TRANSFORMCITY MODULE 4 – SUGGESTED TIMELINE 'STEADY LEARNING'

Duration: 8 weeks
Time investment: 2 hours per week

You are busy. Your work comes with its own bunch of targets and deadlines and you really don't have time to dive into a whole new subject next to that. With this steady learning plan you simply block two hours a week during an eight week period to focus on one or two lessons every week. This allows you the time to let every lesson sink in while also giving you weekly food for thought for your own work. We suggest you plan this ahead, blocking the same moment every week. We also suggest you take a real area from your own work as a case to reflect and work on. Like this, you boost your own knowledge and skill set ánd implement concrete improvements in your projects at the same time. You hit two birds with one stone.

Week 1: Strategic context
Content: Chapter 1 (Intro) & 2
Assignments:
1. Have a look at the overall transformation project you are working on. To what extent does reaching your different goals and tackling your different challenges and transitions (on both short, middle and long term) depend on the active engagement or collaboration with the different local stakeholders? Please specify both the goals and on whom they depend.
2. To what extent do you already collaborate with these stakeholders? And where do they already collaborate with each other (possibly also on local topics that are not on your agenda but that are on theirs)?
3. Where is the collaboration going smoothly and where do you experience thresholds or resistance – and where do you think this is coming from?
4. How are the different collaborations organised within your complete project team? Do you have one person for all different partnerships or are the different types of collaboration (for example with citizens or with project developers) organised separately?
5. Can you spot opportunities for improvement in how you currently collaborate with the different stakeholders in your area?

Week 2: Multi-stakeholder collectivity
Content: Chapter 3 & 4
Assignments:
1. Fill in your canvas for the different local stakeholder groups in your project area and the mutual dependencies among them and also between them and your organisation. Perhaps you already spot opportunities to bring specific groups together around specific topics? Or do you spot potential tensions of conflicting interests you need to keep an eye on? Be as broad as possible, as mentioned in the video some groups may have conflicting interests on one topic but overlapping interests on another. This may inform you with which topics to start when you bring these groups together, but we will dive into that next week. For now, it is important that you get a broad scope of the force field in which you are running your project.

Week 3: Building coalitions
Content: Chapter 5 & 6
Assignments:
1. Look at the canvas you made last week. With which stakeholders do you have good relations already? Do you already know enough different stakeholders to bring them together around a first selection of local topics? Or do you need to set up a range of more in-depth one-on-one conversations first?

2. Make a top 10 of people and key figures representing a diverse group of stakeholders that you would like to talk with and make a list of questions you would like to ask them.
3. Sketch out what your first multi-stakeholder workshop could look like. Make it very specific: invitees, location, setting, decoration, program, topics on agenda, presentation of input, form of interaction, informal aspects, networking, etcetera. If you have a few ideas you can work out all of them. Make a simple onepager with bullets per workshop idea. You can use our checklist from the downloads section.

Week 4: Platform-thinking
Content: Chapter 7
Assignments:
1. How do you yourself view such an open and continuous platform approach? Do you (or your team or organization) feel the need to organise clearly defined themes and stakeholders or, on the contrary, do you have a sky high ambition to address everything with everyone? Do you expect resistance in your own organisation against an open and continuous platform approach? How could you overcome this? What do you need for this?
2. Sketch out what this platform approach could look like for your project. You can use our canvas from the download section.

Week 5: Layering formalities
Content: Chapter 8 & 9
Assignments:
1. Take a close look at both the different topics you need to work on in the area and on the different stakeholders and existing networks that you need to work with.
2. Specify which topics could be best tackled through which type of coalition and governance form. Can it be organised with existing networks or do you need to set up something new? Keep it light and informal (and low-threshold!) where possible and further formalise where necessary.
3. Fill in your own layered structure of different local coalitions with the help of our canvas. Are there any stakeholder groups left that you need to involve more actively? This is just an exercise for yourself. The actual coalitions of course can only take shape in close coordination with the actual stakeholders.
4. Have a look at all the coalitions you sketched and highlight in which you or your team or organisation have a role, what type of role and what you need to keep in mind when executing that role transparently and consistently. What (internal) agreements, mandates or for example political or financial buy-in do you need to organise before you start or as you go?

Week 6: Collective financing
Content: Chapter 10
Assignments:
1. Make an initial assessment of the financial opportunities and challenges in your project area. For which parts of the area development do you need external funding? How can you build this up in smart layers, like a kind of cake, so that you can achieve optimal co-financing and joint ownership in each layer in a targeted way? Consider both large, regional investments, such as infrastructure, but also smaller and hyper-local investments in public space. What can be covered by direct private initiatives, either individually or collectively? And where do you see opportunities for subsidised innovations and experiments? Use your layered coalition structure here as well to see where which investments can be organised.
2. How can you build this collective investments over time? Be very realistic and tactical here. What is your first step? Who can be your first believers and how can you increase your support base step by step? How can you use the different mutual dependencies here, so that your first believers can also become active advocates towards others for the whole collaborative urban transformation project. You can also use our checklist for inspiration.

Week 7: Sustainable safeguarding
Content: Chapter 11

Assignments:
1. Which aspects of your collaborative project will at one point have to be safeguarded in the area itself? Which coalitions are suitable for safeguarding what? Please pay special attention to safeguarding the big and diverse community layer very well in the area, because this is where the connectivity and inclusivity between the different coalitions and stakeholder groups in your area is safeguarded.
2. Which aspects of your collaborative project will at one point have to be safeguarded inside your organisation? Where so you see the risks concerning this adoption and commitment? What is needed for successful institutioning in your organisation? Who is crucial for this and how can you make sure to properly engage and align him/her/them along the way? Of course, this is a big question that may need additional and specific organisational expertise. This exercise is for you to do a rapid mapping of the opportunities and the threats so you can either mitigate them directly or set up follow-up actions towards mitigation.

Week 8: Synthesis & action
Content: Review whole course
Assignment: Sharpen your strategy and action plan and get ready to start
1. Based on everything you've learned, refine your own strategy and canvases one more time.
2. Now refine your top five very first actions. Make sure that these are actions that you should be able to start right away, tomorrow morning at nine o'clock so to speak, so that you don't need any additional budget, permit, support, or other permission. These actions can in themselves be very light with zero risk of failure, but they are aimed at giving your process an optimal kickstart and setting in motion as many other actions as possible in your strategy and action plan. Make sure that at least one of these first actions has a festive and optimistic tinge and gives you the opportunity to meet the various stakeholders without putting too much serious content on the agenda immediately.
3. Take a moment to realise you just finished this module and redesigned your complete software strategy while also being busy with your regular work and projects. This is no small achievement in these busy times, and you should definitely celebrate this. Whether you pop open the champagne or plan something nice for yourself, enjoy – and congratulations!