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On January 27th, 2021 we organise the first public CoAct webinar **"Co-shaping evaluation in Citizen Science? Towards more participatory approaches in evaluation of Citizen Science"** in cooperation with ECSA and EU-Citizen.Science. The present document is the transcript of the webinar.

1. Speakers

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Teresa Schäfer (ZSI – CoAct)

Katie Richards-Schuster (University of Michigan)

Stefanie Schürz (ZSI – CoAct) (Facilitation and technical assistance)

2. Webinar Transcript

Katja

The objectives for today are, we want to learn from our peers, I already said that we, we want to think together, why more participation is good for evaluation. We think we need a better understanding of how to give voice to the stakeholders of an intervention, and its evaluation design. So already in the design of the evaluation, but also then in the process and in the results of the evaluation. So we want to provide you with a brief overview of participatory - but also other - evaluation methods in citizen science so far. And we want to introduce you to our approach to co-evaluation today. And the idea really, is that we can learn from each other. So the mutual learning at the discussing of experiences can help us especially nowadays, when we are in the middle of global crisis, and when we have the problems of physical distancing, and that traditional evaluation, or participatory evaluation strategies don't work so well, in the digital domain, or in times when, yeah, you need to distance and you need to be sure not to create too much social interactions on the ground. So, before we start, we just wanted to introduce you briefly to the project, which is hosting this webinar.

It's called co act, co designing citizen social science for collective action. It started in 2020, and is funded by the European Commission and the SWAFS Science within for Society program. In this project, which will go for three years, citizen social science, I come back to that term, is especially designed and directly driven by citizen groups that are sharing a social concern. We regard the participants as equal co researchers, on an equal footing. And we want to bring together and further develop methods to give citizen groups an equal seat at the table. And there are four, what we call, Research and Innovation actions, more or less case studies. There is one from Barcelona. Hi, there colleagues from Barcelona, the mental health care project,

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we will hear a little bit more about it later, then we have case study in Vienna on youth employment, and one more in Buenos Aires on environmental justice, and then one that is rolled out only this year with a call on gender equality. So this is the info on the current project.

Just to come back to this idea of citizen social science briefly. We want to take the best of citizen science and the best of participatory action research, if you like. We want to bring it together to learn more how to design the whole research cycle in a better and more participatory way. And so you can see on the slide, I'm not going to read all that you will get the slides anyway, that the idea is really to to stick with the best principles of both worlds and bring them together. And there is actually a lot to bring together. So both worlds can learn from each other a lot. That is what we think.

So, before I continue speaking, I want to introduce you to my three colleagues who are already waiting to engage with you here. They have co organized this webinar together with me. First of all, there is Steffi in the background. She's organizing everything she is like having the technical lead and she sent out and does the she sends out the info she does the communication. Thank you, Stefanie Schürz for that. And then there is my other two colleagues, Barbara Kieslinger and Teresa Schäfer, who are now going to present you a brief overview about what we know on participatory evaluation and citizen science so far before we come to the ideas of CoAct. I'm not going to introduce them with their short CVs because you can read them in the workbook and time is precious. I hope you are okay with that, Barbara and Teresa, and we just directly jump into the topic. And yeah, I give you the word.

Barbara

Thank you very much. Katja. Yes, actually, we thought before going into the details of CO evaluation, we wanted to give a little bit of an insight into what is already going on in terms of evaluation and citizen science. And actually this is a very hot topic, I would say. Just last week there was also a meeting with 16 European Union funded projects on citizen science and impact assessment was one of the was one of the core topics being discussed there. And there are actually even at European level specific projects just dedicated to developing evaluation and impact assessment frameworks for citizen science. So basically, there is already quite a lot out there. I mean, there are evaluation frameworks that are based on the logic model of evaluation, which comes from more from the developmental areas, but has been adapted widely. When you look into the input activities, outputs and outcomes and impact, which is partly can be applied to citizen science. Partly, it's difficult, especially when again, when it comes to the outcomes and impact assessment. There is a good model, I would say, a widely used model on targeting specifically evaluating specifically learning outcomes that has been widely spread and come from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology in the US, or we have certain embedded models where people are not even in terms of methods where people aren't really aware that they're being possessed or contributing to the evaluation, so to say. And then we have also models that are more inspired already by participatory approaches. And, for example, by designing ethics, in that sense, also evaluation and from the users, or from the older participants, into the design of the whole project. And we have, without going into detail, we have summarized this in a recent publication that just came out, it's this book called The science of citizen science, where we have one chapter dedicated specifically, to evaluation and citizen science, the art of chasing a moving target, we call it Thank you, Katja. Next one. For us, we have developed this model of evaluation for citizen science, together with some other colleagues working for a long time and citizen science. And we, it was helpful for us to

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divide it into three dimensions, and in two types of, say, on the one hand, focusing on the process, and on how it is being designed and set up a citizen science project, and where evaluation should already be considered, and also in the outcomes and the impact. So that's more related to impact assessment. And there we have these three dimensions, which have later been developed and by others into more dimensions. And we have references to that in the in the reference section. But basically, we said, let's look at the scientific part of citizen science projects. Let's say let's look at individual participants, you know, the researchers, the CO researchers, the citizens, everybody involved, how are they affected by participating in citizen science, and then the wider context, so they call the socio ecological and economic aspects as well. And policy would fall in that as well, for example. So I would actually hand over to Teresa, who goes a little bit into more detail in all of these dimensions.

Teresa

Yeah, hello. So actually, what we did in this book chapter the barber was mentioning is we looked in how far are these dimensions already evaluated at the time being for citizen science. So I will start with the scientific dimension. And if you look at this dimension, of you see that the numbers of publications are of course divided supplied indicator that is collected at the moment by citizen science project. And we see that we have the highest numbers of publication in the traditional natural science fields and for big online, citizen science projects like Galaxy Zoo are folded. And we also see that lower numbers in humanities but have to see this very critically, because maybe especially this cross route, but an approach checks do not publish so much in scientific publications, but reading newspapers, television, and so on. So but this is the mostly applied indicator to disconnect it. But we also have other indicators that would cover the scientific dimension, but we only see some selected studies that try to bring evidence for these kinds of other let's say outcomes in for science, which is for instance, the trustworthy relationship between members of the society and the scientific community, or an enhanced capacity to work together. Then on the next slide, we have the participants dimension. And certainly the learning effects on individuals are the things that are most often evaluated at the time being. So we see quite a lot of studies that bring evidence for an increased content knowledge that means that individuals learn about the subject of the scientific investigation. And we also find some studies that bring evidence for an increased scientific accuracy. But then, if we look at additional, let's say, aspects of learning, then we again see rather a smaller number of studies that try to address these aspects. That is, for instance, increased sense of empowerment, or, let's say higher civic activism in the form of political influence and political decision making, or reflecting one's own values and interests. So these aspects that can be found in some of these studies, but they are only collected anecdotally, but of course, and then we have the socio ecological and economic dimension. And here, this is the dimension that is most difficult to, let's say, evaluate. And what we find here is that we do see individual outcomes, learning outcomes, that that cascade for whole regions and communities. So the individuals actors promote as promoters for a scientific project or subject and involve the whole networks or communities, and the collaborative, together, raise political participation. And we see some really interesting also air quality citizen science projects in Europe that try to also cover these aspects and find evidence for positive effects, for instance, on air pollution by by influencing political decisions, and to be how infrastructures are built into city and parks and so on. So if this is started being started is just at the beginning of really being evaluated. But we see that there's also something going on. At the next slide, we see we have looked into current practices and tools on how is citizen science evaluated at the moment, and, of course, most often, we find surveys and interviews, like for the learning outcomes, for instance, the pre

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and post surveys, but also interviews to gather benefits and motivations. But we also see some more let's say, other tools like narrative interviews that are combined with research diaries or storyboards or better at assessment as Barbara was mentioning, the citizen scientist as part of their activity, get more playfully involved in quizzes and so on, and they do not even realize that their skills and so on are evaluated.

Okay.

Katja

Okay, so should I should I take over? So, as you can see, a lot of things are missing when you when you come from activism or participatory action research. And we are asking ourselves, how can we construct a project that is thinking participation as a whole? What about integrating multiple perspectives in the design of the evaluation strategy already from the beginning, and in the choice and maybe also design of the evaluation instruments and with that, creating a more socially robust project? Because this is what we think we think, when you think participation as a whole, you will create definitely a socially more robust project with more benefits for the stakeholders, because they will for the different groups of stakeholders on the different dimensions that Barbara and Teresa have just shown you. And hello, why is it not work? Ah, sorry. So, this is why we have come up and of course, we were not the first ones but why we are kind of now adopting or newly inscribing, the term of co-evaluation. We understand it as a form of participatory evaluation that initiates the conversation on expectations, objectives and impact already at the start of the project. Or even before in the design of a project, with a lot of different stakeholders, and later on also with a lot of different participants in the project. So the right point to do this, or at least one of the points in the research cycle to do this is when the forms and formats of participation of actors are negotiated. Best of all worlds, of course, when they are negotiated collaboratively and not when top down research design is thinking about how they can participate. Of course, we have to think about that, because we, most of the cases that we have in our project, they come from community groups, communities of practice, people who already have and share a social concern. So, and sometimes this, there have been activities for more than 20 years, that now our project comes in built on. So there has been a lot of social activism going on, and not so much of science. So this is why it's so important to negotiate those kinds of forms and formats of participation at one point in time. And, of course, maybe to leave it flexible for later. But we'll come back to that. **So the main difference between co-evaluation and conventional types of research revelation is, and it's very simple, that participants are also involved in the decision on project goals and the evaluation instruments.** And we want to learn from other fields, that's what I already said at the beginning. So, and participatory evaluation has already quite a long tradition, in development, in developmental studies in program design, in a lot of those fields, as we will hear also later in the panel discussion. So we can say that we are basing our thoughts on all types of participatory evaluation that are characterized by a research process based on partnership between the evaluators and those actors who were part of the research process, or even becoming evaluators themselves. Because many of them have to put the results into practice. And this is why it's so important to engage with them already on the thinking about impact from the beginning. Yeah. So, but there is not only impact, of course, as one of the objectives, one other objective is to initiate and facilitate learning, and therefore also focusing on the processes of the project themselves. Co-evaluation is inspired by many, many, many things. And we could talk for hours about this on a more epistemological level. But I want to pick out two that I always show to the audience when I present co-evaluation.

