Does Participatory Budgeting Improve Local Democracy?

A comparative study of Central Java and Northeast Scotland

A thesis submitted for the degree of

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Abstract:

Participatory Budgeting (PB) has grown rapidly as part of a range of democratic innovations with the aim of reinvigorating participatory democracy during a time of declining trust in institutions. However, questions remain about the potential of these instruments to contribute to transformative change. Against this background, the objective of this thesis is to investigate how and why PB improves local democracy. The study contributes to the literature by integrating three important aspects of PB -- design, embeddedness and outcomes -- which have been predominantly studied in isolation or limited combinations in existing research.

The research utilised a subnational paired comparison design centred around four specific case studies: two in Central Java, Indonesia (the cities of Surakarta and Semarang) and two in Scotland, United Kingdom (the local authorities of Fife and Moray), where PB has been nationally legislated. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with 56 PB participants, organisers and civil society stakeholders. These responses were triangulated with observation notes and photography from field visits and other available secondary data.

Key findings include that PB is helping to bring communities and local governments closer together and that the mechanism brings modest results in responsiveness to community needs. However, a greater scale and ambition is needed to strengthen citizens' perceptions of local governments. A relationship between PB design, embeddedness and PB outcomes was found in which improvements to design improved embeddedness and vice versa, and outcomes such as community-level change were more apparent.

In generating evidence across multiple case studies in two highly contrasting country settings in Europe and Asia, this thesis has developed a deeper understanding of how design and embeddedness factors interact and contribute to the improvement of government-community relations.

Key words: participatory budgeting, deliberative democracy, embeddedness

This thesis is the result of the author's original research. It has been composed by the author and has not been previously submitted for examination which has led to the award of a degree.

Signed: 

Date: 19/02/25

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Glossary

APBD – Regional Budget

Bappeda - Regional Research and Development Planning Agency

Camat leader – Leader of the Kecamatan

Citizen Rembug/Rembug warga* - Neighbourhood level discussion forum (in Semarang)

CSO – Civil Society Organisation

Desk Sinkronisasi – Synchronisation Forum

DPRD – House of Representatives

EU – European Union

FGD – Focus Group Discussion

Kecamatan – District or sub-district (used interchangeably)

Kelurahan – Urban village

Kota - Municipality

LPMKs – Community Empowerment Institution/Forum

Musling – Neighbourhood level discussion forum (in Surakarta)

Musrenbang – Deliberative Development Planning (or Participatory Budgeting)

NGO – Non-governmental Organisation

PB – Participatory Budgeting

Pre-Musrenbang - Neighbourhood level discussion forum (in Semarang)

QCA – Qualitative Comparative Analysis

Renstramas – District Strategic Plan or 5-Year Mid-Term Development Plan

Sangpuan – Caring for Women and Children Forum (or Women and Children Forum)

RTs – Block level

RWs – Neighbourhood level

UK – United Kingdom

UN – United Nations

VAW – Violence Against Women

*Alternative name for Pre-Musrenbang

1. Overview & Literature Review

1.1. Introduction

This thesis seeks to contribute to the understanding of how the democratic innovation of Participatory Budgeting (PB) strengthens local democracy when instituted through national legislation. The research addresses one specific research question: "How and why does PB improve Local Democracy?" Two inter-related dimensions of PB are also explored: PB design features and PB's embeddedness in the democratic system. To address the research question, I have employed a comparative case study approach focused on two pairs of case studies in Central Java, Indonesia and Scotland, the United Kingdom (UK). The case studies were the cities of Surakarta (referred to as Solo) and Semarang in Indonesia and the predominantly rural regions of Fife and Moray in Scotland, UK. The pairs were selected based on several criteria: differences in PB design and anticipated differences in embeddedness of PB, duration of time implementing PB, similar socio-economic contexts, observable civil society engagement in PB processes, and relatively stable political contexts. Through this approach, the research explores the interaction between micro- and macro-level factors and the outcomes of PB, including community-level changes and perceptions towards local government, and whether and how together these factors can contribute to strengthening local democracy. The thesis comprises 8 chapters, covering a literature review, analytical framework, empirical case studies, comparative discussion, and conclusions.

Chapter 1 reviews the existing literature on PB. Beginning with an outline of the background of PB and its history and drivers, before turning to the impact of PB processes. The chapter then proceeds with an elaboration of different factors that are at play in the relative effectiveness of PB, with overviews provided in two broad categories – micro-level and macro-level factors. Finally, I conclude the chapter by summarising the main points and outlining what the implications are of the state of the literature for this thesis and its research design. Building on the foundations set in the previous chapter, **Chapter 2** sets out the research question that has been explored through this research, before detailing the analytical framework that has been utilised to guide the research. The framework has drawn influence from several areas of political theory: deliberative democratic theory, embeddedness, and cyclical trust building in developing a framework that considers contextual factors, PB factors of Design (micro-level) and embeddedness (macro-level), and PB outcomes, including community-level results and

perceptions towards local governments, in an assessment of whether and how PB improves local democracy.

Chapter 3 sets out the methodology for the research. The chapter provides an overview of the pragmatist philosophical underpinnings which have guided the research, along with an ontological position that is sympathetic to bounded relativism and critical realism, and epistemological groundings in constructionism**.** The chapter details how these positions are appropriate for this research due to its intention to arrive at a contextualised understanding of what works to solve problems and facilitate policy change. The chapter describes the paired subnational comparative design that has been employed for this multi-case qualitative comparative research study, as well as the approach taken to the case selection of Surakarta and Semarang in Central Java, Indonesia, and Fife and Moray in Scotland, United Kingdom. The chapter elaborates on the data sources and methods, including semi-structured interviews, field notes, and triangulation with available secondary sources, before providing an overview of the ethical approach taken.

Chapter 4 provides an overview of PB in the countries of Indonesia and Scotland, as well as the specific case study locations in each country – Surakarta and Semarang in Central Java, Indonesia, and Fife and Moray in Scotland, United Kingdom. This chapter serves to set the scene of the research, to detail the past and the present of PB in each of the case study locations, the drivers for its emergence, as well notable design and contextual aspects of their experiences to date.

