first participatory budgeting coalitions between government and citizens have been formed in the Netherlands. In 2010 and 2011, a tsunami of participation processes arose, most of the time regarding budget cut challenges of local governments*". For the Indische Buurt, one of the involved civil servants also sees the potential of the neighbourhood budget instrument to improve the spending of money: "*And to budget savings. Inhabitants shall examine projects differently leaving room to the question: is the municipality not doing too much? Or: How can we do this differently? The new dynamic, where citizens critically examine the functioning of the government and where the municipality can account correctly for its actions, this is the way that we want to shape the future*" (I. Stoelinga as quoted in Van Roosmalen 2014[34]).

## 5.2.1.5   Broader societal trends and discourses: Transparency, digitalisation and open data

For the development of participatory budgeting in general, ideas of open data, transparency and digitalisation seemed to be crucial. Open data is considered as the availability of government data enabled by technological and digital means to use and reuse without any (technical, legal or financial) obstacles leading to more transparency of government spending and activities (Cadat 2012, Roodink 2013, Open State Foundation 2014).

World-wide many organisations are committed to supporting the disclosure and public accessibility of data by governments in a timely, trustworthy and accurate manner along a universal standard

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[30] Dutch original: "We zijn in Nederland op zoek naar andere verhoudingen tussen overheden, instituties en burgers, en pogingen om daar concreet vorm aan te geven krijgen – vaak nog in embryonale vorm - juist in deze wijken gestalte"

[31] The text in this and the preceding paragraph is partly taken from Wittmayer, J.M. (forthcoming)

[32] Dutch original: "*Overheid die zelfbeheer door burgers ondersteunt met als basisprincipe 'minder overheid, meer burger'*"

[33] Dutch original: *"In Nederland zijn de eerste participatieve begrotingscoalities tussen overheid en burgers gevormd. In 2010 en 2011 is er namelijk een vloedgolf aan participatieprocessen ontstaan, meestal rond bezuinigingsopgaven van lokale overheden"*

[34] Dutch original: *"En tot besparingen. Bewoners zullen namelijk projecten op een andere wijze tegen het licht houden, waarbij dan de vraag kan rijzen: doet de gemeente niet te veel? Of: Hoe kunnen we dit anders doen? Die nieuwe dynamiek, waarbij de burger kritisch kijkt naar het functioneren van de overheid en de gemeente goed kan verantwoorden waar zij mee bezig is, is de wijze waarop wij de toekomst vorm willen geven."*

(Cadat 2012). In the Netherlands, the Open State Foundation an NGO is taking up this work locally to make financial and other information from Ministries and other governmental bodies more accessible (Interviewee 3). The Open State Foundation believes that a healthy democracy needs well informed citizens. Open data serves as a means to inform citizens, creates more transparency about the way governments operate and is a requirement for citizens to participate (Open State Foundation, 2014). Open data is data that can be accessed and reused without any technical, legal or financial obstacles (Roorda 2013, Open State Foundation 2014). However, there are different opinions on how data should be presented and communicated. On the one hand it is argued that data should be presented directly from the source, and on the other hand that it needs to be visualised and 'translated' in order for citizens to understand it. According to Roodink (2013) open data should be presented directly from the source without any editing, as a 'wrong' interpretation of data could lead to a 'wrong' solution for problems. By editing the data so her claim, the editor is already involved in interpretation: "*making a budget publicly accessible by applying infographics and putting them on a website can be very useful but can not be considered open data*" (Roodink 2013: p.91[35]). Other authors stress the importance of doing exactly that: "*Visualisation of financial open data is key to budget monitoring for citizens*" (Cadat 2012: p. 18[36], also Metz 2014). They argue that raw data only is beneficial to market companies but not for citizens who are unable to read and understand it (Metz, 2014). A point both of these sides leave out is the definitional power included in the actual setting of the indicators: thus what is it that data is collected about.

Another international organisation important for budget monitoring is the Open Government Partnership (OGP). On their website (OGP 2015a) OGP present themselves as follows: "*The Open Government Partnership is a multilateral initiative that aims to secure concrete commitments from governments to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance".* OGP was launched in 2011 by 8 founding governments and has grown since then to currently 69 participating countries (OGP 2015b)*.* The national commitment to OGP resulted in an action plan (co-produced by the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, Dutch Citizens, civil servants and government officials) with three pillars: transparency, responsiveness and open access to information (OGP 2015c; Roodink 2013). The CBB was upon its foundation accepted by the government as a partner of OGP civil society (Interviewee 6). As such OGP brings together civil society organizations and governments.

The neighbourhood budget instrument is an initiative that is thriving due to the current trend towards more transparency. After concluding that digital tools can be of great value to stimulate and enable participation, a resolution was approved by the District Council of Amsterdam-Oost in February 2012. This resolution led to the start for a pilot making open data online available within 6 months (D66, 2012; Cadat, 2012). Alderman van Speijk of district Amsterdam-Oost also frames transparency as a strategy to engage citizens: once they have insights in the financial data, they can also see where they can contribute (De Groot, 2014). Another civil servant involved in setting up the neighbourhood budget instrument, sees transparency in financial flows also as a means to create a level playing field since everybody possesses the same information (De Groot, 2014). However, the transparency of data is only considered a first step, while a second equally important step is to translate this in information that is accessible to financial laypersons (Interviewee 1, 3) – as outlined in the discussion above. The director of the CBB does see progress in the way that municipalities present their data which is becoming more informative and accessible and as such addresses a societal need (Interviewee 3). The call for government transparency also leads to changes in municipal cultures and structures: "*In this process the administration turned towards citizens and*

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[35] Dutch original: "*een begroting toegankelijk maken door infographics toe te passen en deze op een website te publiceren is zeer nuttig maar geen open data*"

[36] Dutch original: "*Visualisatie van financiele open data is de sleutel voor budget monitoring voor burgers*"

*entrepreneurs. Instead of reasoning from your own policy areas only, you also work based on direct contact with citizens and entrepreneurs. This results in more area-focused management.*" (J. van Speijk, quoted in de Groot, 2014[37]).

The neighbourhood budget instrument, like the more general transparency and open data movement, makes use of the possibilities offered by technology and digitalization. The technological possibilities increased to make information more accessible to the public. Digital platforms, such as the neighbourhood budget instrument, enable exchange of information between citizens, civil servants and politicians. They also become digital meeting points for these actors and are a handy tool for presenting e.g. financial data (Interviewee 6). For realizing budget monitoring in the Indische Buurt, transparency of financial data by the municipality is a requirement (cf. Gündüz and Delzenne 2013). This is one of the reasons why the co-evolution of the neighbourhood budget instrument initiative within the district administration helped the further development of an overall participatory budgeting approach in the neighbourhood.

### 5.2.1.6 Broader societal institutions and structures: Human rights and reversed development cooperation

The emergence of budget monitoring in Brazil was motivated by a Human Rights perspective. When introducing it in the Netherlands, the initiators at the CBB took over this perspective for implementing budget monitoring in the Indische Neighbourhood. Therefore we discuss a broader outline of the Human Rights movement in this section.

Human Rights are often expressed in terms of philosophical and moral principles linked to ideas of equality, justice, freedom, sustainability and human dignity (CBB and INESC 2012). They are applicable to all regardless of race, nationality, religion, gender, or whatever other characteristic. The international movement on human rights was strengthened by the founding of the United Nations in 1945 and the introduction of its committee on Human Rights in 1946. On 10 December 1948, the international human rights movement was consolidated with the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) by the General Assembly of the United Nations. Since then, many international declarations have been formulated. Part of the universal declaration is the ICESR – International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights with the concept of "*progressive realization of human rights*". Part of the ICESR is the obligation of the state to "*promote improvements on the living conditions of its citizens year after year*" (CBB, 2012: 6).

CBB (2012) describes the movement of Human Rights as one combatting suppression, discrimination and injustice. It is a struggle for the emancipation and empowerment of men and women (CBB, 2012: 5). Through a continuous struggle for "*recognition of their identities and redistribution of resources*" (ibid.) rights are conquered, and not just given. A fair redistribution of public resources is intrinsically linked to this struggle. Gradually this struggle and progress would lead our societies "*to new patterns of freedom, equality, respect and dignity*" (ibid.). The role of the state is to ensure the fulfilments of rights guaranteed in our international and national legal systems. As of January 2015 the municipality of Amsterdam is working on a 'Human Rights Agenda' as "*an instrument to open up the discussion on human rights on a local level*" (NAP 2015).

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[37] Dutch original: *"In dit proces is de ambtelijke organisatie gekanteld richting bewoners en ondernemers. In plaats van dat je alleen vanuit je eigen programma's denkt, werk je ook vanuit direct contact met bewoners en ondernemers. Je krijgt meer gebiedssturing."*

# **tran**sformative **s**ocial **i**nnovation **t**heory

Budget monitoring was a method created by the Institute for Socio-economic Studies (INESC) in the Brazilian context with a focus on advocacy and gaining political influence (Gündüz and Delzenne 2013). INESC describe themselves as "*a civil society organization with the mission to help deepen democracy and promoting human rights*" (INESC 2009: 4). They have "*(...) chosen the public budget as a strategic instrument for public policy analysis and social control*" (ibid.). By taking human rights as a conceptual framework they take international commitments into account which go beyond political, normative and operational beliefs. They take a broad scope of human rights including civil, political, social, economic, cultural, environmental, sexual and reproductive rights as for example combating poverty or income inequalities in Brazil are related to the variation of colour and sex (INESC 2009: 6). This idea is taken up by the participants of the first iteration of budget monitoring in the Indische Buurt. As put by one of the initiators: "*We are rather a kind of local human rights organisation. Together, we establish the standards under which no one in our neighbourhoods should sink. You cannot let a homeless person die here. That is how we look at the neighbourhood budget instrument. Of course, the business association wants more money, but the question is whether this is really crucial. This money can also go to extra support for pupils with ADHD*" (F. Azarhoosh, quoted in Smouter 2014[38]). For some of the Dutch proponents of budget monitoring, this framing is still important: "*Budget monitoring is a way to enable human rights. If you leave out the human rights part, you should call if differently, call it citizen budgeting, neighbourhood budgeting or participatory budgeting*" (Interviewee 6[39]).