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One is definitely participatory action research, I've already mentioned it, where with the concept of co-researchers that tries to understand co-researchers as equal participants on an equal level with the scientists. [phone rings in background] Now the phone is ringing, sorry for that. And then on the other hand, we have co-production as shorthand for the proposition, I'm sorry [turns off telephone] sorry, not very professional, but I couldn't turn it off. So, and on the other hand, we have co-production as shorthand for the proposition that the ways in which we know and represent the world, both nature and society, of course, are inseparable from the ways in which we choose to live in. I think this is really, really important, we should never think that science is something detached from what we actually do and where we live. Science is always a part of how we make the world, how we realize the world that we are going to live in. And so, this is also a very good model for us.

There are several core principles, which are listed here on this slide. One is what we call a participant ownership. So, the participants do not only take part in the design, but they also take on responsibilities. Then, openness and reflexivity, is really, really important. Input should be always balanced and representations should be guaranteed also in terms of diversity and inclusion. Transformation is a very important principle, so the emphasis is definitely on the identification of lessons learned and improvements of benefits and wellbeing for *all* participants. So, change, sometimes that is also called change. Flexibility, that's really important, and sometimes one of the hardest parts, because you have to keep the evaluation design rather flexible. But also with that not forget that it has to be systematic, of course. But things change. Yeah, now we, with Corona we have seen how fast things can change, and we live suddenly in a very, very different world. So just like participatory action research, also, co evaluation has to remain flexible across and along the project's development. Documentation and transparency, this is really important. This also means giving people the opportunity for feedback, for example, yeah, so whenever possible and ethically desirable evaluation procedures should be documented and made accessible to participants, or even to a wider public. We'll come back to the limits of that, of course, in a bit. And then the timing, we already said that it has to start early as early as possible. There are several steps, of course, that are important, just to keep in mind. So you have to think about the co-design of the evaluation strategy in the beginning, then you have to develop some kind of tools for continuous observation and discussion, kind of monitoring. Then, of course, you need to implement feedback cycles for the necessary adaptations and reporting and structured analysis. This is what we call interpretation. And then of course, there is this kind of layer that can be called "valuation", which means that collaboratively again, there should be some processes of assessing the value of the outcomes and lessons learned. So yeah, actually, it's quite interesting to, to see what for example, practitioners or people involved, participants, think about impact indicators that just count academic publications, you know. And it's sometimes quite interesting to discuss this with communities of practice. So, now I want to give the word again to my colleagues who will share with you how we do it in correct.

Teresa

Okay, so back to CoAct again, once again, here the visualization. Remember, we had these four different cases where we involved the citizens as co researchers, to address their concerns. And so, how did we do that, or how did we start actually to do that? Um, could we go to the next slide? So, actually, we have defined some co-evaluation instruments that go across these four different cases. So for instance, we have defined some co-evaluation roadmaps, that means that it's just like a kind of timeline, where we discuss with the different case representatives and so on what is going on in their case, what are they doing, what

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are they planning, and where can then evaluation come in, where is it important that we consider evaluation as a part of the activities taking place. So this is one important thing that we need, the roadmap, to always remember: We have to think about elevation, we have to consider that in all the steps that we're doing. And then this roadmap also helps us to define *how* would you come in with this evaluation. For instance, when there are the first meetings with the participants, how would evaluation come in now, in this already first meetings. So these are the roadmaps. And then we started to work on indicator matrix that is what you see here on the slide, where we collected from these first interactions with the different groups of citizen scientists, but also professional researchers and other organizations that are involved: What is their expected output? What are expected intermediate outcomes and what do they expect in the long term? So, this is something that might change during the project, but we start to track this from the very beginning. And on the next slide, we have then developed some very case-specific evaluation instruments, where every case then can choose what would best fit in this specific case. So, we have some qualitative data and quantitative data collection instruments that we have described and that will give us like a set of instruments to choose from during the process, Okay, next slide.

Barbara

Yes, and actually talking about evaluation instruments has been, this part is of course, a challenge, as Katja was saying, if we take this co-evaluation approach seriously as we defined it earlier on. We would like to have everyone also involved, or at least for the co-researchers involved in even defining evaluation instruments, which is hard enough. And so we are approaching this at the moment on the one hand with reflecting on them on the very objectives, on the goals, of what should be assessed, and impact, moving also to online instruments for this co-reflection. And this is just an example here that we in one of the workshops, we are using a Padlet, to also collect jointly with the participants, the objectives, as we sit and watch the intended impact they expect to be. But not only did we want to include them in online activities, we were also thinking about our target groups and working with them, I had the feeling that also still, though we have COVID-19 and we can't meet face to face, we would like to have some physical objects as well, something haptic, a part of the research that is again entering the physical space. And so for one of the cases, we decided a research diary, where we include individual reflection sheets. So compared to the collective experience we collected online, for example, in this case here we also collect individual feedback and reflect and trigger people to reflect on the process in this research diaries that were sent to them.

And in the next one, next slide, please. And just to reflect a little bit also about what action we had to take when co-evaluation was suddenly also influenced by the whole context that the situation that we live in today with, with COVID-19, and physical meetings and physical interactions, physical interventions being completely reduced or almost taken away from us, while we had a lot of the co-evaluation activities planned as such, and actually they're very important for trust building, for this collaboration that we envision together with our co-researchers. So this, moving from this physical space to the more digital space had also quite a lot of effects on our projects, even on the research topic itself. Because even the social concerns that we are dealing with here, they have been affected by COVID. And so it's something that couldn't be ignored. So we can't just continue the project, we wanted it to be, and the flexibility that Katja was mentioning before comes very strongly in again. The research process itself, you know, for example, the way we collect input, we have to consider maybe is there a gender bias in women taking traditionally more again, they're part of taking care of the kids at home, you can't just assume that everybody has the same time available

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then in this online meetings. Or digital literacy: When working with certain groups, you have to consider in how far do they have access, do they have the skills to use these digital tools. Or even new stakeholders came up when moving to the digital world, and with COVID itself affecting our cases, we even had to bring in new stakeholders on board, and as we said, there are a lot of flexibility had to be put into this process. And we're still continuing to do it. So actually, I would move over hand over to Katja, again, to also outline these, our limitations, as I already addressed a little bit, and what we have still in terms of open questions.

Katja

Yeah, so thank you very much Barbara. So I think it's already clear that co-evaluation is quite laborious and takes a lot of effort and care. But it's even more difficult when everything moves to digital worlds, and we cannot meet in person. Because a lot of trust that is needed for these kind of activities is of course built by social relationships, by face to face meetings. And it's quite hard to build this kind of relationship among the participants and all the people in a project with these digital tools that are available to us at the moment. So there are a lot of open questions and limits, and we just chose, we just picked some of them, of course, here, which also fit very well to the problems that we are facing in today's crisis. So we have to be really, really strict about data privacy regulations. And this is really important if you want to stay true to your own morals and ethics. So language issues is also harder when you can't be on the ground, and everything is kind of distributed through countries over borders and so on. Then, of course, there's a lot of problems with the term evaluation itself, so sometimes we will not use the term because there is this misconception of evaluation as being evaluated. So people think they are then assessed whether their performances are right, or something like that. So even the term has its problems. And I'm sure you are familiar with that. And then of course, there are the project dynamics that Barbara just brought up like the uncertainty of the next weeks to come, and the necessary flexibility. And last, but not least, one of the biggest hurdles sometimes is that you have to design these co-evaluation processes very, very carefully, because if you do too much, you're just overloading everybody, not only the co-researchers, but also the team of a project. So responsibilities have to be carefully distributed. And this is why it's so important to openly speak about this already in the project design with the different stakeholder groups, and communities of practice.

There are a lot of resources that are now also starting to share information on similar topics, and we collected them for you, some of them and we'll collect further. I don't go into detail here you'll find it in the documentation of the seminar. But as you can see, there is a lot of questions, open questions, and some of them I think we will tackle now in the upcoming panel discussion with our dear guests. And I just want to put on the board here some of the questions that we think are important. And those were also the questions that we asked the speakers on the panel to think about. So what are your experiences in designing an evaluation strategy? Maybe even co designing it together with stakeholders? Have you done so already at the beginning of a project? Or when did you do it? And what were the benefits and challenges for you? Were they connected to the temporality of when the design happened or when this was initiated? And do you have any experiences with alternative methods, open evaluation, peer interviews, diaries, as Teresa has also talked about, storytelling, and so on. So we would be really interested in that. And before we open a full discussion, we will come to our panel discussion. But before that, we would give you the opportunity to just relax a little bit because those online meetings are always really fast and intense. So we would give ourselves the luxury of a short break, just five minutes, so that we can settle in with the panel speakers, and maybe you can grab a glass of water or something or go to the bathroom. And yeah, we'll start – what's the

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time now – so we'll start at 4:45 Central European Time with the panel discussion. And I will briefly then introduce you to the speakers. Okay, so see you in a bit. In the meantime, of course, if anyone has a question or so please step forward. Or put it in the chat. If you have already questions, please start you can already put them in the chat, we will collect them. Yeah, I see there are already some interesting comments, which of course I have not seen while I was talking. So I'll take the opportunity now to read through them.