Chapters 5 and 6 present the empirical case studies, drawing on semi-structured interviews, field notes, and secondary sources. It begins with the Indonesian cases in Chapter 5, followed by the Scottish cases in Chapter 6. The case studies are structured around three specific sections. The first sets out findings relating to micro-level factors of PB design, in accordance with the three elements of deliberative democratic theory included in the analytical framework: inclusion, quality of discussion, and decision-making. The second section presents the findings concerning the macro-level - three dimensions of embeddedness: temporal, spatial and practices. The final section assesses PB outcomes in relation to local democracy, including evidence of community-level changes that the mechanism is understood to have contributed to in each of the case study locations, and drivers of PB promoting trust in local government.

Chapter 7 provides a comparative analysis and discussion of the case studies highlighting similarities and differences in PB design, alignment with deliberative democratic values, and PB

embeddedness. The outcomes consider community-level changes, satisfaction with PB, as well as the extent to which PB has the potential to shift attitudes towards local government. The findings are compared with existing literature, and the contribution of the thesis is clarified.

Finally, **Chapter 8** concludes the thesis, summarising key findings and drawing implications for theory and practice. The chapter also outlines the limitations of the thesis and concludes with suggestions for future research, and a short coda dedicated to answering the central question of the thesis.

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1.2. PB background, history, and drivers

PB was first introduced in 1989 by the Brazilian Worker's Party (Partido dos Trabalhadores (*PT)*) in the city of Porto Alegre, in response to community demand for more active involvement in the decisions shaping their everyday lives. The PT were of the view that elections should be but one part of democracy, with other more local and participatory ingredients also necessary for a vibrant participatory democracy with the ability to improve people's lives. In the years following the demise of the country's military dictatorship in 1985, the Worker's Party strongly felt social justice could only be delivered through radical empowerment of the working classes. As PB showed early signs of success in Porto Alegre it subsequently swept the nation (Avritzer and Wampler, 2008)

The Porto Alegre model brought together people from across the municipality into regional groups to propose, deliberate, and prioritise projects that met the agreed needs of communities across the local area, with a significant promotion of redistributive funding allocations from wealthy to poor areas (Boulding and Wampler, 2009, Avritzer and Wampler, 2008, Wampler, 2012, Wampler et al., 2021, Touchton and Wampler, 2014). Once projects were selected, PB representatives also had oversight of project implementation to ensure accountability in line with expectations (Wampler, 2012).

Following its genesis in the 1980s, PB subsequently spread around South America, into North America, and across Europe, the Middle East and into the Asia-Pacific (Ganuza and Baiocchi, 2012). While initially characterised by an association with radical left-wing and socialist governments, PB has since been embraced to varying degrees by policymakers across the political spectrum – including in authoritarian and non-democratic societies such as China and

Russia (Shah, 2007, Wampler et al., 2021). According to the PB Atlas, an initiative to map all PB examples across the world, there were over 10,000 examples of PB in 2019, with this dropping to approximately 4,000 in the most recent edition of the Atlas in 2020, predominantly due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Oficina, 2020). Nevertheless, these figures demonstrate the significant scale at which PB is operating in since its advent. Alongside this growth there has been significant variations in design observed, as well as mixed outcomes (Shah, 2007, Wampler et al., 2021, Sintomer et al., 2012, Sintomer et al., 2021).

The expansion of PB can be partly attributed to attempts to address a decline in social trust and faith in democracy, economic stagnation in the west (Kriesi, 2013, Wampler et al., 2021, Sintomer et al., 2012), and democratic backsliding elsewhere in Europe and the United States of America (De Vries et al., 2021, IDEA, 2021). Polarisation and the rise of echo chambers have also increased interest in deliberative democracy (Taylor et al., 2020, Haidt, 2012).

Major institutions such as the European Union (EU), United Nations (UN), and the World Bank have become increasingly active in the promotion of PB (De Vries et al., 2021), particularly in the Global South as part of a worldwide push towards decentralisation in the hope of empowering citizens and improving the responsiveness and relevancy of services delivered. This process has coincided with what some have argued is a hollowing out of some of the more transformative elements of the innovation in favour of practices that more readily support the Washington Consensus of neoliberal economics such as privatisation, deregulation, and globalised free markets (Goldfrank, 2012). Meanwhile, PB has been used by elites in Russia and China in efforts to legitimise decision-makers at the local level (Li and Mayraz, 2015, Wu and Wang, 2012, De Vries et al., 2021, He, 2019).

Critics have argued that PB has been used as a tool to shift responsibility onto the poor and marginalized (Sintomer et al., 2021). A recent development is nationally legislated PB in which national or regional governments enact top-down reforms to promote participation with PB playing a central role (McNulty and No, 2021). Other trends in PB are the implementation of online forms of PB in which participatory processes are delivered via the internet, either on their own or in conjunction with offline processes, and theme-specific PB to ensure that outcomes focus on particular issues such as the environment or health (Cabannes and Lipietz, 2018, Wampler et al., 2021).

Whether due to deficiencies in design, challenges of context, lack of reliable data, or a combination of all three, the successes initially achieved by the original PB model in Brazil have

been less documented elsewhere in the world (De Vries et al., 2021). Moreover, the successes of the original PB model have not been sustained over time (Abers et al., 2018).

1.3. Definitions and Typologies

PB is often described as **a process in which local people are enabled to decide how a portion of local money is spent through a process of deliberative decision-making** (Shah, 2007). However, the original PB process pioneered in Porto Alegre, Brazil also included a commitment to redistribute resources towards the poor and a role for participants in agreeing the exact design the PB process would utilise (Goldfrank, 2007). This form has been labelled the "real" PB, the "ideal" PB and the "original" PB (Sintomer et al., 2008, De Vries et al., 2021, Wampler et al., 2021). Scholars have defined what PB is (or should be) and classified the various forms it has taken across the world. Some focus on structural factors when classifying types of PB processes (Sintomer et al., 2012), while others have developed hybrid typologies that integrate the outcomes from specific PB models, including digital PB and mandated PB (Wampler et al., 2021).