The context in which participatory budgeting emerged in Brazil is fundamentally different from the context in The Netherlands. In Brazil, democracy was not perceived a stable or dominant institution. In the face of amongst others corruption, a too strong state and uneducated citizens, participatory budgeting was introduced to combat that and strengthen democracy. The Netherlands, however, is perceived as a more stable democracy. The need for participatory budgeting becomes clear in face of the hidden indifference and taken for granted attitude towards democracy as it is experienced in the Netherlands. Introducing budget monitoring has the potential to strengthen basic democratic interests and rights. In developed democracies, the state has made its citizens reliant to guarantee their rights but in moments of crisis this might not be the first thing on the priority list (CBB and INESC 2012). In developing democracies it is also a question of continuous education of human rights to citizens and civil servants.

The Human Rights discourse and practice is firmly connected and gives direction (amongst others) to the ideas and practices of 'developing' societies. Such a development perspective mainly focused on how countries in the global South can learn from and develop so as to become as countries in the global North – thus to turn from undeveloped or underdeveloped to developed countries. There are critical and lively academic and public debates with regard to such a limited and one-dimensional understanding of development (e.g. Ferguson 1990, Quarles van Ufford 2003, Mosse 2005). In search for a more diverse understanding of development one of the ideas that emerged is 'reversed development'. In the context of our case study this refers to the idea of taking solutions developed in the 'South' to solve problems in the 'North', or more specifically issues of social cohesion in the Netherlands. An important player in organizing such a learning alliance between partners in the Netherlands and the 'South' is the Dutch E-Motive programme, a global network of organisations sharing innovative solutions to global and local issues including Oxfam-Novib (E-Motive 2015).

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[38] Dutch original: *"We zijn eerder een soort lokale mensenrechteninstantie. We bepalen met elkaar onder welke standaard niemand in onze buurt mag zakken. Je kunt een dakloze hier niet laten creperen. Zo kijken we ook naar het buurtbudget. Natuurlijk wil de ondernemersvereniging meer geld krijgen, maar de vraag is of dat essentieel is. Dat geld kan bijvoorbeeld ook naar extra begeleiding voor scholieren met adhd"*

[39] Dutch original: *"is er geen sprake meer van budgetmonitoring vanaf het moment dat je mensenwegrechten weg laat, De insteek van popular education/community building weg laat, is er geen sprake meer van budgetmonitoring. Je kan het dan anders noemen, burgerbegroting, buurtbegroting of participatief budget."*

# **tran**sformative **s**ocial **i**nnovation **t**heory

Oxfam-Novib, with its many years of experience in development co-operation reasoned from the underlying idea that the Netherlands can learn much from global partners and therefore set up this 'Reverse Development Co-operation' (Oxfam Novib 2011). It was through 'E-Motive', that the collaboration between INESC and active people in the Indische Buurt on budget monitoring started (Mertens 2011, Cadat 2012). This close collaboration during the start-up phase played a crucial role for the translation and development of budget monitoring in the Indische Buurt and for the Dutch context (Gündüz and Delzenne 2013).

## 5.2.2   Transformative ambition, potential and impact

In TRANSIT, we consider that a SI-initiative can be transformative along three aspects: transformative ambition, transformative potential and transformative impacts. In this section, we are analysing these three aspects for the participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt. This allows us to draw conclusions with regard to the extent to which it has the ambition, potential as well as actually challenges, alters or replaces dominant aspects of the social context.

### 5.2.2.1   Transformative ambition

The extent to which participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt can be said to have a transformative ambition, i.e. a vision or ambition to achieve or contribute to an identified transformative change (cf. Wittmayer et al. 2015a), is not uniform across the actors interviewed or documents studied.

The transformative ambition related to the practice of budget monitoring is more obvious than the one of the neighbourhood budget instrument. The ambition of the former is especially present in the early documentation of the CBB, still in very close collaboration with INESC as well as with those interviewees that had been closely connected to the initiative in its beginnings. The INESC approach is solidly grounded in a human rights and emancipatory discourse (see also section 5.2.1.6). Iara Pietricovsky de Oliveira, member of INESC's executive board outlines that "*the idea is to offer communities, groups and civil society organizations conditions for participation in, and democratic control over government, using the public budget as a starting point*" (CBB and INESC 2012: 4). The transformative change aimed for are "*new patterns of freedom, equality, respect and dignity*" (ibid: 5) in our societies as well as to "*guarantee human rights and social justice*" and "*to make governments accountable*" (ibid: 4). This is seen as necessary for all democracies as there is a huge gap identified between committing to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to translate this back into policy and budgets.

To achieve or contribute to a society where human rights, social justice, non-discrimination and social participation are high on the agenda, budget monitoring is considered as just one possible participatory mechanism through which to aim for a more "*emancipatory political culture*" (CBB and INESC 2012: 12). While proposing a more participatory culture, CBB and INESC (2012: 11) outline that "*The participatory democracy will not replace representative democracy, by contrast, representation and participation can and should combine different mechanisms and opportunities for enhancing democracy and create a fair and sustainable society. The movement between these two forms of political participation is an opportunity for building a new order and active citizenship*". This

assessment is shared by Hofman (2011: 20 [40]), who, more generally, considers participatory budgeting as an "*instrument to strengthen representative democracy*".

However, in the current discourse in the Indische Buurt the transformative ambition is rather implicit and not an explicit part of the communication in that the words 'transformative', 'transformation', 'change' do not feature. The website of the CBB is an interesting case. While in the Dutch version it promotes budget monitoring as an instrument to support dialogue but does not refer to a higher ideal, it does so in the English version of the website where it relates budget monitoring to "*the right to live in better environments*" (CBB 2015[41]). However, we can define clear areas that the budget monitoring in the Indische Buurt targets and through which it contributes to the aspired transformative change. These include the re-invention of the role of the citizen, as well as the role of the government and of the relation between government and citizens (see also section 5.3.1). Especially in relation to the latter budget monitoring appears to have ambitions: "*budget monitoring can play a role in this democratisation process by connecting system world and life world of the inhabitants via control of the budget*" (Cadat 2012: 18[42]).

The transformative ambition of the neighbourhood budget instrument is both inward-looking focusing on municipal internal structures and processes as well as outward-looking focusing on more transparent and open government. Internally, the broader vision of the civil servants involved in developing the neighbourhood budget instrument is on re-organizing the way that the municipal budget is drawn up – from a policy-area-focused budget to an object-focused budget as a form of scalable budgeting (Interviewee 1). The latter distinguishes between objects rather than between policy fields. The ambition for the online application in this is modest: it can serve as a support and presentation tool for the area team. The tool provides a kind of infrastructure, through which to add and remove data (being activities, priorities and budgets) in monthly cycles: "*That you run through the list every month to check whether something has changed*" (Interviewee 1[43]).

### 5.2.2.2  Transformative potential

Transformative potential refers to the potential of the ideas and activities of the participatory budgeting initiative to display qualities to challenge, alter and/or replace dominant institutions in its social context. Following McFarland and Wittmayer (2015), we take a) 'challenge' to refer to objects, ideas or activities that an initiative is performing questioning the legitimacy or existence of dominant institutions (i.e. ways of doing, framing….), b) 'alter' to refer to objects, ideas or activities that an initiative is performing changing (parts of) dominant institutions, and c) 'replace' to refer to

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[40] Dutch original: *"instrument om de representatieve democratie te versterken"*

[41] Dutch version: "Budgetmonitoring is een tool waardoor burgers, communities en andere organisaties zicht krijgen op begrotingsprocessen en de besteding van middelen. Met behulp van deze methodiek kan een dialoog plaatsvinden tussen burgers onderling en tussen organisaties en overheid over prioritering, behoeftes en aanpak van problemen" see http://www.budgetmonitoring.nl/ (accessed 28.10.2015)

English version: Budget Monitoring is a method that facilitates citizens to screen, assess, and actively participate in the decisions on public policy-making and government expenditure. It offers citizens the power, knowledge, and self-belief to take action for the right to live in better environments. The Center for Budgetmonitoring binds diverse community-led organizations, allowing valuable encounters among them as well as dialogue between citizens, organizations, and the government in mapping out problems and their solutions, see: http://budgetmonitoring.nl/english/index.html (accessed 30.10.2015)

[42] Dutch original: "*Budget monitoring kan een rol spelen in dit democratiseringsproces door de directe koppeling tussen de systeemwereld en de leefwereld van de buurtbewoners, via controle op het budget*"

[43] Dutch original: "*Dat je elke maand door de lijst heen loopt, is er nog wat veranderd?*"

objects, ideas or activities that an initiative is performing taking the place of (a) dominant institution(s). We can distinguish between three different areas where the participatory budgeting has transformative potential, namely to challenge and alter firstly the role of citizens, secondly the role and organisation of local government and thirdly the relations between actors.

Both the ideas and activities of participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt have the **potential to challenge and alter the current role of citizens**. Ideas include the empowerment of citizens, their education and social mobilization (as outlined under section 5.2.2.1). Activities in the Indische Buurt include asking for a transparent budget on neighbourhood level, actively working with civil servants to detail the budget for the neighbourhood according to specific areas, prioritizing specific areas and drawing up a citizen budget, presenting this budget as an alternative to the citizenry and representative body. In addition, the initiative aims to include an element of control in the fourth iteration of budget monitoring: namely not only forecasting (drawing up a budget) but also looking back (controlling whether the budget was spent according to the planning).

The knowledge that citizens gain by engaging in these activities empowers them to better understand the influence of policy on their daily lives (see section 5.3.1.1). As put by Cadat (2014[44]) "*If citizens know more about the spending of budgets, they can have a bigger contribution in policy development. This, because technical information about the government budget is translated into a more accessible language. It provides insights into the influence that the budget has on daily life*". It also puts citizens in a position to be a sparring partner for policy makers and civil servants by being conscious about their democratic rights and more directly involved in decision making (Hofman 2011). Finally, it also provides a platform where citizens can meet but also where ideas and perspectives potentially clash (cf. Engbersen et al. 2010).