Stefanie, will we open the Miro board for the panel discussion?

Stefanie

It's already open and I started putting in the questions.

Katja

Ah super, perfect. Thanks. I see there's already really interesting comments coming in. Yeah. Yeah, the pattern we are very familiar with. Good.

So welcome back, everybody. And thanks for staying in the webinar. I see we still have the same number of participants as before, this is a good sign. So we are now coming to our panel discussion, which we'd prefer to call "conversations" because it's really a very informal way of engaging with each other's position, of course, and we will not have lecture series here or something like that.

And I need to click. Again, we have a slightly different time scale, as we have sent out. We'll now have about 40 minutes or a bit less for the conversations part, where our four guests that I will introduce in a bit, have the opportunity to share their thoughts and to engage with each other on their experiences in participatory evaluation. And then this is followed by 25 minutes of discussion and Q&A. Please post your questions into the chat, we will collect them and we ask them to the panel speakers. This is probably the easiest way unless you need to say the things yourself which of course, you're free to do. So if you want to address the speaker's yourself then please also tell us in the chat that you would like to ask the question yourself. Then we'll have a short last 10 minutes for feedback and send-off. So here we are our our panel speakers, our dear panel speakers. So today, we have invited four guests and I will now present them to you in the order of which I hope they will start to give us then their little lightning statements or lightning talks.

So first of all, we welcome from our hearts Katie Richards-Schuster, from University of Michigan School of Social Work in Ann Arbor in the US. I personally have learned a lot from a webinar, or recorded lecture that you gave on participatory evaluation, so I'm very, very happy that you are here with us today. Your research focus is on understanding the strategies and approaches for engaging young people in communities. [see CV for more information]

Next on our virtual panel is Obialunanma Naiobi. You are a development practitioner. Your work combines elements of research strategy and advocacy, to support good governance causes, innovative use of technology, and the empowerment of women and youth. Welcome. [see CV for more information]

Then, there is Anna Cigarini, who is also part of the CoAct project. You are a PhD candidate in information and knowledge society at Universitat Oberta de Catalunya. You are a member of the OpenSystems group at

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the University of Barcelona, where I've seen several members today here, in the webinar. And you are a collaborator at Dimmons at the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya. [see CV for more information]

And last, but not least, there is Johannes Jäger. Hi Johannes. You are an evolutionary systems biologist and philosopher by training, but you are interested in a lot of things, for example developing a theory of knowledge that is tailored to open science, inspired by your work on organismic agency and innovation in biological evolution. [see CV for more information]

So, welcome everybody, and I would like to give the floor directly to Katie, if that is okay. Katie?

Katie

Sounds great. Um, thank you so much for inviting me to be here today, it's quite a thrill. And I think what I'm going to share a little bit, or was asked to share, was to talk a little bit about my perspective about involving young people in research and evaluation. And to share a little bit about the kind of work I've done, and some of the lessons that I've learned along the way. I just have to say that the opening slides were really exciting to see because they really do cover so much of the way that I think about this work. So from my perspective, all my work for the last 20 years has really been about centering and involving young people, as co-researchers, co-producers of knowledge, and thinking about the roles that they can play in creating change in their communities. And so it starts from a perspective of involving young people in all aspects of the research and evaluation process, I call it the knowledge development process. And it really comes also out of a space of thinking about power. So if knowledge is power, then thinking about how can we disrupt and challenge traditional ways of knowledge development and open up who has access and rights to be creating knowledge about themselves. And so for me, it's also a form of what I call democratizing knowledge and opening up that process, opening up that power, and engaging young people in that process.

So my perspective assumes that young people have the rights and responsibility to ask questions, to gather information and to use that information to create change. And so that also ties, while the US hasn't been part of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, that does tie closely to thinking about the articles of participation that really give the rights of young people to ask questions about their communities and to participate. It also assumes that young people are experts in their lives. And so really, who better to be engaging and developing knowledge about themselves than young people. And so it's it really comes from that perspective.

And I also want to just say, and this is tied into the examples that were shared, and the kind of comments that were shared in the in the first part of this webinar, that this is really about meaningful and authentic participation of young people. So there's a lot of participation that's happening, are kind of this, I feel like especially in the US, there's kind of a trend to involve young people. But it's really without thinking critically about what does it mean to meaningfully and authentically engage young people, which is really about the process of sharing power, building trust, really creating spaces for young people to be fully involved in all aspects. This is not about tokenizing young people or just kind of having them there and thinking that this is a nice thing for young people to do. When you come from a meaningful and authentic perspective, then it also means that not only can young people benefit from the process of being part of evaluation, but that the research process itself, the evaluation processes, benefits, and the community benefits. So really thinking about it from that multiple level.

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In my own work, I've had the real privilege of working with young people across the US, I've done a little bit of work across the Americas as well. But I'm going to share just a few examples from my own work. I came to this work in partnership with grassroots community organizers across the US, who were thinking about strengthening their participation of involving young people. And so as part of documenting that process, we formed evaluation teams, and that was really in the early stages, probably about 20 years ago, when there really wasn't a whole lot of work being done around youth evaluation at that time, and barely stuff around participatory evaluation. So it was really eye opening to think about what happens when you give power to young people to document and evaluate the work that they're part of.

And I had to smile when you all talked about the idea of challenging the term evaluation because that was something we came about in that project, that young people are evaluated all the time and most of the time, it's quite negative. And so it was really about helping young people to reclaim the concept of evaluation and turn evaluation into something that they control that they had power over, and that they could see this as a source for change.

Over the last many years, I've been part of doing a lot of capacity building workshops with young people, who are interested in asking questions about their communities and using that information for change. I wanted to share with you a project that I was involved in called Metro Youth Policy Fellows. And this was a team of young people. So I'm in Michigan, in the Midwest of the US, and our major HUD [Housing and Urban Development] city is Detroit. And Detroit is a highly segregated metropolitan area. So this was a team of young people coming from across city and suburbs, who were interested in thinking critically about how to think about the social justice issues that were emerging in the region. And so this team came together, and they had been part of an earlier project, and so they had a little bit of relationships with one another. But from the very beginning, it started with a process of kind of forming a team, thinking about how did they want to work together? These were almost all high school aged youth, so between the ages of 14 and 17 years old, and how did they want to work together? How did they want to think about the community doing lots of activities to help them ground themselves in the larger metropolitan area? And then from there, we can start to think about what did they want to know, what were the various kinds of knowledge that they were interested in gaining? And then how could they think about the questions that they might want to ask, and then from there, how they wanted to approach it. And in this case, this group, because they were interested in gathering, a metropolitan, a broad based metropolitan region, they were interested in more traditional form of doing a survey, an online survey. But they also offered to use that information to develop video projects. They wrote, collected narratives and did a book project, and through their efforts, they engaged over 1000 young people and raising their voices about the issues that mattered to them. That information then got used, as I said, to create videos, create reports, create a book project that got shared with various policymakers across the region, and led to the creation of a special community development effort, to fund youth ideas to address some of the issues that had been raised in the survey. So in this case, it was a project that involved young people from the very beginning in designing the process, designing what it is they wanted to know, thinking about what questions they wanted to ask, developing the research process, analyzing the information, and then using the information to drive change at multiple levels.

Another example, that I'll just share, real briefly, because it involves more alternative methods is a more recent project to involve a team of young people in engaging issues related to safety in the community, and in particular youth and police relationships. And in this case, the group came together because of there, across the world, but definitely in the US, there have been many issues around police brutality, especially for

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young people of color. And so this group of youth, were really interested in thinking about how could they use a research and evaluation process to develop new recommendations and new solutions that can be used to drive change in the community. And so they created a process called Data Dialogues, which were really a kind of an engagement process of involving young people across the community to participate in a series of different dialogic activities, including different kinds of games, different types of small dialog activities, drawing activities, where they could engage youth and helping to identify issues and think about the recommendations that young people had. So in this case, different types of methods, kind of out-of-the-box included walking Likert scales, graffiti, walls, brainstorming, muraling, and so forth. Photovoice is another example. So again, just to wrap up my time, because I know, the time is short, but I think in each case, it's about the active involvement of young people in each step of the process. And then thinking about the ways in which this information can be used to create change.

In my own work, it's really thinking about how can you create spaces for young people to be these kind of equal partners and oftentimes that means as an adult, really thinking about how you navigate, creating and scaffolding and supporting young people to develop the skills but also being able to step back to allow them to step forward. So in many cases thinking of this work almost as a dance, in my role of being able to try to create the space for young people, but also to be able to step back when they're ready to lead and then step forward, when they need more support. And I can talk a little bit about that later.

But in my own work, across the board, young people have wanted to engage, they want to be respected and valued. They have important ideas about their communities, about their world. They do need support from adults, but they also need adults to help get out of their way. And so again, it's just these kind of critical questions about how do you help facilitate and support the work, for young people to have a voice especially in a world that often dismisses or marginalizes youth? How can we help to both create the spaces for young people to step in, to have the skills to be able to ask the questions that matter to them? And then help adults to listen to their ideas? Thank you very much.