PB models vary according to the setting in which they arise, their intended outcomes, operational rules, and the administrative capacity of the bodies implement them, among other factors. Moreover, PB types exists on a spectrum of engagement in which the format, structures and rules that are in place result in different levels of power to enact change for citizens that are taking part (Sintomer et al., 2012, Wampler et al., 2021). At one end of the spectrum are models in which participation and decision-making scope is more limited, and in some instances, there being no guarantee that choices of participants will be enacted (Sintomer et al., 2012). At the other end are more open and participatory models where citizens can guide the overall scope of the process, including what issues will be addressed. When the scope of a PB process is particularly wide, it can involve decisions over mainstream government budgets. Furthermore, at its most transformative, PB involves a redistribution of wealth from more affluent areas to those deemed to be disadvantaged (Boulding and Wampler, 2009, Wampler et al., 2021). In more limited circumstances, PB processes are undertaken to decide on discrete pots of funding, as in the case of community grant-making initiatives (Sintomer et al., 2012).

The various forms that PB can take pose challenges for undertaking meaningful comparison (Sintomer et al., 2021). No typology has yet been able to combine all aspects of variation in PB, and few studies have focused on differences in PB design directly (Ryan, 2021). In chapter 4, I will

detail how PB is defined and operationalised in the two pairs of case studies examined for this thesis.

Whether through accident or design, the original model, placing significant emphasis on social justice and radical participation, has lost favour among policymakers and has rarely been fully realised since the early years of its advent in South America, despite (or perhaps even because of) its association with the most transformative results on record thus far (Wampler et al., 2021). This is likely due to a mix of various factors including the different intentions of governments, local contexts, pressures from special interests, resource deficits, and technocratic styles (Wampler et al., 2021).

1.4. Evaluations of PB – what impact does it have?

The literature on PB highlights a range of impacts around the world, although these vary significantly by region and context. The key types of impact can be broadly categorised into the influence on policies, polity, and politics.

Policies

One of the most frequently documented effects of PB is **an increase in spending on social services,** particularly in South America (McNulty, 2012, Boulding and Wampler, 2009, Goncalves, 2013, Jaramillo and Wright, 2015). However, such shifts did not necessarily lead to appropriate services being delivered. Challenges have included insufficient quality or services simply not being implemented (Jaramillo and Wright, 2015, McNulty, 2012), often due to over-stretched local budgets and inability to spend PB budgets (Jaramillo and Wright, 2015). A lack of technical expertise at the local level to deliver projects in line with expectations has also been a significant challenge (Buele et al., 2020, McNulty, 2012).

Increased spending on health and education are a notable outcome of PB in Brazil (Boulding and Wampler, 2009), which shows a degree of responsiveness resulting from PB processes. This trend has also been observed alongside the realisation of improved services (Sintomer et al., 2008). In this context, responsiveness refers to the extent to which the needs and aspirations of participants and communities are served and responded to. In such instances, a PB process would be sufficiently participatory for and empowering of those taking part, ensuring their needs are taken on board. However, further evidence reveals nuance to the impact of PB (Boulding and Wampler, 2009). Firstly, while health and education spending did increase, other priorities that

were noted by communities did not see similar increases in comparison to non-PB locations – such as in housing or social services. Moreover, in the city of Recife, Brazil, informal interviews revealed that two priority concerns of residents were unemployment and violence, yet these were not responded to during the PB process due to the sense that they were topics that were best tackled at the national level – outside of the remit of the local PB programme (ibid). As the authors conclude: "*this evidence thus suggests that governments with participatory budgeting may be responding to citizens' demands, but only on a limited scale and only on certain policy issues"* (Boulding and Wampler, 2009, p. 128).

Shifts in social spending priorities, such as reallocating funds towards schools, street improvements, and public housing, have also been observed in cities such as New York (Hagelskamp et al., 2020). Through a comparison of budgetary allocations across PB and non-PB, increases in these areas alongside comparable reductions in spending in parks and recreation, housing preservation, as well as development projects (ibid). An interpretative study of the same city, however, argued that the process was not set-up to tackle the complex and largescale priorities of non-white participants (Su, 2017).

There is further positive evidence elsewhere on PB's potential to prioritise marginalised groups and communities. A study in South Korea found that a more diversely configured review process during project selection led to higher levels of spending on pro-poor issues (No and Hseuh, 2020). While in Spain, the inclusion of ethnic minority representatives on the delegate board led to the construction of a community centre in the city of Albacete which responded to the needs of underserved communities (Sintomer et al., 2008). Such shifts are further evidence of the pro-poor direction that can occur when local communities are actively involved in the decisions regarding how funds should be spent.

Polity

A second key area of impact from PB is on civil society, in terms **mobilising, engaging and/or activating greater numbers of civil society organizations** into the discussion around public policy and service (McNulty, 2012, Touchton and Wampler, 2014). Indeed, Touchton and Wampler (2014, p. 1444) have suggested that that PB *"is associated with a broader, structural set of changes; new patterns of governance, state–society relations, and empowerment"*. These shifts produce "*more durable change."* (ibid). Another study have found that PB contributed to a

strengthening of civil society in Brazil, when comparing cities that did implement PB with those that did not (Baiocchi et al., 2011).

While strengthening civil society is an impact associated with PB in Brazil, such findings are less typical of processes elsewhere. Some evidence has been found in Europe of PB strengthening coordination amongst civil society actors, particularly when processes are ongoing and repetitious over multiple annual cycles (Sintomer et al., 2008). In Spain, alienation amongst CSOs was felt in the city of Cordoba upon the arrival of PB to the area which led to a pause in operations pending reforms to the initial model. A revised iteration of the model opened the model to both citizens and members of CSOs – with the latter of these being entitled to an overwhelming majority of seats on the PB council. This example could be seen as something of an overcorrection to an understandable concern amongst organised civil society (Wampler et al., 2021). Such experiences again draw attention to the inherent trade-offs of developing an impactful and fair process of PB.

Politics

A third type of impact from PB is its **effects on the wider political and governmental sphere**. Arguably, understandings of the impact of PB on politics and democracy are underdeveloped, particularly outside of South America. For example, very few studies have explored links between PB and political trust (Theuwis 2024). Sintomer et al (2008) have noted that the impact of PB on politics in Europe was not as evident as it has been shown to be in areas of Brazil, and could only be understood in the long-term. Nevertheless, while significant impacts in this sphere may have been less widely apparent at the time of their writing, the authors did find a link between the reform and the demand for greater transparency among the citizenry, as well as on what they referred to as the "political culture" of a locale (ibid).