Clearly, those ideas and activities do not only have the potential to challenge and alter the role of citizens, but also the **role and the routines of local government**. Budget monitoring in the Indische Buurt has the potential, as put by Smouter (2014[45]) "*to have politicians spend public money in a way that serves the priorities of the inhabitants instead of the bureaucratic reality*". More generally, participatory budgeting can lead to more transparency in government finances and less corruption as well as quality improvement of services and infrastructures (Hofman 2011). Through its controlling function, budget monitoring has the potential to change the role of the municipal council (Smouter 2014). However, "*the role of the City Council is not played out, but changes indeed*" (Engbersen et al. 2010: 58[46]). As put by a trainer of the CBB: "i*f it [financial data] is accessible and inhabitants start working with it, dare representative democracy to acknowledge this piece of participation by inhabitants as discussion partners*" (Interviewee 10[47]). The Alderman actively promoting the neighbourhood budget instrument in the Indische Buurt summarizes: "*But eventually, the Council is the place where the choice between different stakes has to be made. You cannot leave this to this kind of citizen initiatives*" (Jeroen van Spijk, quoted in Smouter 2014[48]). Questions thus remain

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[44] Dutch original: "*Als burgers meer weten over de besteding van de budgetten, kunnen ze vervolgens een grotere inbreng hebben in de beleidsontwikkeling. Dit doordat technische informatie over de overheidsbegroting wordt vertaald in een meer toegankelijke taal. Het maakt inzichtelijk wat de invloed van de begroting is op het dagelijkse leven*".

[45] Dutch original: "*om politici gemeenschapsgeld zo te laten uitgeven dat het de prioriteiten van bewoners dient, in plaats van de bureaucratische werkelijkheid*"

[46] Dutch original: "*gemeenteraad is niet uitgespeeld maar verandert wel*"

[47] Dutch original: ""*Als het [financiele data] beschikbaar is en bewoners gaan er mee aan de slag, durf representatieve democratie, dat stukje participatie van bewoners als gesprekspartner te erkennen*

[48] Dutch original: "*Maar uiteindelijk blijft de raad de plek waar gekozen moet worden tussen verschillende belangen. Dat kun je nooit aan dit soort burgerinitiatieven overlaten*"

in relation to the actual deference of power between actors. As put by Hofman (2013[49]) "*What is striking is that in Dutch participation processes it is especially about participation in the advising sense. 'Preparing a budget by citizens' has remained limited to join the conversation through advising about governmental business and making choices with neighbourhood pocket money*"

Also, in order to work with an area-focus, it seems logical that more transparency is necessary in terms of the actual budget available for on area. It is specifically the activity of breaking down and discerning the budget on neighbourhood level, which has the potential to alter or even replace procedures and rules within the municipal organisation. As outlined by a trainer of the CBB: "[Imagine] *we want to have the specific costs for this small area. As long as you make the area specific and very small – you can ask this question. But to say that you want this for the complete neighbourhood, this means that you need to have everything [in the overall budget] area-focused*" (Interviewee 10[50]). In a similar vein, one of the civil servant developing the neighbourhood budget instrument aimed for structuring the municipal budgets along objects rather than policy areas (Interviewee 1).

Thirdly, all activities as part of the participatory budgeting have the potential to **challenge and alter the relation between citizens and civil servants** at local government level as well as between citizens and the District Council, or City Council respectively. Usually, activities related to municipal budgets are not taken on by citizens but are exclusively done within the municipality. When citizens adopt new roles and take on new activities by entering this level playing field, the roles and activities of other actors also change as does the relations between them. While in the Indische Buurt this new actor constellation is productive, this is not always the case. As outlined by Engbersen et al. (2010) in their nationwide study there is also the chance of a collision between civil servants and citizens if for example the wishes of citizens collide with municipal internal routines. Budget monitoring can exactly address such disconnect between citizens and civil servants, which are due to the fact that they talk different languages according to the director of the CBB. For him, the connection can be re-established and gaps bridged through budget monitoring, which is an instrument to get the conversation going, establish trust and make connections (Interviewee 3).

In general, the transformative potential of participatory budgeting lies in challenging current understandings of a lived local democracy through challenging and altering the role understandings of citizens and local government as well as the relation between the two. As put by Hofman (2011: 16[51]) in relation to participatory budgeting more general in the Netherlands: *"Working with a citizen budget increases the responsibility of the citizen for the spending of public resources. You can regard this kind of budgeting also as a search for a new democratic ideal and the breaking through administrative power".*

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[49] Dutch original: "*Opvallend is echter dat het in de Nederlandse participatieprocessen vooral gaat om deelnemen in d adviserende zin. Het 'door burgers begroten' is dan tot nu toe ook beperkt gebleven tot adviserend meepraten over overheidszaken en keuzes maken met buurtzakgeld*".

[50] Dutch original: "*we willen hier de specifieke prijs van dit gebiedje hebben. Zolang je het gebiedje maar arceert en specifiek en heel klein maakt – kun je de vraag nog stellen. Maar om te zeggen je wilt dit voor de hele wijk, dan kun je het niet meer als vraag stellen, dan moet je aan de andere kant alles gebiedsgericht maken*"

[51] Dutch original: "*Werken met een burgerbegroting vergroot de verantwoordelijkheid van burgers voor de besteding van publieke middelen. Je kunt deze manier van begroten ook zien als zoektocht naar een nieuw democratisch ideaal en het doorbreken van de ambtelijke macht".*

# **tran**sformative **s**ocial **i**nnovation **t**heory

## 5.2.2.3 Transformative impact

Clearly, the next question is whether this potential translates into actual impact, thus: is there actual evidence that the participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt has achieved transformative change? While transformative change might still be out of reach and also be too farfetched after having been active for five years only, there are impacts of the participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt on the dominant social context that can be pointed out.

The municipal council took into account the priorities of citizens as outlined in the Citizen Perspective Paper 2013-2014. The results of the third iteration, the Citizen Agenda was timed in line with the policy cycle of the district, and as such was used next to the civil servant-led Area Agenda as a basis for the Area Plan (Interviewee 4, PO). The Citizen Agenda thus has direct influence on the policy plans for the coming year 2015/2016. As put by the director of the CBB "*The biggest success is… that the community has become a serious discussion partner of the government, especially the district. And that one can state… and that has its ups and downs, but that we collectively think about what is important, what we want and we shape the process together. And this changed a lot in comparison with 2011*." (Interviewee 3[52]).

Furthermore, the idea of participatory budgeting is picked up within the Municipality of Amsterdam to be adopted in its other districts – a process that is having its ups and downs (Interviewee 1). In addition, the ideas are also picked up by the national government. The Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations co-financed pilots with budget monitoring in six other locations. There, the CBB trains local municipal staff and citizen groups in using budget monitoring.

In their study on participatory budgeting on a national level, Engbersen et al. (2010: 30[53]) outline that the societal effects are "*still unclear*". They argue that participatory budgeting should profile itself along second-order effects on social relations and give the following examples: "*1. Inhabitants as co-producer and being responsible for the own society; 2. The municipality as a servient party instead of directive and determining; 3. Using the power and quality of citizens as a motor for development; 4. Strengthening the vitality of the local society*" (ibid.[54]). Similar results are outlined by Hofman (2011b: 41[55]) in terms of visible developments: "*the development of the influence of citizens, the development and change of relations between citizens and societal organisations, the development of the relation between local government and citizens in new public arenas*".

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[52] Dutch original: *"Het grootste succes is.. dat de community hier een serieuze gesprekspartner is geworden van de overheid, met name hier van het stadsdeel. En dat je constateert.. en dat gaat met vallen en opstaan, maar dat er in gezamenlijkheid wordt nagedacht over: wat is hier belangrijk, wat willen we hier en hoe geven we samen dat proces vorm? En dat is wel echt heel erg veranderd ten opzichte van 2011."*

[53] Dutch original: *"nog onduidelijk"*

[54] Dutch original: *"1. Bewoners als coproducent en verantwoordelijke van de eigen sociale samenleving; 2. De gemeente als dienstbare partij in plaats van directief bepalend; 3. Het benutten van de kracht en kwaliteit van burgers als motor voor ontwikkeling; 4. Het versterken van de vitaliteit van de lokale samenleving."*

[55] Dutch original: *"de ontwikkeling van de invloed van burgers, de ontwikkeling en verandering van banden van burgers en maatschappelijke organisaties, de ontwikkeling van de lokale overheid – burgerrelatie in nieuwe publieke arena's".*

## 5.3  Agency in (T)SI

TRANSIT is interested in the agency of individual actors, SI-initiatives and SI-networks in transforming their social context. We start with describing the kind of actors involved in participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt (section 5.3.1). From there we describe the agency of the actors involved, i.e. their capacity to co-produce SI with transformative potential and impact (cf. Wittmayer et al. 2015a). In doing so, we first outline the theories of change of specifically the budget monitoring part of the initiative (section 5.3.2), and then zoom in on processes of dis/empowerment. We study the latter in relation to four elements, namely governance, social learning, monitoring and resourcing (section 5.3.3).

### 5.3.1  Actors involved in participatory budgeting and their changing relations

In this section, we first give an overview of the most relevant internal and external actors, namely the Centre for budget monitoring and citizen participation (CBB), the district Amsterdam-Oost, the communities of the Indische Buurt, the participants of the participatory budgeting and Oxfam-Novib and INESC. In a next step we outline the different (changing) relations between these actors.

#### 5.3.1.1   Actors involved in participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt

**Oxfam-Novib/E-Motive and INESC**
As has become clear by now, both INESC as introducing their method to the Netherlands as well as Oxfam-Novib for making this exchange possible through their E-Motive programme played a crucial role in the emergence of the participatory budgeting. However, currently their role is negligible and the contacts are not so regular anymore (Interviewee 6).

**The Centre for budget monitoring and citizen participation (CBB)**



*Figure 5.9: Logo of the CBB*

The centre was founded by two social entrepreneurs Marianne Delzenne and Firoez Azarhoosh as a legal entity through which to receive subsidies (Interviewee 3, CBB and INESC 2012, Smouter 2014). While the latter is still involved, Martijn Kool has replaced the former as Director after her resignation for personal reasons. The CBB is the Dutch contact point of INESC, translated budget monitoring to the Dutch context and continues to initiate the different iterations of participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt. For doing so, it receives incidental financial support from the district administration. In the meanwhile, financed by the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, it also supports other cities in using budget monitoring (Interviewee 1, 3, 10).

