

CHECKLIST IMPLEMENTATION IN YOUR ORGANISATION (BACK-END)

How you implement your tools in your overall process of course completely depends on the type of tooling. In the beginning of this module we distinguished one-off tools, single-purpose tools (automating or enhancing one specific part of your process) and multi-purpose tools (supporting your overall process). The first two categories might require a small change in your way of working and maybe you need some extra technical support, but they generally do not require fundamental organisational or process changes. You don't need to negotiate responsibilities or ownership within the team, that naturally lies with the person who is responsible for that part of the project.

The more you move towards integral and multi-purpose tools and platforms for your whole urban transformation process, the more complex the implementation becomes. Multi-purpose tooling - like the urban swiss army knife I mentioned in the videos - means different people in your team and different departments in your organisation will need to commit to and work with the same tool. They may need to share data, upload and update project information, process information uploaded by the community plus feed it back into the internal planning process, manage the community, etcetera. Running this successfully is essentially a question of organisation, where platform-thinking can help. When you set up your whole urban transformation project as a local (organisational) platform, it will make total sense how to implement and use a digital platform to support that. Below we list a few practical tips to help you with this.

1. Make sure you have one dedicated community manager or moderator

You will need this in any case for your project and this is also the person with whom to safeguard the final responsibility for keeping an overview and for keeping the platform and community alive both online and offline. This community manager needs to be a generalist who is sensitive to language, tone and atmosphere.

2. Make the community manager the linking pin between your organisation and the area

He or she is helping the project team and different internal departments to share their information in a regular and most of all understandable way. By keeping an overview of what is shared - and how. By monitoring the different interactions and follow-ups on specific posts and comments by the community, the conversations can progress and if needed provided with relevant information or tips or otherwise guided to take next steps. This will keep the platform alive and give it the trustworthiness to keep using it. It is a misconception that you do not need a dedicated community manager because you already have all these skills somewhere in your project team, distributed among different people. You need one person, otherwise you miss accountability and consistency.

3. Make sure that all relevant internal departments are committed

They need to commit to a) the complete urban project, b) the collaborative process and c) the tool or platform you chose to support this process. Ideally there is one person in each department who is already part of your local project team and your natural contact person. Then that person should also be responsible for a specified list of tasks for the platform (for example make sure all relevant datasets are shared and kept up-to-date).

4. Organise regular meet-ups with all your contact persons in the internal departments

This is especially important when a lot is happening in the area. Do a quick round of updates to keep everybody engaged and accountable. This is also valuable for those departments as this allows them to get valuable information, both from the area and its stakeholders and from other the departments - which normally may not reach them through the different siloes in the organisation.

5. Automate data sharing and updates where possible

Maybe you can get the help of your data or innovation department or if you have one, your Chief Technology Office. They may help to automate some of the data flows by making visualised datasets you can import or API's that you can connect with. Also look for relevant data connections you can make with external sources, like the land register.

6. Keep your data and content management well organised

Because of the interactivity, everyone in the local community can put projects on the platform and you can include in the terms of use that everybody remains responsible for keeping their own projects up-to-date. Like this, the community manager only needs to keep the municipality's own projects and general pages updated.

7. Allow the tool or platform some time to take root

Give both your team and the rest of the organisation a bit of time to get used to it. Implementation can go step by step and with every step your team grows confidence, and your external stakeholders get used to it and grow the trust in the tool (and in the team commitment behind it!) that is needed for them to use it. You may start with only one urban analysis or vision map but no thematic datasets yet. You start the conversation with the local community based on that one map with a few diverse local initiatives on top of that map. Once the community is becoming a bit more active on the platform, you can reach out to more stakeholders in your network to invite them to share their initiatives. The same with internal projects and thematic datasets. Like this you don't have to do everything at once and go from zero to hundred, but you allow yourself, your organisation, and your stakeholders some time to get used to it, to build trust and of course to practice a bit. It is new for everybody after all.