PB is understood as having the potential to greatly strengthen the flow of information between citizens and governments, resulting in policies that are more responsive to local needs (Goncalves, 2013, Sintomer et al., 2021). Some studies observe a positive effect of PB on aspects of political trust (Volodin, 2019, Swaner, 2017). An increase in positive sentiment towards local authorities, a stronger sense of government legitimacy, access and transparency, as well as an improved knowledge concerning government and budgeting processes were found in a study utilising PB experiments in Ukraine (Volodin, 2019). However, this study focused on the question of whether PB could increase trust in local government, but not on how and why this occurs.

Moreover, the study was limited to one locality in Ukraine (ibid). Elsewhere, a qualitative study that has focused on the question of PB and trust in government suggested that PB promoted a greater sense of constructive engagement with local government, as well as promoted learning about the workings of government. The study highlighted that both of these factors showed signs of promoting positive perceptions towards government as well as a heightened sense of government legitimacy (Swaner, 2017).

However, the evidence of any link between PB and political trust is not universally positive and is highly nuanced. In a review of available evidence from research focusing on the Philippines, no evidence was found to suggest that PB promotes trust in government (Franklin and Ebdon, 2020). A comparative study of PB across Europe found mixed results regarding its impact on democratic reform and strengthening (Sintomer et al., 2021). It revealed that PB did not lead to an increase in voter turnout and did not visibly strengthen support for the sitting administration. Furthermore, abstention was more commonplace in areas that had undertaken PB than in areas with a similar context without PB (ibid). As the authors note, such a finding may suggest that involvement in PB fulfils citizens appetite to participate and discourages them from taking up opportunities to further engage in the political system.

Furthermore, studies in Central and Eastern Europe have underlined how the failure of participatory exercises to deliver on their intentions can exacerbate governance dysfunction, lead to a worsening of state-civil society relations, as well as lead to a reduction in the likelihood that people will participate again in the future (Fölscher 2007). A qualitative study of the impact of PB on populist attitudes, which are symptomatic of disaffection with politics, showed that a decrease in populist attitudes was more likely when authorities are seen as valuing the inputs of PB participants (Theuwis 2024). However, differences in participant profile and their respective experiences of PB were also found to have shaped the extent to which attitudes towards government shifted (ibid). While it is important not to downplay the governance improvements attributed to PB, impact also seems to depend on complementary, top-down elements (Sintomer et al., 2021). Such complementary elements may explain how greater turnout of marginalised groups following their inclusion in PB has been observed elsewhere (Wampler et al., 2021).

1.5. Micro Factors Linked to PB Effectiveness

Given the large volume of PB initiatives across the globe, it is not surprising that the conditions that give rise to effective results vary widely. Effectiveness has been considered to be simply the extent to which participants proposals are implemented (Feruglio and Rifai, 2017). With others going further to suggest that PB is effective if it is perceived to be leading to quality projects (Ganuza and Baiocchi 2019). However, I believe a more desirable marker of effectiveness worldwide is if PB is giving rise to transformative change (O'Hagan et al., 2019), such as through rebalancing power between citizen and authorities, and promoting equity in governmental resourcing (Wampler et al., 2021). The potential for such shifts depends greatly on the intentions of PB organisers, which vary greatly across the world (ibid). A compendium on PB from the World Bank listed several factors that may improve results in PB processes (Shah, 2007). While more recent overviews have been conducted, the World Bank report's remains valuable due to its comprehensive examination of case studies across regions and continents, offering insights into how different PB models have performed in diverse contexts. Although the World Bank is sometimes criticised for promoting policies that are not always considered socially just, evidence suggests that the Bank's role in advancing PB is positive (Goldfrank, 2012). Moreover, the report contains work from some of the leading scholars on PB, synthesising findings which still hold true today. I have divided these factors into two levels (micro and macro) for the purposes of presentation and relevance to my research design, while acknowledging that that the grouping is not always clear cut. The micro-level factors include:

- The rules that guide both participation and decision making
- How different participation mechanisms combine to greater effect
- The importance of awareness raising and education of stakeholders, including the quality of information being utilised
- The role and effectiveness of incentives (Shah, 2007).

The following section unpacks the factors, beginning with a consideration of the types of participants and the significance for performance overall.

1.5.1. Inclusion

For PB to fulfil its promise, it must involve the communities it seeks to empower. Moynihan (2007) has gone further to say that participatory forums should reflect something of a microcosm of the

local demographics. While others suggest that marginalized groups should be over-subscribed in deliberative processes to counteract pre-existing power differentials (Curato et al., 2019).

While a normative standpoint favours inclusion, the extent to which greater social inclusion in PB approach leads to more social justice is contested (see section 1.4). However, other benefits of inclusion in PB design have been observed. For example, organised mobilisation of an entire community has been shown to result in a greater degree of ownership by said community in the PB process, as was the case in some countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (Shall, 2007). With a greater degree of ownership, the eventual outcomes are more likely to be deemed legitimate by communities - positioning projects to be well-supported and ultimately succeed (Shah, 2007).

Inclusive participation can also address power dynamics by ensuring higher participation rates of typically underrepresented groups or by limiting the participation of dominant groups (Curato et al., 2019). In Indonesia, efforts to empower disadvantaged groups include special forums whereby disadvantaged groups convene prior to PB processes in order to ensure these stakeholders can combine their voices for greater effect (Feruglio and Rifai, 2017). Alternatively, placing the power of final funding decisions in the hands of a group of individuals randomly selected from a larger pool of participants can also serve to disrupt entrenched power, as has been the preferred route pursued by the leadership of the city of Paris (Wampler et al., 2021).

However, simply increasing the participation of regular citizens may not be a silver bullet to the challenge of elite domination in PB processes. A study in Kenya demonstrated that while increasing the numbers of citizens participating in PB did alter the observed relationship between projects requested and those selected, it was insufficient in fully addressing elite capture due to structural factors that became apparent at finalisation stages (Sheely, 2015).

Despite the benefits of inclusion, organisers often struggle to achieve the desired levels of inclusivity. This is often due to structural barriers related to inequality, social exclusion, or poverty which mean that groups on the periphery face exclusion (Baiocchi et al., 2011, Wampler, 2012). These challenges have been observed globally, including in South America (McNulty, 2018), North America (Hagelskamp et al., 2020)), and Central and Eastern Europe (Fölscher, 2007c). Longstanding mistrust in duty bearers can also impede inclusion, as has been shown to be the case in Zambia where - despite invitation - citizens chose not to attend PB events due to a lack of confidence in those responsible for delivering the events (Shall, 2007).