**The district Amsterdam-Oost**
While initially hesitant, the District Council and administration embraced the efforts by the CBB and citizens to draw up, prioritize and control the municipal budgets. This was facilitated through the open support for more transparency by one of the Alderman and more specifically by two driven civil servants which retrieved and visualised financial data on a neighbourhood level through a method they termed neighbourhood budget instrument. Their motivation was to understand the allocation of budgets with regard to the areas they were working in (Interviewee 2) as well as to provide citizens with insights into the finances and challenges of the district as related to e.g.

government budget cuts and to raise commitment, legitimacy and acceptation for district activities (Interviewee 6). The district administration welcomed the initiative by the citizens and started to collaborate for the necessary yearly drawing up of Area Plans. A civil servant outlines that "*in the previous period [second iteration] was the climate in Amsterdam-Oost, also politically speaking, ready: we want to do things together with the neighbourhood and are open for new forms of collaboration. We are just going to try it and maybe it is not working*" (Interviewee 4[56]).

## The communities of the Indische Buurt

The Indische Buurt is a neighbourhood praised for its social capital and different citizen groups and organisations (Gündüz and Delzenne 2013, Cadat 2012, CBB and INESC 2012, Temmink 2014, Interviewees 6, 7, 8, 9). As put by two participants of budget monitoring: "*The Indische Buurt traditionally shows a great participatory capacity […] this is part of the DNA of the neighbourhood*" (Interviewee 7[57]) and it is a "*strong community*" (Interviewee 8[58]).

With the declaration of the Indische Buurt as a 'focus neighbourhood' by the national government, a participation broker was installed. S/he outlined that the work was especially fruitful as "*the Indische Buurt [knows] many community leaders of outstanding quality*" (Interviewee 9[59]). The involvement of the national government along with the increased focus on a more active role and participation of citizens led to the foundation of a think tank on social cohesion in the Indische Buurt (Temmink 2014). This think tank focused on co-creation of different actors with one of its ideas being the initiation of neighbourhood communities (Temmink 2014). As put by the participation broker: "*The emergence of the communities was a powerful bottom-up movement which made great impression on the district*" (Interviewee 9[60]). The Indische Buurt is divided in four quadrants (see Figure 5.10) and counts a number of active communities, amongst which the Timor Square Community (since 2006) is the oldest. The Makassar Square Community, established in 2010, is collaborative member of the OIDP network.

These communities are groups of citizens and professionals which link "*policy interests of the urban district with the wishes, motivations and needs of its residents*" (Temmink 2014: 2). They are flexible, volatile and informally organized networks "*in which the local government, formal welfare organisations, civil society organisations, housing corporations, entrepreneurs and citizens cooperate for the well-being of residents*" (Temmink 2014: 6). By way of example, the Makassar Square Community aims "*to improve the living conditions, social cohesion and well-being of residents*" (Temmink 2014: 2). One of its board members outlines as follows: "*A community entails people meeting each other in the neighbourhood. We share the joys, but also the sorrows. We are active citizens, professionals, civil servants and housing corporation staff who join hands. Together we have a lot of knowledge about the square, the urban district, and the culture in the neighbourhood. This means we have a better idea of how to achieve things and how to solve problems in a more sustainable way than others do*" (M. Cadat, quoted in Temmink 2014: 3). The participation broker contents that "*these

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[56] Dutch original: "*in de vorige periode [second iteration] was het klimaat in oost, ook politiek gezien, er klaar voor: we willen dingen samen met de buurt doen en we staan open voor nieuwe vormen van samenwerken. We gaan het gewoon proberen en misschien is dit het niet*"

[57] Dutch original: "*De Indische Buurt heeft van oudsher een enorm participatief vermogen […] dat zit hier blijkbaar in het DNA van de buurt*"

[58] Dutch original: "*Hechte community*"

[59] Dutch original: "*In de Indische Buurt veel gemeenschapsleiders die van uitzonderlijke kwaliteit zijn*"

[60] Dutch original: "*Het ontstaan van de communities was een machtige beweging van onderop die bij het stadsdeel grote indruk heeft gemaakt*"

*communities are not representative*" (Interviewee 9 [61]) given the many different lifestyles and worldviews in the neighbourhood.

*Figure 5.10 The Indische Buurt (Source: Albers et al. 2014b)*
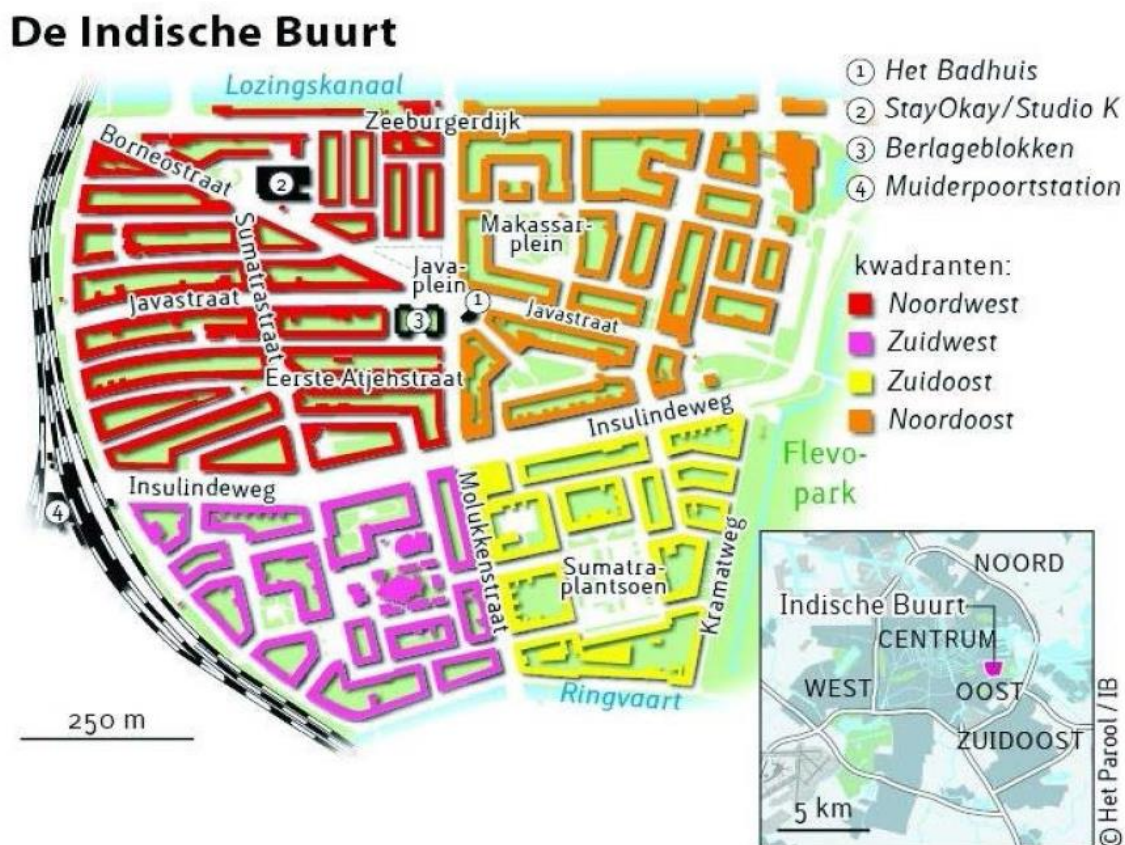


### The participants of participatory budgeting

Different people took part in the different iterations of participatory budgeting throughout the years. These participants need a certain interest in finance and budgets as well as time to spend – during the last iteration the sessions were on a two-weekly basis with 'homework' in between. In terms of motivations, we have very limited data. Outlined by one of the participants is that personal motivation should be central to participating in budget monitoring (Interviewee 8). One of the participants indicated that "*I am part of this society and I do not only make this known once every four years by colouring a little box with a red pencil*" (Interviewee 7[62]) – she thus sees the participation as expression of her being part of society. Similarly another participant outlined that citizens can be a mirror for the political representatives through these kind of activities (Interviewee 8).

In the first iteration, participants seem to have been drawn from the communities of the Indische Buurt (CBB and INESC 2012). With regard to the last iteration, both participants we interviewed indicated that they had been asked by the trainers of the CBB whether they would like to join (Interviewee 7, 8). There are different ideas on whether or not the group can be regarded as

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[61] Dutch original: "*Die communities zijn niet representatief*"

[62] Dutch original: "*[...] ik ben deel van deze samenleving en dat uit ik niet maar 1x in de vier jaar door een heel klein vakje rood in te kleuren.*"

representative and what difference this makes. A participant of an earlier iteration states "*it is an elite which is doing it currently, chosen managers of the neighbourhood*" and he qualifies this as follows: "*It should not be the case that more than half of the group consists of civil servants, social professionals, facilitators and politicians*" as quality and diversity are necessary to have long-term effects (Interviewee 6[63]). A participant of the last iteration contends: "*the elite, but from a cross-section*" (Interviewee 7[64]). Another participant contemplates: "*maybe it becomes a self-created elite, but is this worrying if they are talking to inhabitants which are part of society? This is what I ask myself. If others want to join, they are welcome*" (Interviewee 8[65]). Also the participating civil servants are aware of this: "*You understand that the group you are talking to is not entirely representative, but you take that into account".* (Interviewee 4[66]). The participation broker outlines that it is not about searching for a representative group, but rather for allies (Interviewee 9).

There have always been efforts to include the opinions and priorities of others – to make the process more inclusive. For this end, participants including civil servants of the district administration went on the streets with a questionnaire to learn about the priorities of their fellow inhabitants during the first iteration. This became the Citizen Perspective Nota. However, again the last iteration is conceived very differently. A participant of an earlier iteration holds that "*One is not mobilising the neighbourhood [because] that is scary and one does not take human rights as starting point*" (Interviewee 6[67]).