Katja

Yeah. Thank you, Katie, I think you raised a lot of important points, about authenticity, about sharing power, about building trust, creating safe spaces, and also the very, very difficult dance, sometimes, while giving guidance, developing skills, building capacities, but also stepping back and giving the stage to those who sometimes know it maybe even better. Yeah, so thank you very much for sharing this with us. I would like now to give the word to Obialunanma, to share a little bit of her experiences with us in participatory evaluation. Are you there?

Obialunanma

Yes, I am. Howdy. Good day from very sunny Lagos, today. I want to share thoughts on evaluation, participatory evaluation from the point of view of working on accountability of projects in Nigeria, but also across a few other countries in Sub Saharan Africa. So I start on the premise that if more stakeholders are involved in evaluations, then there becomes a greater likelihood that the results of evaluations will be considered valid. This presupposes that stakeholders were already supporters of the project, of the program, or the intervention from its earliest point. And with evaluations here, what we really want to find

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out usually is three things: What are we trying to achieve? What progress have we made? And watching this can be made to, you know, the way that we are working? And so I think that it's really important in the course of my work, that we maintain sensitivity to mainstreaming diversity and the participation of the evaluators.

So in co-creating these evaluations, we want to very strongly ask the question, how do we ensure that dialogues remain open and fair? How do we ensure that voices that are traditionally considered marginalized or disadvantaged are represented? And here I speak about young people you know just as Katie has mentioned about the elderly. Because policies and interventions affects men and women in different ways, it's also important to consider women and ensure that their voices are heard, you know, and join the long list of stakeholders or participants. We want to look at persons living with disabilities and how are they affected? And how can we make sure that they participate in these evaluations? People from ethnic minorities, people from religious minorities, and in this part of the world, also sexual minorities. So we ought to see how, beginning at the point of project design, how do you frame the logic framework or the theory of change, to see that all these different stakeholder interests are represented?

And so, we look at modes of participation: Is there a need to change the language, is there a need to take into consideration cultural or religious contexts for working with the different groups of people? But most importantly, noting that stakeholder engagement must be continuous and it has to be broad. So who is interested? Who is influential? And how do you manage these interests? So it's very important that stakeholder engagement is continuous. But also one of the things that I have seen, and I am just coming from an Open Government Partnership meeting here, in Lagos, and one of the things that we've seen is that, when we have evaluations where the participation is not broad enough, when you don't have, you know, a cross-section of the right stakeholders you presented, what might happen is that you stand the danger of not getting enough information. And so you have situations where people who have information are not involved in the process. So you might end up not getting some results or not counting some results that have actually occurred, or losing track of some things that are potential issues. But because you're not speaking to people who are affected by it, you miss that. So I think it's very important, even as we design evaluations, that we look at access. So in terms of affordability, in terms of technical capacity, do you need to do some training for the people to get involved, especially now, in the last one year, a lot of evaluations have become digital. So we now start to ask the question, do the people have access to devices? Do they have access to internet facility? How fast is it? You know, questions like that. And most importantly, for me, I will just leave with saying that consultation should be broad, it should be continuous, and that we should ensure or we should try to ensure that all voices, as much as possible, voices are represented in the conversation.

Thank you, Anna.

Katja

Thank you, thank you very much. So we can see here from your statement and your position, that it is really, really important to carefully design the format's of participation as well. And to always monitor the communities, the things that go on, whether or not the diversity and inclusion is really working out in the project. So whether you have as many perspectives that you can have – a multi-perspective approach in a

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way. So that is really, I think you opened up also, complimentary, very important points to what Katie has already said. So yeah, as time is running unfortunately, I am moving again to Anna and I would like to invite Anna to share with us her experiences here. Hi, Anna.

Anna

Hi, Katja. Thank you. Um, yeah, I will bring in my very practical perspective on participant evaluation in, participatory evaluation in citizen science, since I participated in the last five years in a number of citizen science projects with [unclear] and participatory aspect, inside of the participatory spectrum of citizen science, and which involves citizen scientists as co-researchers in the, since the very beginning of the research project. And since last year, I was a part of the CoAct project and project in Barcelona, which is involving individuals with an experience of mental health in the design of micro-histories on their self-experience of mental health, which will be then included in a chatbot for the mapping of resource, of social support resource and strategies in mental health. And, I do understand, participatory evaluation or co-evaluation as very much as like a mutual dialogue among project participants since the very beginning of the research project and as a reflexivity exercise. And this means on the one end that project managers or professional scientists are attentive to the, and active listeners to the expectations and objectives and impacts of the project participants, and also able to be responsive to this input and feedback and feed them back into the process development. On the other end, the project participants are to be legitimized, to raise also critical issues, which is easier, totally easier if time is spent in the project to build trust, and if evaluation is carried out by a project member rather than an external evaluator, because there's still sort of skepticism towards evaluation as you already mentioned. So we have explored different tools from, for participatory evaluation from more digital ones, such as the case for the InSPIRES open platform, which is, was developed by the Barcelona Institute of Global Health, and which allows to easily and rapidly systematize inputs and feedbacks, and visualize also inputs and feedbacks on projects, on certain aspects of the project development and project outcomes. And we've also explored and we're also using some less digital tools and strategies and artifacts, such as focus groups, or debriefing after participatory sessions, or the research diary, as was already mentioned, which we have just sent to the participants of the Barcelona CoAct project, or traditional email channels, which shorten a bit the distance between the digital world and the physical world. But what I would like to point out, and what is my limitation that I've encountered, is how to systematize that this very broad variety of inputs received, this very broad variety of expectations, and research objectives and expected outcomes, which can be and should be very diverse for project participants, and which also have different, let's say levels of abstractions or detail, but mostly how to adapt and align the changing nature of these expectations and research objectives and expected outcomes, which naturally evolves over time. So what one might be expecting at the beginning of the process is, can be naturally different, totally different from one, what one may expect in the middle of the project or at the end of the project, right? So for participatory evaluation to be participatory, and not only a input collection exercise, it should also be able to integrate those feedbacks into the project, timely those feedbacks into the project development process. And I'm very curious to discuss and put it on the table today, because this is, yeah, what I feel it's a crucial issue when discussing co-evaluation or participatory evaluation.

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Katja

Thank you. Thank you very much. So the temporality of typical research projects is definitely problematic when you want to dive deep into the participatory dimension, and you have to be very effective in order to make it happen during the research process itself, and maybe even adding some benefits for after the project ends. So I think you brought up now very important issues again, like, first of all important to keep in mind, is your point on that you experienced that people are actually fond of having internal people doing the evaluation or them participating in the evaluation because it's easier to talk about sensitive issues there than to external evaluators, I think this is a very interesting experiences, and but also the expectation management. This is definitely a hard thing. And sometimes, yeah, science makes itself vulnerable through that, because, yeah, when we, there are changing expectations and in the process of co-production. Of course, those expectations are co-shaped by what the people learn in a project. So this is very hard, it's dynamic on every level you can have. So thank you, Anna, for that and I want to move on to Johannes. Johannes, please share your ideas with us.

Johannes

Thank you, thank you so much for having me. So, I will come at this from a sort of a philosophical angle, but I will give you a specific example. And I want to add another dimension to what it means to do participatory evaluation. And that is that maybe the evaluators should also participate in, in a way in the, in the project if it's a citizen science project. So I've been fascinated by the process of deliberation. And I want to frame this by sort of comparing what I call a traditional view of science. And then what I'm actually working on as a philosopher a view of science that's more adequate for citizen science, the traditional way, of course, is sort of looking at science as if it was the scientific method was an algorithm. And you can apply it and the more you apply it to something, the more results you get. And it doesn't really matter who is doing the research in this view. And so citizen science doesn't fit at all into such a research paradigm, because it's all about inclusion and diversity, different standpoints. And as we said before, these sort of activities, especially evaluation activities that come with citizen science, they use up a lot of time, and citizen science is obviously not going to compete in terms of efficiency, and this sort of output productivity with traditional research projects. So the view of science that's better suited for this is a view that is based on perspectivism, you know, the importance of different standpoints that come into a project. And also focusing on the process of doing research rather than only on the outcome. These are topics that have been brought up by several speakers now already, so I won't go into them. And a particular aspect of that is that if you have a diverse group of people that are actually involved in co-design, and talking about co-design projects here, you will have a lot of different approaches and opinions, which will, in this traditional view, will just be a nuisance, it will slow down the process of doing science. And so what is neglected here? [technical issues]

... both an essential part of a good citizen science project. And there needs to be some kind of dialogue to come at. Well, what is the aim? Is the aim of this dialogue to come to a consensus? Traditionally, you would think, yes, good science, will use the scientific method to arrive at the one true explanation of whatever, or solution of whatever problem that you have. But the sort of environment, philosophical environment in which citizen science would actually flourish is a different one where you respect the differences in standpoints and opinions. And so deliberation is a mode of discussion, which is opposite to debate, where you have two people and they come with arguments, and the one with the better arguments wins. This is