1.5.2. Quality of participation

The quality of participation, especially in terms of deliberation, also varies widely across different PB models. Meaningful deliberation, which should be central to participation according to some proponents (Moynihan, 2007), is often uneven, with some PB processes offering limited opportunities for thorough discussion and reflection. An assessment of PB in Europe found that most deliberation in PB processes was average at best, with only a small number of cases displaying a higher standard mainly due to deliberate efforts of organisers to ensure lengthy discussion could take place (Sintomer et al., 2008). Similar conclusions have been reached by other scholars (De Vries et al., 2021, Röcke, 2014).

Low levels of deliberation may be in part due to the inherent theoretical tensions that arise between participation and deliberation (Fishkin, 2011). Further reasons for unsatisfactory deliberative quality include the role of facilitators, the standard of information provided to participants, the duration of discussion, or the numbers and dynamics of the discussion groups (Ebdon and Franklin, 2006). PB in New York has sought to redress some of these issues through ensuring small-group discussions can take place in which learning and education of participants has a central role (Wampler et al., 2021). Similarly, researchers in Indonesia have identified the provision of suitable information to participants as being a critical action required to improve the PB process in the country (Feruglio and Rifai, 2017). Indeed, scholars have noted that the expectation that participants arrive at conclusions from low levels of understandings of issues is a particular deficiency of PB (Wampler, 2007). It is therefore incumbent on organisers to take steps to correct and bridge such deficits if they wish their interventions to deliver on the outcomes that PB promises. Without sufficient learning and awareness raising occurring during PB there is a risk that participants will be unable to challenge the prevailing orthodoxy or business as usual of elites (ibid).

1.5.3. Decision-making

Different PB models also employ various decision-making methods, the results of which further shapes how participants engage. Whilst it is commonly understood that PB is a democratic process – which implies a vote of some kind – the literature demonstrates that decisions are arrived at in a variety of ways. For example, in locations such as Scotland, Poland and France, it is more typical for votes to be conducted in a rapid 'competition-style' way, often with little or no time for dialogue or discussion between participants (O'Hagan et al., 2019, Wampler et al., 2021). Where PB has been moved primarily online – "e-PB" – the benefit is often in having more sheer numbers of people participate, with the trade-off being that deliberation opportunities are

further constrained (Wampler et al., 2021). Elsewhere, locations including Indonesia and Kenya, have been described as utilising consensus-based decision-making in which participants discuss and agree on appropriate funding decisions (Akbar et al., 2020, Sheely, 2015). Proponents of this model believe that it increases support for the overall process, rather than just those individuals winning support for their priorities (Wampler et al., 2021).

As was noted earlier (section 1.3), the Porto Alegre model of PB gave participants a certain degree of control over the way the PB process was run. The argument in favour of this feature of a PB process is that only through giving participants the flexibility to set their own agenda can you truly empower people. The 'power to decide how to decide' is arguably the ultimate subversion of traditional power dynamics. However, feasibility challenges in this level of freedom in policy implementation mean that this form of "fully participatory" PB has been relatively rare. Meanwhile, research has shown that the design of an institution invariably replicates existing power dynamics (Bherer et al., 2016). However, others have challenged this notion to say that the design and agency of actors involved in delivering a policy can help overcome constraints or challenging conditions (Baiocchi et al., 2011).

Crucially, how people participate can influence the outcomes that PB processes achieve. Wampler et al (2021) note that the "original" design of PB (what they label the "empowered democracy and redistribution" model) has significantly more evidence in its favour regarding social justice outcomes and impact. The second most effective model according to available evidence that Wampler et al (2021) note is the "deepened democracy through community mobilisation" model. Meanwhile, a dearth of evidence is noted for models they label "mandated PB" (nationally legislated PB) and "digital PB" (PB delivered utilising online technology) (ibid).

As PB has evolved, the ambitious goals of earlier models - like redistribution, empowerment, and reducing corruption - have shifted (Wampler et al., 2021), with modern iterations often focusing more on increasing knowledge and tolerance rather than on deep participatory engagement (De Vries et al., 2021). Such changes may well be contributory factors behind the more modest impacts scholars have observed in Europe and Africa. Significant social changes arising from PB have previously been understood as rare in Europe (Sintomer et al., 2012, Wampler et al., 2021), while the interests of communities in PB have been seen to be secondary to international donor priorities in Africa (Sintomer et al., 2012).

1.5.4. Incentives and resources

As a means of addressing some of the above barriers to inclusion and effective participation, several strategies have been identified in the literature. Taking steps to incentivise participation or simply making it easier is a logical step that many organisers take. The means in which participation has been encouraged varies according to the context in which the strategies have been developed. Examples include enacting quotas for specific roles within the PB process, ensuring technical information is made more accessible to participants, and removing barriers to participation through rule changes or through proactive or thoughtful scheduling (Wampler et al., 2021, Shah, 2007). Other strategies include the use of technology to provide more avenues to participate (a route that European cities such as Paris, Madrid and Barcelona have increasingly opted for), and the use of 'sectoral discussions', also referred to as actor-based PB (Cabannes, 2004), in which participation is limited to specific identity groups as a means of affirmative action (Feruglio and Rifai, 2017). However, while technology is often hailed as a facilitator of inclusion and this can be true in certain circumstances, it can also lead to the opposite in other occasions because of the "digital divide" – the fact that ICT is less accessible to poor and marginalised communities. Like sectoral discussions, technology can also be costly and/or require competencies that local administrations do not possess (Kurniawan, 2018, Feruglio and Rifai, 2017).

At a deeper level, another way to incentivise participation can simply be to ensure that would-be participants are confident that their time is worth spending on the initiative. This was the case in Porto Alegre, where participation grew year-by-year as citizens came to realise the significance of PB for local decision making (Wampler, 2007).