*Figure 5.11: Picture of different budget monitoring sessions (Source: CBB 2014a)*



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[63] Dutch original: "*het is een elite die dat op dit moment doet, gekozen bestuurders van de wijkradar*" and: *"Het kan niet zo zijn dat meer dan de helft van zo'n groep bestaat uit ambtenaren, sociaal medewerkers, begeleiders en politici"*

[64] Dutch original: "*De bovenlaag, wel van een dwarsdoorsnede*"

[65] Dutch original: " [...] *misschien wordt het een zelfgecreëerde elite, maar is dat erg als zij met de bewoners praten nog in de maatschappij staan? Dat vraag ik me af. Als anderen mee willen doen, zijn ze welkom*"

[66] Dutch original: *"Je beseft je ook dat de groep waarmee je praat niet helemaal representatief is, maar daar hou je rekening mee"*

[67] Dutch original: *"Men gaat niet in de wijk mobiliseren, dat is eng en men gaat niet de mensenrechten als uitgangspunt nemen"*

**The dis/empowerment of participants of participatory budgeting**

Empowerment of participants is explicitly mentioned as one of the effects of budget monitoring in the Indische Buurt (CBB and INESC 2012), and confirmed by studies of other participatory budgeting methods which "*stimulate[…] the empowerment of inhabitants*" (Engbersen et al. 2010: 22[68]). Based on feedback by participants, CBB and INESC (2012: 19) maintain that "[*o]ne of the effects of the roadmap is that participants feel stronger*" and that *"[t]he methodology helps to believe in their own abilities and strength and can, therefore, lead to enhanced citizenship*". One of the participants we interviewed takes this a step further, for him/her participatory budgeting is a tool through which to have the political representatives work for the neighbourhood (Interviewee 8).

Research by Master students of the Free University of Amsterdam on the best practices and challenges of budget monitoring in the Indische Buurt showed that one of their respondents, a participant felt taken serious because "*he could suggest ideas that were listened to*" (Albers et al. 2014a: 51). Other participants interviewed for that study declared that they received admiration and appreciation from the district "*for putting their time and effort into learning and understanding the difficult material of budget monitoring*" (Albers et al. 2014a: 52). To us, one of the participants explained that participating in budget monitoring brought him/her more contacts in the neighbourhood and that s/he made friendships. S/He sees budget monitoring as "*a mirror for the neighbourhood"* (Interviewee 8[69]). Also knowledge gain and an increased understanding of the political system have been reported: "*That you as citizens understand a bit what kind of processes are behind this whole budget thing, behind the choices for priorities, how this comes about*" (Interviewee 7[70]). Participation in budget monitoring specifically and in participatory budgeting more general, thus can be said to lead to enhanced feelings of competence and impact, as well as new knowledge and networks for those involved.

However, there are also instances of disempowerment. One of our interviewees expressed that she also looks at it with a cynical eye: "*There is influence, but to what extent is there influence? Has it not already been on the agenda? And is it not really nice that there is such a group of idiots which gives the government legitimacy?*" and later in the interview "*on a lot of counts it is also just legitimation*" (Interviewee 7[71]).

### 5.3.1.2   Changing relations between actors of participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt

There are different roles for actors mentioned in the studied documents and interviews. These include citizens, volunteers, local government, municipality, policy makers, civil officers, communities, neighbourhood organisations, inhabitants, housing cooperation, healthcare institutions, entrepreneurs, stakeholders in the neighbourhood. The main emphasis is on the relation between (local) government and citizens. The discourses to which participatory budgeting is connected, such as participatory democracy or participation society do contribute to a blurring of the boundary between the formalized role of the citizen and the informal role of the inhabitant. We

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[68] Dutch original: *"stimuleert het empowerment van bewoners"*

[69] Dutch original: "*spiegel naar de buurt*"

[70] Dutch original: "*Dat je een beetje doorkrijgt als burger wat voor processen er zitten achter dat hele budget gebeuren, achter de keuzes voor prioriteiten, hoe dat tot stand komt.*"

[71] Dutch original: "*Er is invloed, maar ja in hoeverre is er invloed? Stond het niet al op de agenda? En is het niet heel fijn dat er dan een clubje idioten is die dan zo'n overheid enige legitimiteit geeft*" and: "*op veel punten is het ook wel een legitimering*".

therefore focus on the changing roles of citizens and citizen organisations, civil servants and the district.

*Figure 5.12: Actor map of participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt[72]*
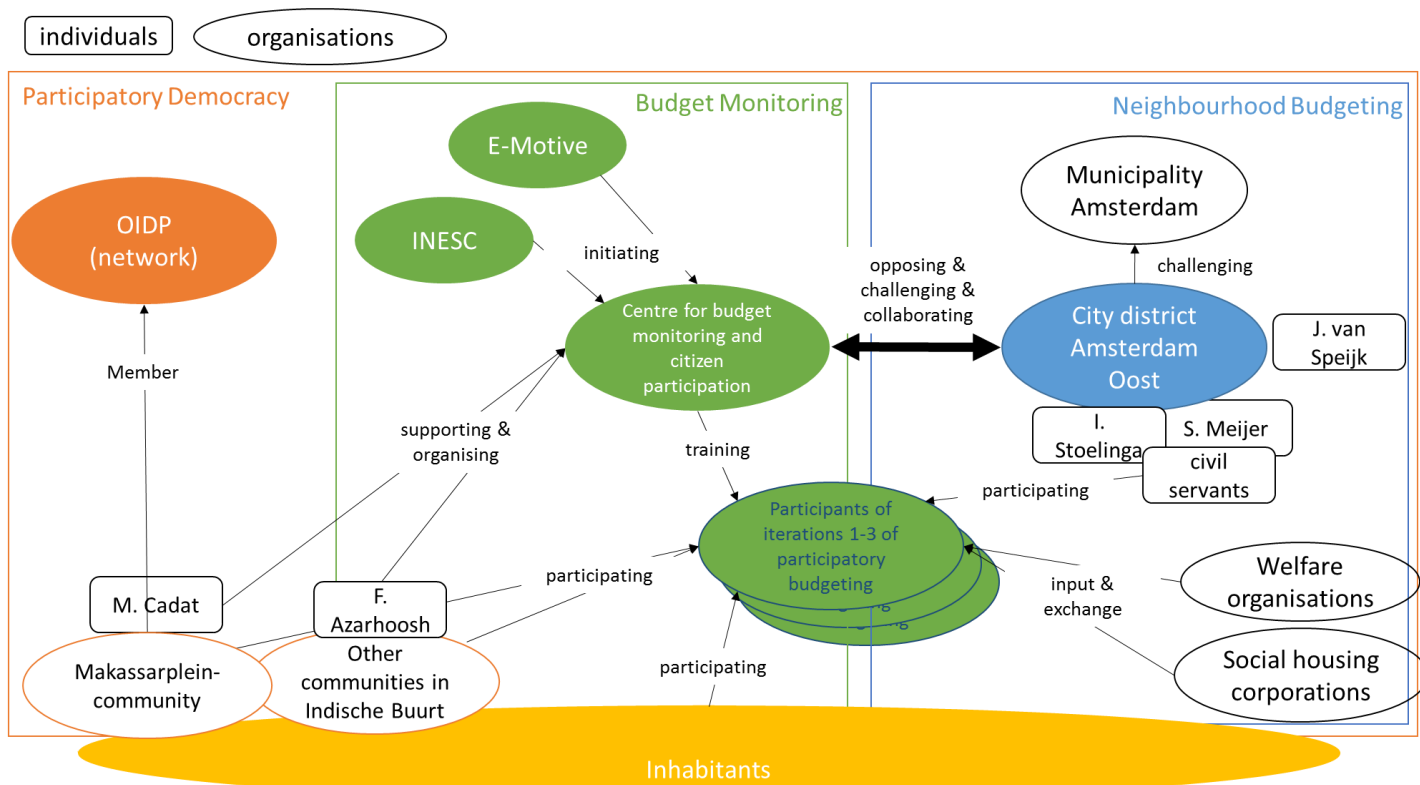


**Changing roles of citizens and citizen organisations**
For budget monitoring, citizens engage in activities (see Table 5.2 above – outlining the new ways of doing) not hitherto considered as being part of what citizens do. Broadly speaking, this includes drawing up, prioritising and/or controlling the public budget (CBB 2014, 2014b, Smouter 2014). The fact that budget monitoring would be done by people without a background in finance "*implied that people who never studied budgets before had to be trained to monitor budgets*" (Gündüz and Delzenne 2013). Through the CBB-provided training and through engaging in participatory budgeting, participants increased their knowledge and understanding of the policy making process especially with regard to budgeting and distribution of resources but also in regard to 'how' a government works in terms of structures (cf. Interviewee 7). This knowledge puts them in a better position to think along critically and control public policy (Cadat 2015, CBB and INESC 2012). The major activity in the Indische Buurt is the prioritisation: "*before they open the books, the volunteers determine the priorities of the neighbourhood*" (Smouter 2014[73]).

In their nation-wide study on citizen budgets, Engbersen (2010) outline that this method can lead to more citizens becoming committed and active as volunteers also from different backgrounds. They also express that quarrel amongst citizens or different groups of citizens are much less likely than could be expected (ibid.).

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[72] This actor map shows the main initiating actors of participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt.

[73] Dutch original: "*Voor ze de boeken openen, bepalen de vrijwilligers welke prioriteiten er in de buurt zijn*"

### Changing roles of civil servants and the district

With more interference of citizens in what was hitherto seen as activities of the state, also the role of civil servants and the district changes. Engbersen et al. (2010: 53[74]) outline this changing role as follows: "*More than before, it is facilitating with regard to initiatives of citizens. Civil servants acquire this role with ups-and-downs*". Temmink (2014: 2) outlines the sphere in the Indische Buurt for citizen initiatives as "*enabling and facilitating environment where the (local) government-supported citizen initiatives are aligned well with the central governmental policies for neighbourhood improvement*". This is what we also see when we take budget monitoring as citizen initiative and the neighbourhood budget instrument as municipality-led initiative together.

However, in the beginning, the district was not prepared (and not ready) to share financial data (Gündüz and Delzenne 2013, CBB and INESC 2012). Also, other districts in Amsterdam are hesitant to use the model as it requires time and commitment by civil servants to retrieve the data and courage to go public with data that might not be perfect (Interviewee 4). As such, budget monitoring and the neighbourhood budget instrument ask for a more humble and cooperative attitude of the municipality vis-à-vis the public. As outlined by the brochure on the neighbourhood budget instrument: "*The district understood that inhabitants would like to be involved. Insights into the way of working of the municipality are produced and discussions are started. This creates new entry points through which not policy but the neighbourhood gains a central place*" (CBB 2014b: 12[75]).