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sort of used in, traditional views of science very often, while deliberation, of course, is a dialogue between people with different standpoints, but instead of just trying to understand each other, they try to move forward with a project, with a model, with a solution to a problem. And so there are a lot of tools out there, especially from political philosophy that you can also apply to science, if you have this sort of more diverse view of how knowledge production in science actually works. And what I'm really interested in here is this deliberative aspect is a way of sort of enabling collective intelligence. And this is the true strength of citizen science projects, of course, how can we best use this? What are the best conditions? And how can we make sure that people are engaging in deliberation? And here's the point, I think so what we're trying to do, I am currently part of a citizen science project, Horizon citizen science project called Crowd for SDG. I can post a link to that in the chat. And what we're trying to do there is come up with a way to evaluate, two things actually. One thing is that we would like to instruct the people who are participating in the science, in the citizen science project cycles, about this deliberative process because this is something that not even scientists know about, you know, not even talking about citizens that come into science. So, first of all, so the evaluation is tightly coupled with an instructive part where we're telling those people about the importance of this process. And then they will get a survey, a questionnaire every, every few weeks of the project where they can actually answer questions concerning the deliberative process. Have you been heard? You know, have you been able to say something? Have you felt included in the research process? Has your participation be valued, been valued? And that doesn't mean that you have to sort of be the one that wins the debate at the end. But the important thing is to move towards an evaluation of that process. And then at the end, we can come out with the results and say, okay, we've had the best possible process, we may not have reached the target. But this should be equally important when evaluating a project. And of course, if you do these surveys regularly, you can also [technical issues] moderate the process itself. So, yes, that was all I wanted to say. And I see, I hope you can still hear me, I feel from my side, I can't see you anymore. But that's good. Okay, so

Katja

We could hear you, there was two spots where we couldn't hear every detail, but I think we got the message. Thank you, Johannes. Thank you for sharing this, you made a good point for focusing more on the process. For seeking, it's not always about consensus. And we have to learn that because science comes from a different tradition. So it's not always so easy to build deliberation processes into scientific research cycles. And of course, the big question: How, how do we organized this how, what kind of formats and you gave the example of a format. That, of course, brings me immediately to all the potential limitations of these very elaborative and effort, high effort approaches. And my question would be - the first questions I would like to address to you guys, and which I've also partly taken from what people have written on the board and in the chat is, what about the participants themselves? Maybe you can briefly share with us how they reacted to the things you did to them, if I may say so. So for example, were they fond by receiving, in addition, every week, a survey to fill out and to give feedback? Obialunanma? Were they okay to be always asked, maybe if there is now every important, relevant body of knowledge present in the group? Were they good to kind of always be asked about their expectations, for example, Anna, what were your experiences with that? Maybe Obialunanma, you want to start responding to that?

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Obialunanma

Okay, Yes, I can. So what we've done in my experience with multi stakeholder groups is that at the point where we are designing, or where we have designed the theory of change and the logic framework, we also come up with indicators jointly. So we jointly collaborate to determine what indicators will be measured and how. The reason for that is, because its multi-stakeholder, usually involved in the public sector and civil society, the perspectives are very different. So in places where the public sector thinks that this has gone great, civil society thinks performance has been abysmal. So it is very important to jointly choose what the indicators are, and then how to measure them, you know, where do we get data from? So instead of asking everybody in those situations to respond to information gathering, what we do is that whatever stakeholders are primarily responsible for activities in those areas, are charged with collecting the data for that particular area. So for instance, when we talk about things like the budgeting process of public procurement, or with public service delivery, whatever agencies who would ordinarily collect data, in that case, we just ask them, this is what we now want to know, so while you're doing your data collection, can you also provide information on that. And then we now jointly look at what information is provided. And there are also civil society agencies or organizations, or people who just have a bit more information, who have the resources to also collect some data. So we jointly now look at all the information available to work on the evaluation. So that's what we've done.

Katja

So it's like it's a quest and the puzzle process sometimes. And you have to engage the people and but if you engage them in the right way, then they are okay with it. So they are not feeling overloaded or with responsibilities, for example, when they have to take ownership of such a process.

Obialunanma

Yes, and let me just say that the reason why it's important to get them involved at the very beginning is that there are times when you have an idea, say the program, perhaps the consultant or the program staff, you have an idea that this is information that we need to collect, but because this is what the people, the stakeholders are involved in, a lot of times on a day to day basis, they can tell you that your frequency is too much. So, for instance, you might want to collect data monthly, but they tell you that, you know, this data would not be available monthly, it's only available quarterly. And so you have to adjust. So if they weren't in the room at the point where that was happening, you might now find out that you do not have any data to collect.

Katja

How were your experiences, Katie, with youth? I mean, you said that they were very engaged. And also, I would, of course, be curious to learn more about those formats that you developed or that they that the youth participants developed, like data dialogues and so on, but did they sometimes feel overwhelmed? Was it maybe too much for them? Sometimes? Did you have experiences like that?

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Katie

Yeah, I think, I mean, I think as many have said, it's really thinking about kind of a long haul process, right? So when young people are involved in the very beginning, it takes time to build the relationships amongst the group, and then to think about what and how they want to work. And it was constantly kind of a checking and reflection about what they're doing, how they're making progress, what they're learning where they need to make adjustments along the way. So that kind of, we had regular meetings, that were spaces for that kind of reflection, and getting a sense of how much is too much. Are we moving, you know, are they feeling overwhelmed by the process? How do they scale back? For the young people who are part of those teams, it's dependent on the different work, but when I can, we try to provide stipends for the young people who are participating as the research team and, and that's both a, an acknowledgment about their role as co-researchers and the and kind of a power sharing piece that other people aren't getting paid for being part of this. So, so really valuing their time. And for many, it's also recognizing that, you know, that they would need some funding to be able to participate, because it's, you know, they're helping pay for things for their family or for school or, or whatnot. So it's, it's out of a necessity. And so that idea of being able to help reward and respect their time as co-researchers and kind of building that into the process, I think is also something that's, that's really important. And one of the other things I just would note that I think it's interesting that young people have a, I mean, when they're thinking about how they want to engage other young people, again, they have a perspective on what it's like to participate as a young person, what feels comfortable, how do they build that trust with other young people. And so they've been able to identify, you know, time or, you know, kind of when we had to do a session or what's going to work better, because from their own standpoint, and it would have been potentially very different from what I would have thought might work. So it was really critical to have their voices part of it because they were able to kind of develop better processes than I would have thought on my own.

Katja

I think this is also leading to this quite interesting situation where necessary feedback and reflection in a project, which we would have done anyways, because in the participatory setting this is necessary, is blurring the boundaries to this idea of participatory evaluation or co-evaluation. Because you can actually put sometimes those dimensions together, the necessary feedback and reflection cycles and the co-evaluation. So this I think this also works together or is naturally part of each other, sometimes. We have several more questions. So, so, in from the audience, which I'm now picking up slowly. There is one question which I'm addressing to the audience that maybe to Johannes first and then to Anna, maybe, because of your background, I think you might be able to answer it. So there is a question of how to make participatory approaches to evaluation more visible and accepted in citizen science. Some participants here in the webinar feel that in citizen science, it is still very top down quantitative and comparative. So what would be your strategy to make it more visible? Uh, Johannes.

Johannes we cannot hear you at the moment, so you can you can turn off your video if you like. Unfortunately, I cannot hear you can maybe somebody else here, Johannes?

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Teresa

No

Katja

Uh huh. Okay, so maybe Anna, we start with you, and we figure out how to bring back Johannes. Anna would you like to comment?

Anna

Yeah, I do not really have an answer. And this is what I'm also wondering myself. I mean, I do totally agree that on most, if not all, yeah, the majority of evaluation exercises in citizen science are mainly top down. And there's not that much value given to more reflexive spaces for participation, because of all the limitation that it might raise. And I would say that we're kind of trying to test that and test these more reflective exercises, during the meetings with the co-researchers. But yeah, it's the same question that I also have, how to then turn these feedbacks and inputs and systematize these inputs and feedbacks and also integrate them into the project development.

Katja

Yeah, so this is Yeah. So, so, this is a wide range of, actually, yeah, things that I think we have to talk about a lot in, in the in the coming years, because this is of course, nothing simple to solve. Johannes can, can you try again to speak with us? Okay, I cannot, I cannot hear you.

Stefanie

Johannes just reconnected.

Katja

Okay, so maybe it will work out? Maybe the others have? I mean, I know Katie, you're not, Katie and Obialunanma, you're not coming from citizen science. So maybe this, this question is an odd one to you. But from maybe more an outside perspective, what would be your advice to us to make the more bottom up participatory approaches more visible in our research fields? Obialunanma or Katie, you want to respond to that briefly, maybe?

Katie

I'll just say a couple things, because I think this is something we've been grappling with a lot. And one of the things in the American Evaluation Association, one of the things we did was create a topical interest group. That's what the TIGs stands for, which was an opportunity for those of us who were using participatory

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methods and in particular, focused on youth so we have a youth focused evaluation TIG an opportunity for us to come together and through networking and allowed us to do some co-writing together and publishing articles looking at process and looking at the value of this approach. We've been able to shape conference sessions because of a TIG. Having a TIG allowed us to have conference sessions. So we've been able to not only have evaluators present on this work, but also I've brought young people to present their research and giving them a platform within the academic spaces to present their findings and their process. And so I won't say that we are, I think we have, we are still very far from having this be recognized and accepted. And that's a question, you know, we're kind of constantly challenging this as not only a process, but an essential process. But that has been, that's been a helpful approach, I think, for lots of us to be able to do exactly what you're doing here: Building a community, a learning community that we can share and grapple with, but also help to collectively lift up this work within our institutions in our organizations.

Katja

Thank you, Katie. So institutionalization is always a good strategy, of course, to become more visible. But as you said, networking, we will have to do a lot of networking, and probably also more informal events and create also safe spaces for ourselves to discuss all the problems that come along with these participatory approaches. I see Johannes is back. Johannes, can you talk to us? Can you try again?

Johannes

Can you hear me now? The micro, microphone button didn't work anymore. Sorry. Should I answer the same question?

Katja

Yes, please, if you want to?