However, one of the clearest examples of incentive structures are the budgets that are being assigned to PB. While increased investment via PB is not a guarantor of pro-poor results, a well-resourced initiative can be both a useful proxy indicator of support from decision-makers, and lead to increased buy-in from the local community in turn. A PB process with substantial funds to spend suggests the possibility of transformative change, due to the higher likelihood that significant investments in the local area being made. The average municipal budget that is allocated through PB is approximately 2-5% of the local budget. While at the height of significance in Porto Alegre, funding allocated was approximately 10% of the local budget (Boulding and Wampler, 2009, Touchton and Wampler, 2014, Wampler, 2012). In Scotland, a target has been set that at least 1% of local government funding be allocated through PB (O'Hagan et al., 2019).

The relatively high budget for PB in the city of Paris compared to other European cities is considered to have a *"higher potential for changes through PB"* (Wampler et al., 2021, p. 148). However, evidence of actual impact remains limited (ibid). A review of PB experiences in Italy found that 24 out of 30 cases demonstrated little impact. The conclusion drawn was that these failings resulted primarily from the insufficient resources that had been available to use in initiatives prioritised by participants (De Vries et al., 2021). Elsewhere, a noted shortfall in Indonesia has been inadequate budgetary transfers from national to city level governments (Feruglio and Rifai, 2017).

Incentives are important for commitment from PB organisers themselves, which has already been noted as a key factor behind successful interventions (see section 1.5). If local level implementers have the belief that participatory efforts will be adequately resourced, then this can relieve some of the pressures of day-to-day administration and encourage these stakeholders to make a greater level of effort in delivering a successful PB process (McNulty and No, 2021). Such a possibility is especially pertinent in contexts where fiscal retraction is occurring, as was the case following the post-2007 economic slump (Wampler et al., 2021). Incentives for local authorities can be particularly conducive in environments where PB has been nationally legislated. In such contexts there may be added scepticism among local bureaucrats regarding the reforms and even reticence about delivering activities that they did not conceive of themselves. Further funding and support can help bridge enthusiasm deficits, as well as promoting greater creativity and the generation of new ideas (McNulty and No, 2021). Such a strategy was initially used in Scotland, including through a funding channel called the Community Choices Fund (O'Hagan et al., 2019). Of course, such incentives may not be consistently forthcoming as they can be subject to political headwinds and the whims and preferences of political parties and their leaders.

1.6. Macro factors linked to PB effectiveness

Wider contextual and structural factors also impact upon PB success, including local leadership support, the capacity of CSOs and local government, partnerships, learning, and external catalysts (Shah, 2007). These factors are consistent with concepts of embeddedness and systems thinking in the fields of participatory governance and deliberative democracy (Bussu et al., 2022, Escobar, 2021a, Owen and Smith, 2015, Parkinson and Mansbridge, 2012).

PB scholarship has shifted in focus from the study of individual interventions to a wider look at how they function as part of a greater systemic whole, acknowledging the diverse and fluid complexity inherent to advancing democratic values (Parkinson and Mansbridge, 2012). The implications of this theory is that: *"when a new institutional arena is created, it should be embedded within existing networks and remedy a functional deficit, rather than displacing organic functional activity"* (Dean et al., 2020, p. 692). Similarly, Wampler et al (2021) observe that, in North America and Europe, PB must adapt to contexts where other participatory forums already exist. However, beyond this wide spectrum of understanding, each individual factor also warrants its own exploration to unpack some of their individual specificities.

A widely held view is that PB is challenging without a pre-existing commitment to representation or consultation by those in power (Shah, 2007). By a similar token, variations in PB design often arise from the different motivations and socio-political contexts behind them (Wampler et al., 2021). For example, PB in China has been implemented to strengthen party leadership in an undemocratic context (Li et al., 2023). PB in Germany has been associated with efforts to make cost savings in over-stretched government budgets (Wampler et al., 2021, Röcke, 2014). Furthermore, PB is less likely to have an impact on public sector decisions if governments are not supportive of participation (Sintomer et al., 2021).

The importance of leadership has been recognised across the world including in South America, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe (Shah, 2007). Indeed, as Wampler et al (2021, p. 181) have stated: "*there is a strong consensus in the literature that the degree of government support for PB is a vital component for its impact"*. This is particularly true of the leadership in a local area that typically are responsible for either initiating or implementing a PB process – or both. If those administrators understood to be the figureheads for PB do not have the talent, motivation, or energy to push through successful initiatives, then it self-evidently places prospects at an immediate disadvantage.

Beyond motivations, other literature has noted the role of capacity in determining whether PB achieves its objectives. Capacity relates to the ability and understandings of organisers to implement PB successfully and as intended. Without capacity, it is difficult for the ambitions of policymakers to come to fruition. For PB to be effective for a sustained period it requires the ongoing cultivation of appetite to participate, and sufficient governance capacity in delivering participatory forums that meet the expectations of the citizenry. The combination of these two factors creates a feedback loop leading to ever increasing participation (Shah, 2007). When this does not occur, there are limits to what PB can achieve, even if the participatory aspect of the

activity is delivered appropriately and the priorities of local people are successfully generated (Ryan, 2021). In addition to the examples in South America already cited, similar experiences have been observed in the Ukraine (Fölscher, 2007b), as well as Indonesia (Feruglio and Rifai, 2017).

The provision of training and resources to governments (national or local) can assist in bridging the competency gap in countries where PB is new, or the quality is found to be lacking (Shah, 2007). Moreover, ensuring adequate sensitisation among the civil service can be another essential driver of effectiveness (Wampler et al., 2021). Alternatively, in the absence of government capacity, non-government organisations can step in to fulfil various responsibilities needed as part of PB processes such as the provision of information, analysis of budgets, or indirectly implementing or monitoring activities (Shah, 2007).

Engagement and collaboration among civil society is seen as important for the success of PB. Firstly, civil society has been regularly observed as a demand-side factor behind the establishing of PB reforms across the world (Shah, 2007, Feruglio and Rifai, 2017, Wampler et al., 2021, Avritzer and Wampler, 2008). A qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) of several historical studies highlights the role of civil society (Ryan, 2021). Others had placed the role of civil society alongside other factors such as resourcing as being equally necessary for the success of PB (Wampler, 2012). However, Ryan (2021, p. 166) argues that an active role for civil society is among the most important factors in PB performance. Going further, he argues that when PB processes can combine civil society's "*willingness to use both cooperative and contentious political action"* with a highly participatory process, they are positioned well to promote deepened democracy (ibid).