However, participatory budgeting also provides civil servants with direct contact with citizens which is valued within the district Amsterdam-Oost. As put by a civil servant of Amsterdam-Oost who wondered whether she would be able to get her colleagues along: "*Actually, everybody really likes to do it. [...] These are topics that touch one as a civil servant, such as employment, poverty, youth and to then take this up with people from the neighbourhood [...] Then this makes it a really nice task.*" (Interviewee 4[76]). The participation broker agrees with him/her: "*This was very appealing to some entreprenerial civil servants: 'finally I do not sit at the office but really do things together with people from the neighbourhood*". She continues that the civil servants "*also were a bit proud because they knew better than the councillors who could not read the budget*" (Interviewee 9[77]).

There are moments when this contact suffers from internal routines – especially during the last iteration when due to the reorganisation of the Municipality of Amsterdam financial data was not made available. As outlined by the same civil servant of Amsterdam-Oost: "*One has to be honest towards each other [...] that they [the neighbourhood] had actually wanted to be 6 steps further. They had wanted to contribute in the earlier area plans. I say yes: sometimes you are just not that far with each other and then you have to be honest and name this and keep the conversation about this going. Of course, we also wanted to be further by now. But yes, this is the tempo. [...] This was depressing with the neighbourhood budget instrument. Then we went a step back, we had been further and had been*

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[74] Dutch original: *"Meer dan vroeger is hij faciliterend ten aanzien van initiatieven van burgers. Met vallen en opstaan maken ambtenaren zich deze rol eigen"*

[75] Dutch original: "*Het stadsdeel heeft ervaren dat bewoners graag betrokken worden. Er ontstaat inzicht in de werkwijze van de gemeente en de discussie komt op gang. Dat creëert nieuwe ingangen waardoor niet het beleid maar de buurt centraal komt te staan.*"

[76] Dutch original: *"Eigenlijk vindt iedereen het hartstikke leuk om te doen [...] Het zijn toch onderwerpen wat jou als ambtenaar werkgelegenheid, armoede of jeugd, dan is dat een thema wat jou raakt en om dat dan samen op te pakken met mensen in de buurt [...] Dan is dat eigenlijk heel leuk om dat te doen."*

[77] Dutch original: "*Dat sprak een aantal ondernemende ambtenaren heel erg aan: 'eindelijk zit ik hier niet op het stadsdeelkantoor maar ga ik het echt met mensen uit de wijk samen doen'.*" And "*[...] werden ook een beetje trots omdat ze beter waren dan de raadsleden die de begroting niet konden lezen*"

*set back. This is really frustrating and that is also nothing you can sell. But as long as we can take steps forward, yes, it does not go so fast then, that is frustrating once in a while"* (Interviewee 4[78]) Thus different internal structures and working routines, i.e. also more internal transparency in relation to budgeting, are needed. Three challenges for civil servants in relation to citizen budgets have been put on the table: the need to liaise with inhabitants, to learn new skills and to deal with internal resistance within the municipal organisation (Engbersen et al. 2010). The latter was also reported by a civil servant of the district Amsterdam-Oost: *"We have to take people along internally, but also in the neighbourhood. Some people there, if you go too fast, maybe they drop out or others cannot join, they 'miss the boat'"* (Interviewee 4[79]). It is especially that commitment by civil servants which is posited as one of the preconditions for citizen budgets to be successful (Engbersen et al. 2010) – especially so as they are the ones that can provide the necessary transparency of financial data (CBB 2014b). Also this we can see back in the Indische Buurt – it was through the work of devoted civil servants that the neighbourhood budget instrument was developed and provided a high degree of budget transparency on the neighbourhood level (CBB 2014b). The third iteration, after the reorganisation of the Municipality of Amsterdam also showed that the budget monitoring is less effective and less impactful without the budget specifications which can only be retrieved within the municipal organisation (Interviewee 5, 6).

### Creating closer links between different actors on the district level
With both roles – those of citizens and communities as well as those of civil servants and state organisations changing, also the relation between these two parties changes. Participatory budgeting is a method that increases interaction between the two groups. As outlined by the CBB (2014b: 3[80]) *"With the neighbourhood budget instrument we build a bridge between government and citizens"*. It also fosters a different kind of dynamics as outlined by one of the involved civil servants: *"The new dynamic, where citizens critically examine the functioning of the government and where the municipality can account correctly for its actions, this is the way that we want to shape the future"* (I. Stoelinga, quoted in Van Roosmalen 2014[81]). The relationship seemingly becomes more 'equal': *"Working with inhabitants budgets asks for a turn towards a municipal bureaucracy which stands next to the citizen instead of opposite him/her"* (Engbersen et al. 2010: 35[82]). Or rather, the dependency of the municipality on citizens becomes visible in the reasoning of a founding member of the CBB, who claims that the politicians need citizens to define priorities in spending money: *"They need us for this. We are their eyes and ears"* (F. Azarhoosh, quoted in Smouter 2014[83]).

There are also cautious voices about the close collaboration: *"The difficulty was: if you involve the Board [of the district] closely in the [budget monitoring] trajectory in the context of The Netherlands*

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[78] Dutch original: *"Je moet wel eerlijk zijn naar elkaar toe […] dat zij [de buurt] ook al 6 stappen verder hadden willen zijn. Dus ook al in een eerder buurtplan hadden ze mee willen schrijven. Ik zeg van ja: Soms dan ben je gewoon nog niet zo ver met elkaar en daar moet je dan eerlijk over zijn en met elkaar over blijven praten. Natuurlijk wilden wij nu ook al verder zijn. Maar ja, dit is het tempo. […] Dat was het nare met die buurtbegroting. Toen ging je echt een stap naar achteren en waren we verder en zijn we terug gezet, dat is heel frustrerend en dat is ook eigenlijk niet te verkopen. Maar zolang je wel stappen vooruit blijft zetten.. ja dan gaat het niet zo snel en ja, dat is frustrerend af en toe."*

[79] Dutch original: *"Wij moeten intern mensen mee nemen, maar de buurt moet ook.., sommige mensen daar, als je daar te snel gaat, dan haken er ook misschien weer mensen af of mensen komen er niet bij 'die missen dan de trein'."*

[80] Dutch original: *"Met de buurtbegroting slaan we een brug tussen overheid en bewoners"*

[81] Dutch original: *"Die nieuwe dynamiek, waarbij de burger kritisch kijkt naar het functioneren van de overheid en de gemeente goed kan verantwoorden waar zij mee bezig is, is de wijze waarop wij de toekomst vorm willen geven"*

[82] Dutch original: *"Werken met bewonersbudgetten vergt een omslag naar een ambtelijke organisatie die naast de burger staat in plaats van ertegenover"*

[83] Dutch original: *"Die hebben ons daarbij nodig. Wij zijn hun ogen en oren"*

*anno 2012, what is your point of attention?*" (Interviewee 6[84]). In addition, more interaction also leads to collisions between civil servants and citizens, e.g. if wishes of inhabitants are not in line with municipal policy or if they collide with municipal working routines (Engbersen et al. 2010).

## 5.3.2  Theories of Change

The processes through which actors imagine alternatives and transform themselves, their relations and their social contexts are also aspects of agency (cf. Wittmayer et al. 2015a). In this section we focus on theories of change sets "o*f ideas, framings and assumptions about how change comes about*" (ibid: 34), that the budget monitoring part of the SI-initiative holds – this includes their problem understanding, their future vision, principal actors who bring about the change and through which ways and means (cf. Wittmayer et al. 2015b).

In its original Brazilian context, budget monitoring is strongly framed in a human rights and emancipatory discourse, and focuses on governmental transparency, social justice, fighting corruption and gaining political influence (Gündüz and Delzenne 2013, Mertens 2011, Smouter 2014). Humans are considered to be subjected to hegemonic powers of oppression and inequality (Cardoso et al. 2013). The main **problem** identified refers to the huge gap between a governmental commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and an actual translation of this commitment in policies and budgets. What is aimed for are "*new patterns of freedom, equality, respect and dignity*" (CBB and INESC 2012: 5) in our societies as well as to "*guarantee human rights and social justice*" and "*to make governments accountable*" (ibid: 4). This **vision** is closely connected to the realization of human rights to increase social justice through ensuring the fair redistribution of resources. More plainly it is "*to establish concrete relations between public budget, guarantee of rights and confrontation of social inequalities*" (CBB and INESC 2012: 19).

This original vision has become diluted or adapted through its translation to the Dutch context. While, this thinking lives on in the discourse and practice of some, the emphasis shifted for the currently mainly involved actors in the processes in the Indische Buurt towards revitalizing democracy through citizen commitment and responsibility. One interviewee conceives of this shift in emphasis much more as a divide, for him one cannot talk about budget monitoring if one disregards the human rights aspect – for him this dilution of the original concept has also lead to tensions in the initiative (Interviewee 6). In the words of the current director of the CBB, the vision is to revitalize democracy and to increase the commitment of citizens (Interviewee 3).

**Actors** who can drive this envisioned change (i.e. realization of human rights and social justice as well as revitalization of democracy) are active and empowered citizens in the original discourse. These can use different **means** such as budget monitoring to hold their governments accountable for and influence their spending. Education is an important **way** through which to bring about change. Referring to the work of Paulo Freire on popular education, the CBB and INESC (2012: 5) outline: "*Popular education is instrumental in building better societies and democracies, since it facilitates the identification of those citizens and groups which are living apart of society [...] to participate in building the public arena*". Therefore a strong emphasis is on the training elements that are part of every budget monitoring iteration in the Indische Buurt. As outlined in their brochure: "*The construction and development of participatory educational processes are important and necessary for the exchange of knowledge that promotes the evolution of our democracies. This can open up possibilities to the empowerment of discriminated groups and marginalized communities and make*

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[84] Dutch original: *"De bedenking was: als je het bestuur nauw betrekt bij het traject in de context van Nederland anno 2012, vanuit welk speerpunt doe je dat dan?"*

*them active and mobilized citizens*" (CBB and INESC 2012: 5). Through education or capacity building, people become empowered and emancipated to either develop or take part in "*processes of social mobilization, that can allow such groups to demand accountability from their governments, at local and national level, about the public decision taken in the name of all*" (CBB and INESC 2012: 3). Cardoso et al. (2013: 17) see the change taking place "*in a dialogical, intersubjective, community-based fashion, through the actual transformation of the structures that oppressed subjects who, after emerging as historical subjects or subjects of rights, educate themselves through the process itself, becoming political subjects as well*". Change thus comes about through the creation of "*conditions for participation in, and democratic control over government, using the public budget as a starting point*" (CBB and INESC 2012: 4).