Johannes

Yes. So I, I think one factor that I mean, it doesn't. It seems to me that participatory evaluation doesn't make much sense for projects which aren't co-designed, right? And I think there was a comment in the chat earlier on about that. And so it's, it's necessarily going to take some patience until these projects become more prominent as well. Because that's the context in which participatory evaluation is important. What I would like to see is even further visibility into the rest of science, because participatory evaluation practices, of course, work everywhere. And they work better than the evaluation practices that we have, the perverse incentives that we have right now, in any context, not just in citizen science. So don't be shy to proselytize to other scientists about this as well that are not engaged in citizen science. I think this is extremely important work. And I think, from the little I have been experiencing the last few months, is this is a very active field of research in citizen science, where it's, it's really just a lot of complaining elsewhere. And so I think that's a great advantage that should be pushed.

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Katja

Yeah, thank you for this position. Now, to have it balanced, of course, because I asked you the question before: Obialunanma, do you want to respond to that as well? I don't want to leave you out here. So you might have interesting hint for us from the more like, practitioners point of view.

Obialunanma

Okay, so, well, if I had to figure out, you know, as a practitioner, if I wanted to try something, it would be because I have seen other people who have tried it, and who have been able to show evidence that it works. So what I'm saying in essence is for the evaluators in citizen science, who are using participatory evaluation, as an approach to show their progress, show why you think this is better than whatever other method you were using in the past. Maybe that will spur more interest from the rest of the community. But just share, share, share. Let's see what you're doing.

Katja

It's a continuous conversation. Yeah. So I see there is a lot of questions and comments on the on the board already. Actually, I have to admit, I lost a little bit the oversight. I see there is a whole group of questions are gathering around the question of transformation, societal transformation or change. They are very big. Then there we have a group of questions related to digital divide or the problems that we are now facing. And since I'm the moderator, I have the power and I will now focus on this topic of digital divide and also the problems that we are facing right now with the crisis. Yeah, with like going, going digital, with the physical distancing that some people also call social distancing, with these new modes of conversations and communication. Did you already gather experience in an evaluation setting during the crisis now or in a setting where you could only use digital formats? Maybe now we start with you, Anna. Did you, I think you could share actually quite a lot from FrenaLaCurva, but maybe not so much in terms of evaluation. But maybe you have a hint for us there.

Anna

Yeah, I mean, last year with we had this project during a digital hackathon, where we gathered with some participants to co-design a platform, which was a bit of pre-testing of how the project in Barcelona would work, since we had to move to the digital environment. And there we did introduce evaluation, but since it was something very, very fast, and it was not really planned since the very beginning, it was something that jumped up, I mean, with no, at the last moment, we did incorporate evaluation, and we did it with an online survey at the end of the project. But we did not have time to start the conversation, since the very beginning of the hackathon, and we had a kind of a small rate of response, and we did not have the time to follow up on the conversation with the participants. And this is why now we have introduced the idea of research, personal research diary, which is a physical artifact which may solve this digital divide, which we will be using, we are inviting and we ideally think that it might be useful to write down some reflection, on how the project is going on the part of the co-researchers, and which we will be eventually used as a starting point for collective discussion in the future.

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Katja

I think it will be so interesting to learn more about this in the next, in the coming months when this will be rolled out. And this again, brings me to the idea that yeah, this webinar can only be the first of the series, hopefully, because I think we need to engage much more on our experiences and learn from each other, in order to also create best practices that we can then share, and to make this approach more visible. What about the others? I mean, Katie, you mentioned Photovoice, as a quite already familiar methods to, for young people also to document their surroundings and the situations they live in? Would Photovoice be an approach or a method that could be easily, kind of transferred to social media or the digital realms?

Katie

Yeah, absolutely. I think both Photovoice, as you mentioned, the process of using photos to help document a question or an answer to a question and then to be able to use different technology to be able to speak to those pictures and to develop assessments. I know for some, there's also kind of using different social media. So I had another group of young people actually, this was before the digital divide, but they were using Google text messaging to do data collection. So this was a team of young people doing a summer evaluation project. And they would put out questions to the young people in the program, and then young people would text back their responses through, there was a way to use an anonymous Google voice box, or voicemail box so that there wasn't, so the information was coming back anonymously. But it came back through text. And then the young people were using almost like Twitter hashtags to be able to analyze the information and group the information into different sets of learning. So that was kind of an innovative approach using text messaging. Another example, are just using some of the, seen some of the groups using Google products, like Jamboards, which are kind of like the Miro boards, to be able to, you know, add information or kind of post sticky notes or kind of do that brainstorm mapping around different ideas. But yes, Photovoice could be a great approach. One of the groups I'm actually talking to, after this call, is using young people to do observations of programs. So it's a team of young people who have been really interested in quality in community programs. And so, they were particularly concerned as things all moved online and kind of community programs and youth development programs were moving online, how to assess quality. And so they've developed observation tools, and they train young people. So 10 people training other young people to attend and observe online sessions, and then to give the program's feedback based on their set of observations. So that's kind of another interesting approach that I'm seeing.

Katja

Very interesting. Where can we learn more about all these approaches? I hope you stick with us.

Katie

I will share some information, absolutely. I have a number of resources to share after the call.

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Katja

This would be great. So it is anyway planned that we gather, there are so many super interesting questions. To some of them, I could find an answer now, but to many of them, I think we would have to take a step back, think about them and group them maybe together, and then, yeah, continue the discussion. So we are approaching unfortunately, already the end of this webinar, far too short, just the kickoff for a lot of important things to further think about. And the idea is to make all this available to you what was, yeah, shared today, and maybe even more to get that we try to systematize this a little bit. And I see there are interesting ideas of like forming a working group at ECSA for evaluation. And I think there are very interesting comments that we need to follow up more. And also, when it comes to methodology, I think there we need to learn still a lot. And as we said in the beginning, I think there are already experiences like in your field, Katie, but also in your work Obialunanma, where we can, which we are not aware of and we need to learn more from. And so yeah, we are going to collect your input, also links that you share with us to interesting projects and best practices. And we're going to put it all together in a nice, open access documentation of this webinar together with the video. And before we, I mean, I see so many interesting things about data quality, the problem of how to bring together qualitative and quantitative indicators, and how to, to go on about this, after the project ends beyond when, again, the community's take over, and follow their agendas, and maybe how they can use the research results, and so on and so on. And then of course, the big question about impact and the discussion on impact and evaluation and if this is the same. And there, yeah, I mean, we could make a lot of workshops only on that, because of course it's not the same. And impact should definitely be part of a co-evaluation process, but it's definitely not the only objective of that. So yeah, too many things to follow up right now, but hopefully, in the next time to come in the next years to come. And I would now like to give the word to Barbara or Teresa of the ZSI team, because they will introduce you to our mini evaluation exercise that we want to do with you. Now. Yeah, Barbara or Teresa, I don't know who wants to take over.

Teresa

Barbara, I think you have to unmute yourself, if you

Barbara

Oh, okay I'm unmuted.

Katja

I will share the screen. Okay?

Barbara

Yes, please. And everybody else we would ask you to move again to the Miro board. And actually, yes, we are not practicing what we preach, I would say, because this evaluation is again, I would say rather classical.

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I mean, we didn't do a full co-evaluation process on this webinar. There was no time for that to ask you beforehand about your expectations and everything. But still, we have prepared a little exercise for you actually two exercises for you to get together some further feedback. And if you see here, it's the frame for the last frame on the mirror board. But we have actually two questions for you. The one is actually, well or two boards to contribute to. So the one is really classical in the sense of, for the webinar itself, asking questions, answering the questions like: What concrete input and insight did you take from the webinar? What was surprising for you? What have you missed? or What should we improve? For a follow up session, for example. And then a more content-wise, because we think that you have so much also to tell and we didn't have time to go into a detailed discussion, what would be next steps for future focus areas in co-evaluation? So really, in which way should co-evaluation go? What should we concentrate on here and take up? So that's the one on the qualitative feedback. And the other one, which is this big circle, with the stars around it is just a kind of a rating in, you know, in these four quadrants, on the one hand, the webinar, if it was worth taking place, if you have learned something, if it raised further interesting in co-evaluation, and if there was time enough for reflection and exchange. And there you should, can, you know, just grab a star, and the closer of course you're to the center, like in this darts, the closer to the center, the more you do agree with it. And the further outside, you don't agree with it. And I can already assume and I agree with you, is that we would need more time for reflection and exchange definitely. But yeah, please feel free to leave all your comments on this on the board as well.

Katja

Yeah, thank you very much Barbara, for explaining this to us, and while we are busy following this moving little icons on the screen, I would like to give the word once again to our guests, and maybe start the goodbye round with the question to all of you. So what would be the priorities for you, in your own context, in your own work, when it comes to participatory evaluation? What are your plans for the moment? Where are you going to work, if you could? What are your wishes? Yeah, so maybe we start this time with you Johannes since we can be sure that you're able to speak right now because we've just witnessed it. And we take this opportunity, Johannes, you want to answer what would be your wishes for participatory evaluation, or priorities, at the moment?

Johannes

So I hope so. And I'm going to start really broadly, I think there's a bigger problem. We can evaluate, you know, processes instead of outcomes. And we can do this sort of accompanying mentoring slash evaluation as much as we want. We can come up with the best schemes, as long as current academic sciences in the state gets in [technical difficulties] I see no way that this can survive on a larger scale. So I think there is hope, because the open and citizen science movement had had great success already, but mostly in areas that didn't hurt the old system. And so I think the really big question here is, how can we really get off the gas pedal, and, you know, create this sort of space in which citizen science, co-designed citizen science can actually thrive in and outside an academic setting? And I think my concentration will be on that to create this sort of ecosystem, this environment where we actually really can employ those really powerful tools that you're all developing here.