Regarding the role of civil society in PB, an ethnographic study of PB in Recife, Brazil, revealed a "local power system" in which networks of actors, movements and associations combine to advance agendas during PB processes (Montambeault and Goirand, 2016, p. 160). Such contexts are more likely in settings where governments believe strongly in the importance of promoting meaningful participation. Conversely, where PB is adopted as a technocratic endeavour the role of civil society is often downplayed (Wampler et al., 2021). In such instances, or in instances where civil society's role has been impaired as a result of the formalisation of participatory mechanisms as was the case in Indonesia, the benefits of civil society can be more limited (Feruglio and Rifai, 2017, Shah, 2007, Wampler et al., 2021).

I have already noted the importance of participant learning when it comes to successful PB (section 1.4). Macro-level learning also contributes to PB effectiveness. Repeated PB processes have been found to be better positioned for transformational impact rather than one-off events (Sintomer et al., 2008). PB often needs several years to realise benefits (Boulding and Wampler, 2009, Touchton and Wampler, 2014, Baiocchi et al., 2011). Given the complexity of PB and its concepts of participation, deliberation, and empowerment, it is unrealistic to expect communities to grasp the full potential of PB from the very outset. As opportunities to engage arise, communities are increasingly sensitised to the needs and potential of the process (O'Hagan et al., 2019).

Adapting processes to the contexts is another important aspect that repeated implementation can contribute to. Such adaptations include several that have already been noted (see section 1.5) – such as the existence of consensus-based decision making, online forms of PB, as well as an example observed in Scotland whereby projects were selected via highly-competitive and quick-fire "dragon's den" challenges, based on a reality television program (O'Hagan et al., 2019). As illustrated (sections 1.3 and 1.4), variations from the original PB have not always led to increased impact – sometimes the opposite in fact – but transposing the Porto Alegre model wholesale to entirely different contexts does not guarantee success either (Wampler et al., 2021). Experimenting, learning, and adapting as time goes on is understood as the best way of arriving at contextualised governance interventions with a greater likelihood of achieving their goals (Andrews et al., 2017).

External factors and actors also play a significant role, both international and national, in the development and implementation of PB. As Wampler et al (2021) have argued, PB initiatives that are not owned and driven forward at the place of implementation (typically the local level) can suffer from warped accountability structures that are more beholden to outside parties than local authorities. These types of PB may be either mandated by national governments or promoted by international actors, and have been estimated to account for more than half of recently established PB mechanisms (Wampler et al., 2021). Clearly then, such a route has been an effective catalyst for promoting the uptake of PB.

At the international level, as was previously noted (section 1.2), the spread of PB in the Global South in the last twenty years has been strongly influenced by multilateral agencies including the UN and the World Bank. Downstream from these international institutions are international NGOs that are invariably involved in much of the grassroots coordination and cultivation of

participatory governance in places where it was previously absent. This can be said for regions including Sub-Saharan Africa, Central and Eastern Europe, and the Middle East (Shall, 2007, Fölscher, 2007c, Fölscher, 2007b). Moreover, as Shah (2007, p. 7) described: "*even where initiatives resulted from local action, international organizations fund key organizations, and contact with networks of CSOs worldwide preceded local action"*. In large swathes of the world then, the role of these international actors has been a key driving force in the spread of PB. Without their involvement it is hard to see PB having become as significant across the whole world as it is in the present day (Goldfrank, 2012, Wampler et al., 2021).

However, while the contribution of international actors is apparent, scholars have observed trade-offs when PB relies heavily on external support. Firstly, there is a risk that buy-in of key stakeholders will not materialise if reforms are perceived to be advanced by outside interests. Regardless of whether buy-in takes place there remain question marks over the legitimacy of institutional changes that have been driven by the international community no matter how well intentioned. Indeed, as already noted (section 1.5.3), donor priorities can take precedence over the voice of communities, thereby limiting the potential of PB to make meaningful changes to the lives of citizens (Sintomer et al., 2012, Sintomer et al., 2021).

In addition, PB that relies on international support to succeed can be at a disadvantage when it comes to being able to ensure its own long-term viability and sustainability (Wampler et al., 2021). Until funding can be guaranteed by national governments, there remains a risk that the resources needed to deliver programmes could be significantly reduced or cut altogether. Finally, as Wampler et al (2021) have stressed, whether or not PB programmes cultivated by international actors are impactful or not is currently difficult for scholars to pinpoint due to them largely being implemented in the Global South where there is often a lack of usable data.

Away from the international arena, national level actors can still be considered external in the minds of the local actors most typically associated with developing and implementing PB processes. An emerging trend has been the increasing phenomenon of national legislation to institutionalise PB from the top down (McNulty, 2012, McNulty and No, 2021), or what Wampler et al (2021) refer to as **"**mandated PB**"**. Nationally legislated PB is one of the most increasingly common forms of PB (McNulty and No, 2021). The effectiveness of these mandated reforms has only recently become a focus of scholarly analysis. For instance, McNulty and No (2021) reviewed the pros and cons of mandated PB, questioning whether a top down approach can be effective. The study also elaborated on various national policies that have been passed in 12

countries worldwide, and four specific types of legislation passed: PB-specific, financial governance, planning, and citizen participation. These laws typically form part of a broader decentralization reform process (McNulty and No, 2021).

A consensus of several important elements required for the successful implementation of mandated PB has been identified in the literature. A recurring challenge is lack of funding or local buy in (Wampler, 2012). A key paradox is that PB is unlikely to be sustainable without being institutionalised, but PB functions best when it is undertaken as a response to a bottom-up demand or in partnership with active civil society actors (McNulty, 2012). Due to the top-down nature of the reforms, there is also a structural risk that support will not be forthcoming at sub-national and community level. Local elites, constrained by lack of resources and competing pressures, may be of the view that PB is not a priority of theirs or that it is a distraction or possible cause of difficulty for them in implementing their own strategies. These contextual factors can cause added difficulty for ensuring mandated PB reaches its potential and achieves what it sets out to do (Wampler et al., 2021).

There are, however, strategies to mitigate some of these challenges. McNulty and No (2021) suggest that using incentives (as already touched upon in section 1.5), rather than punitive measures or rigid rules, can be more effective in promoting the successful adoption of PB.