In the Indische Buurt this dialectic between citizen and governments is less pronounced. Possibly due to the long standing collaborative governance culture of the Netherlands, also the local government is seen as a change agent. Change is seen to come about through the collaboration of the citizens and local governments and administrations. For the Director of the CBB, methods such as budget monitoring facilitate communication between citizens and state organs through creating a common language (Interviewee 3).

## 5.3.3 Four elements of dis/empowerment processes

In this section we further describe four elements of empowerment and agency, namely governance, monitoring, resourcing and social learning. These themes "*are not only activities that actors intentionally engage with, they also manifest as dominant institutions, structures and discourses that prescribe standardised ways of doing, organising, framing and knowing*" (Wittmayer et al. 2015a: 35). For each of these elements we describe the arrangements of the participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt and in how far these can be considered socially innovative.

### 5.3.3.1 Internal and external governance arrangements

With governance, we refer to "*processes of governing (regulating, decision-making, steering) by all types of actors (including but not confined to government).*" (ibid: 35). Generally, it can be said that the initiative is not one coherent set of actors. While specific organisational actors have been involved in all three iterations, such as the CBB and the district administration, individual actors have been changing and also taking ideas further in other contexts.

With regards to budget monitoring, it is the CBB which is driving the different iterations (Interviewee 4). They provide trainers and invite participants, including representatives from the district administration. The trainers receive a compensation for their work. As put by a civil servant of the district administration: "*Budget monitoring is really done through the centrum [CBB], and we join in, we participate. It is their thing. I am invited and I come*" (Interviewee 4 [85]). For the neighbourhood budget instrument, the lead is clearly within the municipality and it has been residing in a collaboration of the neighbourhood management department and the financial department (CBB 2014b) within the former district municipal structure. Through their input they supported the budget monitoring training: "*The support consists of providing information by means of the neighbourhood budget instrument. In addition, civil servants have been present throughout the training to support the participants, to search for financial information and to verify documents. The*

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[85] Dutch original: "*Budget monitoring op zich wordt echt door het centrum gedaan, en wij doen daar aan mee, wij participeren daar in. Het is hun ding. Ik word uitgenodigd en ik kom*"

*civil servants work in duo's consisting of an employee of financial policy and an employee from neighbourhood management*" (CBB 2014b: 8[86]).

In the last iteration, the participatory budgeting group saw their output (e.g. Citizen Perspective Paper) being taken up by the district administration to be integrated in the Area Plan 2016 – the latter process is driven by the area team of the district administration who then invites citizens (Interviewee 3, PO). Through the increasing intertwinement of the civic-driven and the municipality-driven process, the boundaries between them become blurred and it resembles much more a process of collaboration. As nicely put by Hofman (2011: 52[87]) in relation to the citizen budget in general: "*The citizen budget is a process of collaboration in decision making. This means: citizens have influence and co-decide in the preparation of parts of the budget and in making the investment plans*".

In terms of external governance this collaboration process takes place under close supervision of the municipal council, who accords the area plan and has the final say over the budget allocations. A number of judicial problems related to governance issues are outlined by Engbersen et al (2010) for participatory budgeting more in general, such as allocation of responsibility between actors, existence of a grievance procedure, funding dependencies.

### 5.3.3.2   Monitoring and evaluation

With monitoring, we refer to "*the process that actors use to evaluate the impact/progress of their initiative/network on/in the context of the surrounding societal systems*". (Wittmayer et al. 2015a: 35). There is no systematic or regular evaluation of the activities taking place. However, we can distinguish between internal and external evaluatory activities.

In terms of internal evaluation, the different brochures that have been issued on budget monitoring and the neighbourhood budget instrument in the Indische Buurt refer to two evaluations that have taken place (CBB and INESC 2012, CBB 2014a, 2014b). While in 2012, there has been an evaluation meeting of the budget monitoring group (CBB and INESC 2012), in 2013/14 the Financial Policy Department of the district administration had issued an evaluation. The latter concluded that "t*he experiences with the training group shows that inhabitants can and want to talk more and on a deeper level about finances and financial matters*" (CBB 2014b: 12[88]). Both evaluations seem to have focused on the experiences of the involved citizens and were used to further develop and adapt the method. This has been outlined as follows: "*The inhabitants, employees, council members and board members of the district and all others involved in the last years could get acquainted with the neighbourhood budget instrument, each year a step further in its development. Also this year the neighbourhood budget instrument is further developed and innovated*" (CBB 2014b: 3[89]).

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[86] Dutch original: "*De ondersteuning bestaat uit informatieverstrekking door middel van de buurtbegroting. Bovendien zijn tijdens de training steeds ambtenaren aanwezig geweest om de deelnemers te ondersteunen, financiële informatie op te zoeken en documenten te verifiëren. De ambtenaren werken in duo's, bestaande uit een medewerker financieel beleid en een medewerker buurtregie*"

[87] Dutch original: "*De burgerbegroting is een proces van besluitvormende samenwerking. Dat wil zeggen: meebeslissende invloed van burgers bij het opstellen van delen van de begroting en het maken van investeringsplannen*

[88] Dutch original: "*De ervaringen van de trainingsgroep laten zien dat bewoners op meer en dieper niveau mee kunnen en willen praten over financiën en financiële zaken.*"

[89] Dutch original: "*Met deze buurtbegroting hebben de bewoners, medewerkers, raadsleden en bestuurders van het stadsdeel en alle andere betrokkenen de afgelopen jaren kennis kunnen maken, elk jaar een stapje verder in zijn ontwikkeling. En ook dit jaar is de buurtbegroting weer verder ontwikkeld en vernieuwd*"

An external evaluation took place through a group of Master students of the Free University of Amsterdam, who researched the best practices and challenges based on the perspectives of participants and other stakeholders with the goal to issue recommendations for improving the process (Albers et al. 2014a, 2014b). A participant of the last iteration outlined that it is the moment that you present it to the political representative that is an 'evaluation': "*We did have an evaluation with the politicians. A presentation of what we had done, and then you directly have your evaluation, because you present it*" (Interviewee 8[90]).

### 5.3.3.3   Resourcing

With resourcing, we refer to "*the process by which actors acquire the resources they need to attain their goals. […] Resources can be defined broadly as persons, assets, materials or capital, including human, mental, monetary, artificial  and natural resources*" (Wittmayer et al. 2015a: 35). We focus on financial and human resources as well as information as a resource.

In terms of financial resources, the CBB as the main driver of the budget monitoring processes in the Indische Buurt relies on financial contributions from the district. These are no structural contributions, these are project-based: the CBB gets paid for each year's budget monitoring training to a group of citizens (Interviewee 3, 4, 6, 10). There is also a subsidy from the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations for training local administrations and citizens in budget monitoring in other Dutch cities, these trainings are co-financed by the municipalities (Interviewee 6, 10). In the beginning, Oxfam-Novib as part of their E-Motive programme subsidized two trajectories to develop budget monitoring for the Netherlands (Interviewee 6). Interestingly there are different interpretations of the meaning of external funding for the budget monitoring. One participant emphasized that budget monitoring wished not to receive money from the district to retain their "*independent position*" (Interviewee 8). The civil servant responsible for drawing up the Area Plan explained that support for budget monitoring was included to assure commitment from the district in terms of human resources (PO).

In terms of human resources, the processes rely a lot on volunteering – thus the time investment of citizens in the participatory budgeting processes as well as those of the volunteer trainers of the CBB. However, the latter receive a certain financial compensation (Interviewee 8, 10). According to Albers et al. (2014a) not all participants attended every meeting because it was too time consuming. The requirement to attend weekly or bi-weekly meetings over some months, made it also difficult to find candidates (Albers et al. 2014a).

Finally, in terms of information as a resource, participatory budgeting drew much on the information provided by INESC as resources to establish a Dutch version of budget monitoring. The resource which is at the heart of the initiative is 'information'– as without the information on the financial data no monitoring is possible. Obtaining the information needed to actually monitor the budgets, has not been easy at all times. During the first iteration the CBB searched for publicly available financial documents of the municipality and translated it into accessible material. During the second iteration, the neighbourhood budget instrument provided by the district administration made the financial information much more easily accessible. The municipal reorganisation in spring 2014 meant a big step back as central municipal departments were not prepared to share data.

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[90] Dutch original: "*We hebben een evaluatie gehad met de politiek er bij. Een presentatie van 'dit hebben we gedaan', en dan heb je ook direct je evaluatie omdat je het presenteert*"

### 5.3.3.4   Social Learning

With social learning, we refer to "*processes of learning (acquiring information, knowledge, experience), between individuals and groups at the level of the initiative/network, but also beyond the initiative/network to the broader social context.*" (Wittmayer et al. 2015a: 35). Social learning processes are closely intertwined with monitoring and evaluating processes. As outlined under section 5.3.3.2, the evaluations performed were mainly used to improve and adapt the method for the following iteration. Therefore it is safe to say, that there was learning culture – especially related to budget monitoring. Social learning also plays out in two additional aspects, firstly through the importance of popular education in the theory of change, which translates into trainings for the budget monitoring group and secondly, through the focus on sharing lessons and methodology of both budget monitoring and the neighbourhood budget instrument within a broader social context.

Trainings are an important part of the budget monitoring activities with the goal to teach about the human rights background and to support participants in understanding the public budget (CBB 2014b, Interviewee 6). The training is organised by the CBB but is done in cooperation with the district administration (CBB 2014b). As outlined under the theory of change section (see section 5.3.2) trainings are considered in the light of popular education and as such contribute to the vision of social justice and human rights.  As put by CBB and INESC (2012: 5) "*Education that promotes citizenship and mobilization allows the expansion of knowledge, political participation and improvement of living conditions*". Knowledge in this regard is considered "*an instrument of emancipation and promotes solidarity*" (CBB and INESC 2012: 5). Also, it is acknowledged that learning is in essence a social process: "*Popular education is not intended as an educational activity for one person or several people, but with people, exchanging experiences and sharing knowledge, and by doing so, sharing power. This approach values the collective dimension of the educational process and is permeated by a political view that includes the ideas of social change, freedom, justice, equality and happiness.*" (CBB and INESC 2012: 5).