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Katja

Yeah, I think this is a very important point you're making here because especially in the context, for example of the now starting new framework program in Europe for research funding, Horizon Europe, which has a very strong mission oriented approach and there sometimes if you read definition what it is, a mission oriented approach, the word participation pops up quite a lot. And the question is, what kind of participation is thought here and what kind of power relations are built into rather, if I may say, from my perspective, neoliberal ideas of how to make research even more efficient with like, researchers, being employed, or being engaged together with citizens so that you can have it all in one project, and everything is solved afterwards and in the end, you have even the acceptance to a new technology or something like that. So there is a lot of danger looming here that this goes into the wrong direction. So thank you very much, Johannes, for bringing this up. Yeah, stepping down from the gas pedal would be really important. Uh, Anna, what would be your priority or wish for participatory evaluation or co-evaluation in citizen science?

Anna

Yeah, I do very much agree with what Johannes just said, and I hope that if participatory evaluation in citizen science, co-designed citizen science, is to become the mainstream, I hope it can be really participatory. And that this mechanism of not only collecting feedback, but also integrating them back and listening to inputs from all project members are really effective. And I'm optimistic, and I hope that the discussion will follow up in the future.

Katja

Thank you, Anna. Obialunanma, from your perspective, also coming from the open, government data, open, like, open up movement, would one priority or could one priority be also that we foster the exchange between our communities? Because I think, from your work also in the, in more the context of makerspaces, and so on, I think we could actually learn a lot. So one of my wishes would be that we foster our dialogues a little bit more. What about your wishes or priorities for a participatory evaluation in citizen science?

Obialunanma

Okay, it would be for more communities, or at least expanding the communities that exist for identifying champions, who would take this up and, you know, basically just be the face, or at least, be able to galvanize support for participatory evaluation in these communities.

Katja

So it's, in your point of view, it's really important to have also faces to have really champions, as you call them, of people who, who will bring this also to policymakers, but also to decision makers in other fields to

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make it more visible. That's a very good idea. Yeah, thank you very much. Yeah. So the last comment goes to Katie. What would be your wishes or priorities for participatory evaluation, Katie?

Katie

Well, I really agree with what the other panelists have said. And I think just, I think the only thing I would add is, just to kind of build on the last point, is to not only lift up this as an approach, but to really enable policymakers and various institutional stakeholders to hear and use the information that's developed through these, through participatory evaluation, through the co-design process, and have that information be used to drive change, institutional change, policy change, programmatic change. So that that's that final kind of loop is created. So to really use this information for action.

Katja

Thank you very much. So I guess this also brings us to the agenda that we need to learn maybe better also to involve decision makers, policymakers into the participatory processes from the start. And maybe if that is not possible, learn better how to communicate our results, especially the different perspectives, not the non-consensual, sometimes, results to decision makers. So thank you very much, everybody, for joining in. I'm really sorry that we couldn't get all your really interesting questions into the discussion. But we promise that we will now go on the Miro boards, order things around and maybe think about how to best share it with you, after the seminar. This may take some days, give us a little bit of time, but then Stefanie will certainly contact all of you who have registered for the seminar with our results and maybe we will even think about the possibility to create a conversational space where we can kind of react to what has been gathered here today. So yeah, I thank very much all my co-organizers here, Stefanie in the back, having organized this so professionally, thank you very much Teresa, Barbara, for co-organizing with us, and then all our speakers, Katie, Obialunanma, Johannes and Anna, thanks for being with us. And I hope that we'll meet again, maybe in another setting, to continue the discussion, and to continue to build a strong and resilient community. Thank you very much. Bye bye.

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3. Miro boards

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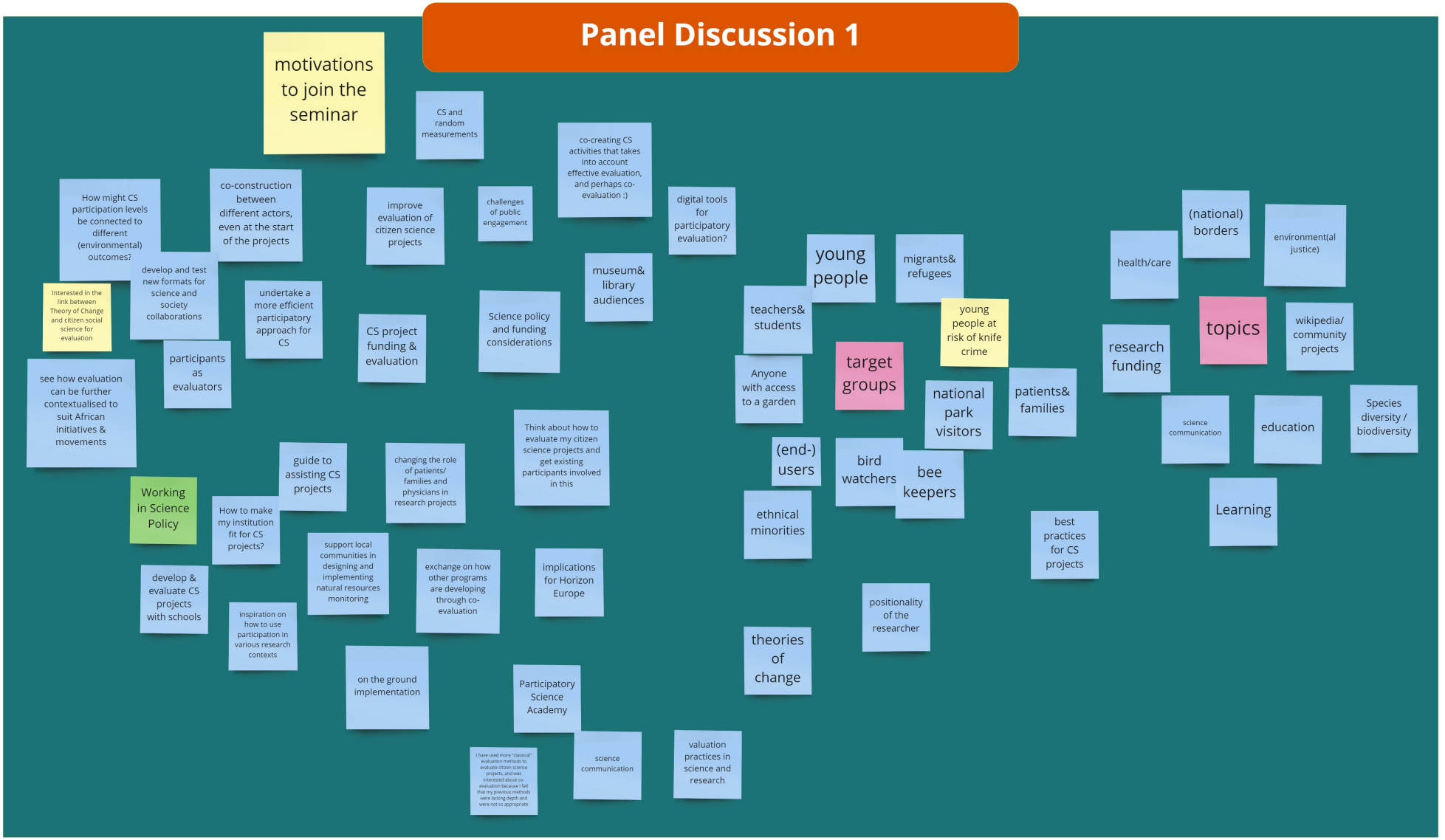

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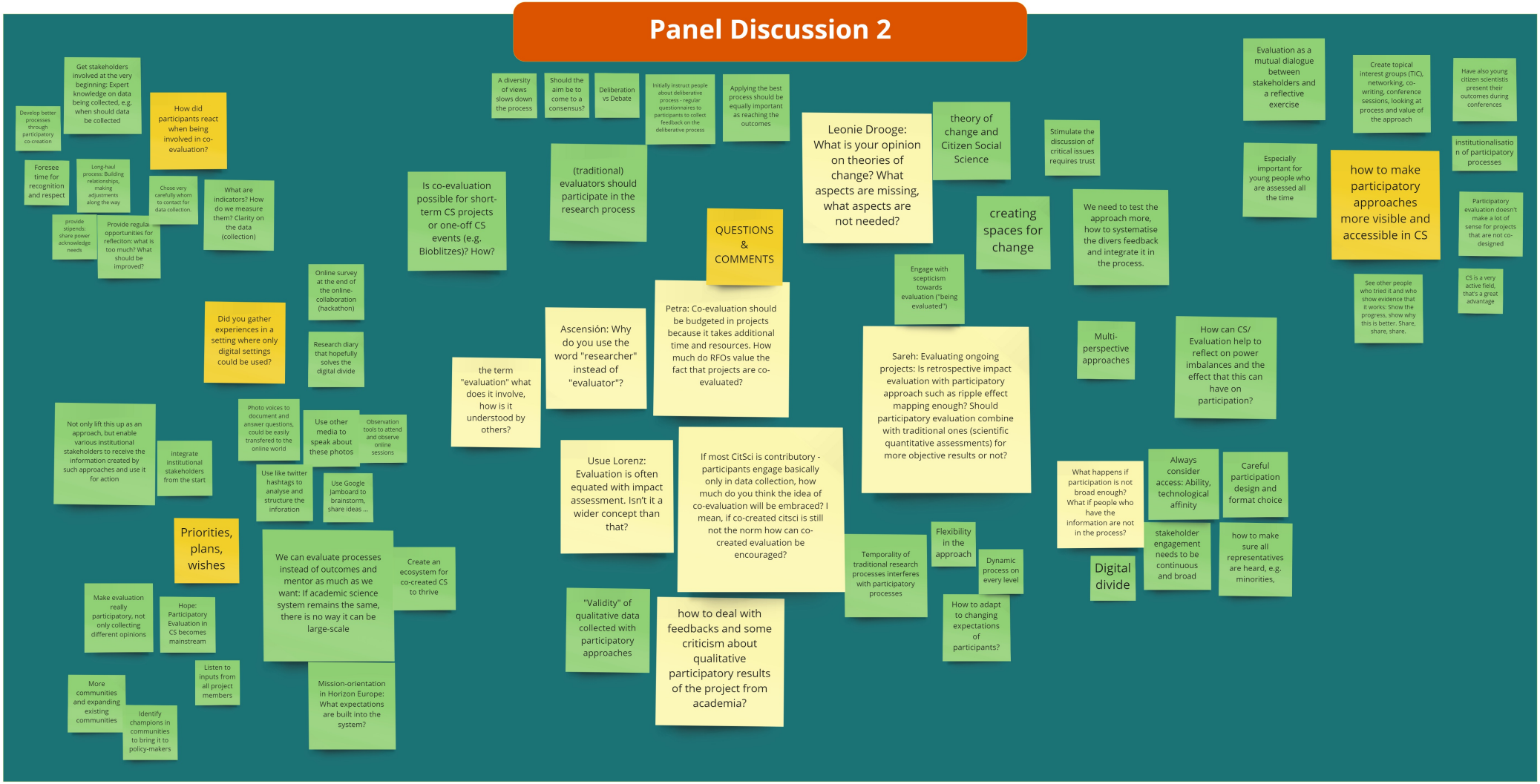