Lastly, the participatory budgeting initiative engages in processes of sharing information with the broader societal context. This takes place through publications, both in Dutch (Cadat 2012, 2014, CBB 2014a, 2014b) and English (CBB and INESC 2012, Gündüz and Delzenne 2013), as well as through video clips posted on YouTube[91].

## 5.4   Summary, synthesis, conclusion

Participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt asks for more budget transparency and accountability on the local level and strengthens participatory democracy by increasing the awareness, knowledge and influence of citizens in the neighbourhood about and on the municipal budget. Through a co-creation process between district administration and citizens, district policies, written down in the area plan, are arrived at.

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[91] Selection of videos available via YouTube: INESC & budget monitoring: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1CKiJ5H_oQI; Study tour budget monitoring – 1st day: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1f0r08Fs8k4; Study tour budget monitoring – looking forward and back: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H9E4VUAoeFk; The week of the Indische Buurt: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a-BtUBhILN8; Budget monitoring – from a human rights perspective: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KEymK7my34s; and Iara Pietricovsky de Oliveira: a message to the Indische Buurt: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xpr_jRQ94x4

# transformative social innovation theory

### Emergence of participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt

Participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt emerged out of two distinct initiatives: On the one hand, a community-initiated stream putting budget monitoring on the agenda and on the other hand a municipality-initiated stream focusing on the neighbourhood budget instrument. Budget monitoring focuses on increasing citizen participation in municipal budgeting and was initiated through a 'reversed development' collaboration between active social entrepreneurs and INESC, a NGO in Brazil. The neighbourhood budget instrument focuses on re-organizing local administrations in a way that makes budgets more transparent for both the internal organisation and an external public and pays tribute to an increasing demand for more open and transparent government as well as more area-focused working.

Participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt is a social innovation, in that it refers to ideas and activities which imply and demonstrate a change in social relations that are associated with

- new ways of doing: the collaboration of citizens and civil servants in drawing up an area plan based on the municipal-led area agenda and the citizen-led outcome of budget monitoring
- new ways of organising: new modes of organizing internal municipal processes and processes between local government and citizenry (i.e. co-creation)
- new ways of framing: participatory budgeting as related to participatory democracy, 'participation society' and new relations between government and citizenry, human rights and transparency
- and new ways of knowing: working with different kinds of knowledges and competences to collaboratively draw up an alternative municipal budget and set priorities

### TSI Dynamics

Participatory Budgeting in the Indische Buurt was enabled and/or inhibited by a number of contemporary social context factors and also was able to play into these.

Reverse development efforts, importing solutions from the Global South to the Netherlands, made introduction of budget monitoring in the Netherlands possible in the first place. These initial ideas on budget monitoring are connected to human rights discourses. While these aspects took a back seat in developing and adapting budget monitoring to the Dutch context, what became more important are discourses, trends and practices that question the relation between government and citizens, such as 'active citizenship', 'participation society', 'Big Society', 'area-focused working' or participatory democracy. Budget monitoring became a tool through which to address and newly define the relation between citizens and their representatives and through which citizens gain influence on local policy making. However, the budget authority does remain with the representative and elected City Council. Both, budget monitoring and the neighbourhood budget instrument are enabled by information and communication technologies and digitalization which play into current discourses and trends towards open government and transparent policy making. A local restructuring of the Municipality of Amsterdam, inhibited the further development of the participatory budgeting – as it severely compromised the access to budget information.

Areas, for which participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt has transformative ambitions include the re-invention of the role of the citizen, as well as the role and internal processes of the government and of the relation between the two. It is considered as participatory mechanism "*for enhancing democracy and creat[ing] a fair and sustainable society*" (CBB and INESC 2012: 11). In general, the transformative potential of participatory budgeting lies in challenging current understandings of a lived local democracy through challenging and altering the role understandings of citizens and local government as well as the relation between the two. It challenges and alters the current role understanding of a citizen, which now includes activities such as actively working with the local government on drawing up a common policy plan. It also challenges and alters the current role

understandings and routines of local administration and government in that it can lead to more transparency in government finances and less corruption as well as quality improvement of services and infrastructures. However, while it challenges the primacy of budget decisions held by the Council, it does not threaten it nor did it change this structure. Rather, through its presence it is altering the role of the Council in regard to the budgeting. In its fifth year, participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt did to date not have transformative impact, while it did have a number of remarkable impacts. Most notably, through this new practice, citizens did have a more direct impact on policy making and were actively collaborating with local government in drawing up the policy plans for 2015/2016 (the so-called Area Plan). Furthermore, the idea of participatory budgeting is picked up within the Municipality of Amsterdam to be adopted in its other districts as well as within other municipalities.

### TSI-Agency
The main actors in the participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt include the Centre for Budget Monitoring and Citizen Participation (CBB), the district Amsterdam-Oost, the communities of the Indische Buurt, the participants of the participatory budgeting and Oxfam-Novib and INESC. The important triangle are the interactions between citizens, local administration and local government. The Indische Buurt has very active civil society actors, who currently have a very productive and good relationship with the local administration. However, especially related to the participatory budgeting activities, these relations had been antagonistic and only step-by-step have they evolved into the close collaboration on together drawing up a policy plan for the area which could be witnessed in 2014/2015.

Participants do report individual empowerment such as learning, a sense of impact or new understanding and insights into the system. Also disempowerment was reported: it was not fully clear in how far citizens were 'used' to legitimize current policies. Those participating are an exclusive group in that they are commonly referred to as either willing, or part of an elite, they also have the necessary time to get engaged. However, an effort had been made to include the perspectives of a broader groups through collecting opinions via questionnaires.

In terms of Governance, as one of the four elements of empowerment and agency, it is the CBB and the district administration which are the constant factor in the participatory budgeting processes over the years. With regard to the community-initiated trajectory, budget monitoring, the CBB provides the trainers and invites participants, while the district municipality participates and takes the results further. For the neighbourhood budget instrument, the lead is clearly within the municipality and it has been residing in a collaboration of the neighbourhood management department and the financial department within the former district munical structure. Through the increasing intertwinement of these two processes, the boundaries between them become blurred and it resembles much more a process of collaboration. However, both are under close supervision by the municipal council, who accords the Area Plan and has the final say over the budget allocation. The second element of empowerment and agency, Monitoring, is not done systematically or regularly – there have been incidental internal and external evaluatory activities. Two internal evaluations have been taken place (for an early iteration of budget monitoring and an early version of the neighbourhood budget instrument). These seem to have focused on the experiences of the involved citizens and were used to further develop and adapt the method. In addition there was an external evaluation through a group of Master students. These activities are closely related to a third element of empowerment and agency, namely Social Learning, as it is also through these evaluations that learning had taken place and the method had been improved and adapted. Social learning also plays out in two additional aspects, firstly through the importance of popular education in the theory of change, which translates into trainings for the budget monitoring group and secondly, through the focus on sharing lessons and methodology of both budget monitoring and the neighbourhood budget instrument within a broader social context. A last

element concerns Resourcing. The main funding streams originate from governmental actors. The district financially contributes to the CBB for organizing the budget monitoring processes while there is a subsidy from the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations to organize the process also in other cities. However, next to financial, also human resources and information are vital. The participants of the iterations are doing this time-extensive task of budget monitoring in their free time. But 'information' is the resource which is at the heart of the initiative – as without financial data, monitoring is not possible.

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This bibliography gives an overview of the documentation that we located on- and offline in relation to participatory budgeting in the Indische Buurt and more general in the Netherlands. We hope it gives the interested reader more avenues to learn about this social innovation.

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**Media**

| Reference | Year | Abstract | Link |
|-----------|------|----------|------|
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| **Makassarplein community** | 2011 | Study tour budget monitoring – 1st day | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1f0r08Fs8k4 |
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| **Groot Oost TV** | 2013 | The week of the Indische Buurt: | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a-BtUBhILN8 |
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## Appendix A: List of interviews

| Inter-viewee ID | Position | Name | Date(s) | Dura-tion | Interviewer(s) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Partner Concept Development OIA Method (oiax.org) and Projectleader Neighbourhoudbudget | Ilan Stoelinga | 2015.09.16 / 2015.11.26 | n.a. / 01:28 | J.M. Wittmayer / J.M. Wittmayer and S. Rach |
| 2 | Developer at Neighbourhoodbudget Lab, Municipality Amsterdam | Sander Meijer | 2015.09.16 | n.a. | J.M. Wittmayer |
| 3 | Director, Centre for Budgetmonitoring and Citizen Participation | Martijn Kool | 2015.09.23 | 00:56 | J.M. Wittmayer |
| 4 | Civil servant at district Amsterdam-East | Martine Koehein | 2015.10.13 | 00:43 | J.M. Wittmayer |
| 5 | Trainer Budgetmonitoring, Centre for Budgetmonitoring and Citizen Participation | Herbert Koobs | 2015.10.13 | 01:10 | J.M. Wittmayer |
| 6 | Trainer Budget Monitoring, Centre for Budget Monitoring and Citizen Participation | Brieuc-Yves (Mellouki) Cadat | 2015.10.14 | 01:44 | J.M. Wittmayer |
| 7 | Inhabitant Indische Buurt, Participant Budgetmonitoring | Roelien Benjamins | 2015.11.26 | 00:53 | J.M. Wittmayer and S. Rach |
| 8 | Participant Budgetmonitoring | anonymous | 2015.11.26 | 00:48 | S. Rach and J.M. Wittmayer |
| 9 | Participation Broker Indische Buurt, Municipality Amsterdam | anonymous | 2015.12.01 | 01:00 | J.M. Wittmayer and S. Rach |
| 10 | Trainer and Developer at CBB | anonymous | 2015.12.03 | 01:05 | S. Rach and J.M. Wittmayer |

# transformative social innovation theory

# Appendix B: List of meetings and events attended

| Meeting and events attended as part of data collection, dialogues, etc. | Purpose of attending | Date and duration | Attending from the research group |
|---|---|---|---|
| Open Day: District Amsterdam-Oost | Understanding the dynamics between the district officials and community initiatives; Getting in contact with citizens and officials | 26.10.15; 3 hours | Sarah Rach |
| Presentation draft Area Plan Amsterdam-Oost | Important step in incorporating the outcomes of the 2014/2015 budgetmonitoring iteration into the official Area Plan for the Indische Buurt 2016; Getting in contact with participants of budgetmonitoring | 3.11.15; 2 hours | Sarah Rach |