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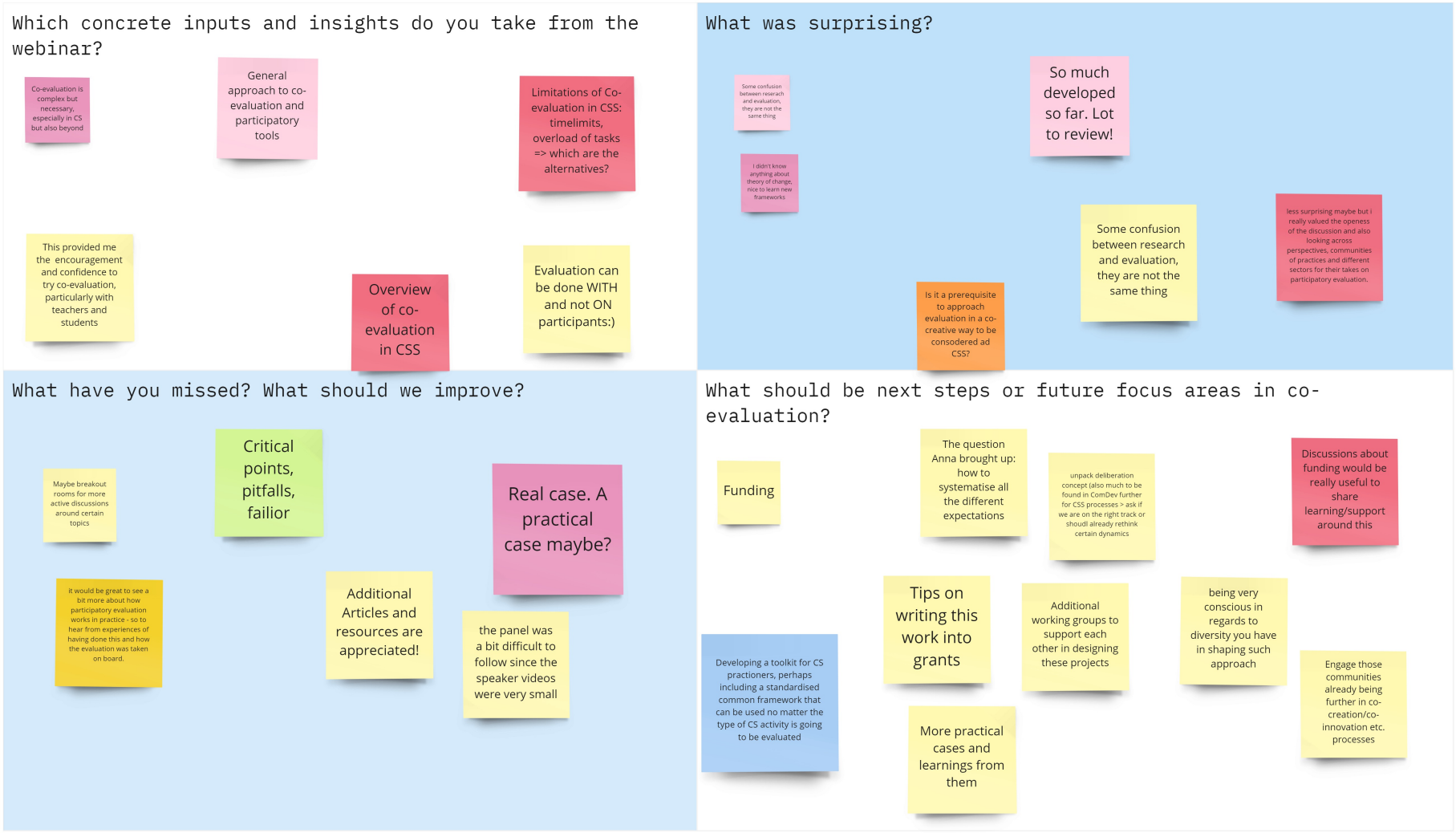

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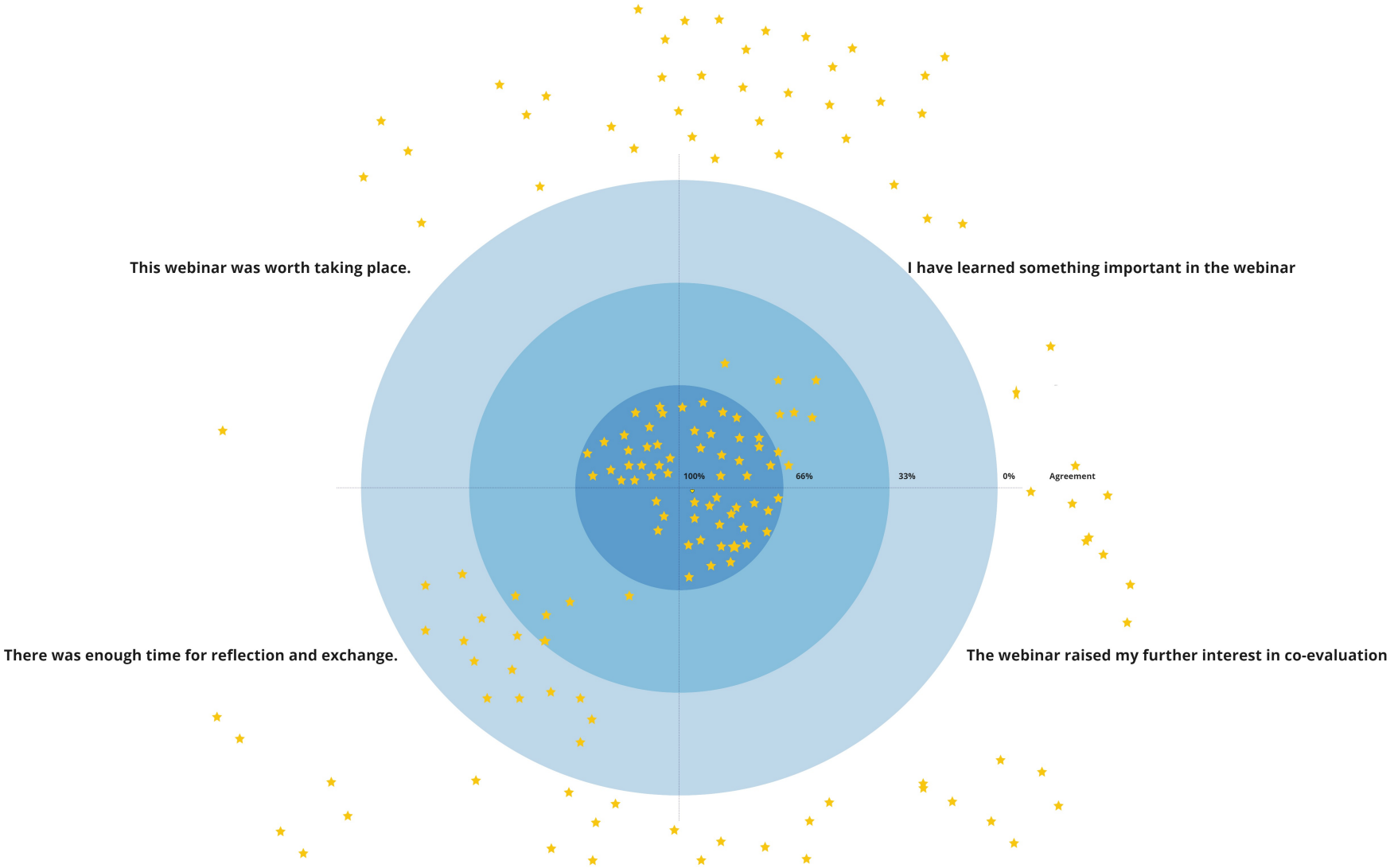
How would you rate the following 4 Statements. Please set your stars, on a range between 0-100% agreement.



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