Given the absence of 'bottom-up demand' in many mandated PB contexts, it would appear to suggest these forms of PB are at a disadvantage when it comes to possessing the active civil society that has been shown to be advantageous (see section 1.6). However, recent analysis shows that PB can succeed in fulfilling transformational impact through some combination of participatory leadership, strong bureaucratic support, or sufficient financial resources. More research is needed to understand how different PB legislation affects outcomes or impact of the reforms (Ryan, 2021, McNulty and No, 2021).

1.7. Conclusion

Despite significant progress in understanding PB, many aspects of its role in politics remains contested and unexplored. While there has been progress, particularly in North America and Western Europe, the most extensive evidence base remains in Brazil and other parts of South America (Wampler et al., 2021).

The literature is rich in single-case studies and descriptions of how specific PB processes differ, but there is a notable lack of systematic comparative research aimed at developing deeper understanding around PB outcomes and impact (Wampler et al., 2021). This deficit is more pronounced in the case of nationally legislated PB where there is very little data on how such institutionalisation has affected people and society more widely (ibid). Moreover, the literature has been criticised for becoming Anglo-centric or weighted towards western examples (Ryan, 2021).

There is a growing consensus that research has too often focused on exemplars, which may prevent a more nuanced understanding of the effects of PB (ibid). While analysing best case examples can be appealing, they risk being unrepresentative of the wider pool of PB initiatives worldwide. Moreover, analysing unexceptional cases enables greater variation and the exploration of relationships, mitigating the classic problem in qualitative research of 'selecting on the dependent variable' (e.g. explaining effective PB by exclusively looking at PB examples that are known to be effective).

Comparing across different contexts can be challenging for drawing conclusions (Rumbul et al., 2018). However, comparisons across contexts are a key gap that needs to be filled for us to develop evidence-based understandings behind the differences we observe in PB interventions (Ryan, 2021). Sub-national comparisons such as Baiocchi et al (2011) in Brazil have made a valuable contribution to the literature. Utilising such an approach within countries where PB is nationally legislated has been advocated by some (Rumbul et al., 2018).

While there are challenges in the extent to which research can demonstrate links between PB designs and outcomes, a key priority for scholars is to identify the rules and structures of PB that fit the context and maximise effectiveness (Ryan, 2021). Assessing a relationship between PB and trust in government has been advocated as an example of PB outcomes with great potential for deeper learning (Kim, 2014, Theuwis, 2024). Further, a focus on the interaction of specific PB designs with the context in which they operate has significant potential in strengthening practitioners' capacity to calibrate their interventions according to local conditions (Wampler et al., 2021).

At the macro-level, considerations of embeddedness and democratic systems are still in an early phase of theory development (Owen and Smith, 2015, Bussu et al., 2022, Dean et al., 2019).

However, assessing PB from an embeddedness perspective could allow practitioners to better combine and sequence democratic reforms, including PB, for greater impact (Ryan, 2021), as well as how interventions can be made to better fit their surroundings for greater effectiveness, as has been advocated for regarding institutions more generally (Goodin, 1996a).

The implications of this review for PB research and this thesis are as follows. Firstly, more research is needed on how well PB achieves its stated aims, with particular attention to impact on participants attitudes – including trust in government. Secondly, conducting systematic comparative case studies, especially those focusing on typical or median cases and diverse study locations, can enhance an understanding of PB's effectiveness. Thirdly, it is important to explore the role of PB design and rules, examining how they interact with various contexts, as well as how they impact on outcomes. Next, examining how PB is embedded within the context of a broader democratic system can further advance the state of the art. Finally, there is a need to explore the intersection of top-down policymaking and bottom-up demand for social justice, particularly in nationally legislated PB contexts, to facilitate comparative research.

2. Analytical Framework

2.1. Introduction

The analytical framework outlined in this chapter presents the theoretical lenses used to analyse and interpret the findings of this research. It identified the micro-level and macro-level factors influencing the extent to which PB enhances local democracy. The chapter begins by outlining the research question of the thesis, followed by a visual presentation of the analytical framework. Key factors are then addressed: contextual influences, PB design (micro-level) and embeddedness (macro-level). The PB design section examines the three aspects of deliberative democratic theory informing the assessment of the micro-level (inclusivity, quality of discussion and decision-making). The embeddedness section details three dimensions of this concept: temporal, spatial and practices. I then outline how PB results – satisfaction with processes, project success and cumulative impacts – intersect with trust-building in local government. Finally, the chapter concludes with a summary of what has been outlined herein.

My examination of PB at the micro-level draws significant influence from the theory of deliberative democracy (Fishkin, 2011, Fishkin, 2018, Parkinson, 2006, Habermas, 1981). An exploration of PB at the macro-level is informed by understandings of embeddedness which examine the resonance and suitability of the participatory reforms to the setting in which they are established. This lens also takes note of the recent sub-branch of deliberative democracy, deliberative systems theory (Parkinson and Mansbridge, 2012, Boswell and Corbett, 2017, Hendriks, 2006, Ercan et al., 2017, Dryzek, 2009). Lastly, my exploration of PB outcomes, including community-level changes and shifts in citizens perceptions towards governments, is informed by ideas of cyclical trust building theory in which trust grows as perceptions of performance improve and citizens have positive interaction opportunities with authorities. More on these conceptual framings is outlined in the proceeding sections.

Broadly speaking, this research has pursued two lines of enquiry – an examination of what is occurring within PB processes themselves, as well as an exploration of what takes place within the wider environment in which a PB process is situated. Some scholars of democracy refer to micro and macro realms (Hendriks, 2006, Elstub and Escobar, 2019), while others prefer to analytically separate communicative and sovereign dimensions of participation (Ganuza and Baiocchi, 2019). The ‘communicative dimension’ refers to when participants are given the power to decide which issues or projects are funded through PB, while the ‘sovereignty dimension’ describes situations in which participants share over-arching power for the PB process with

policymakers and can therefore adjust the guiding rules of processes (ibid). Despite minor differences in content and focus of such classifications, the overriding point is that examinations of democratic innovations are best served by considering aspects of discrete process (micro) in addition to wider structural factors at play (macro), as well as the interaction between the two levels (Owen and Smith, 2015). My analytical framework (Figure 1 below) combines the micro and macro framing with the communicative and sovereign concepts.

2.2. Research Question

The core objective of the thesis is to improve understanding of how PB design and embeddedness shapes local democracy. The central research question of this thesis is:

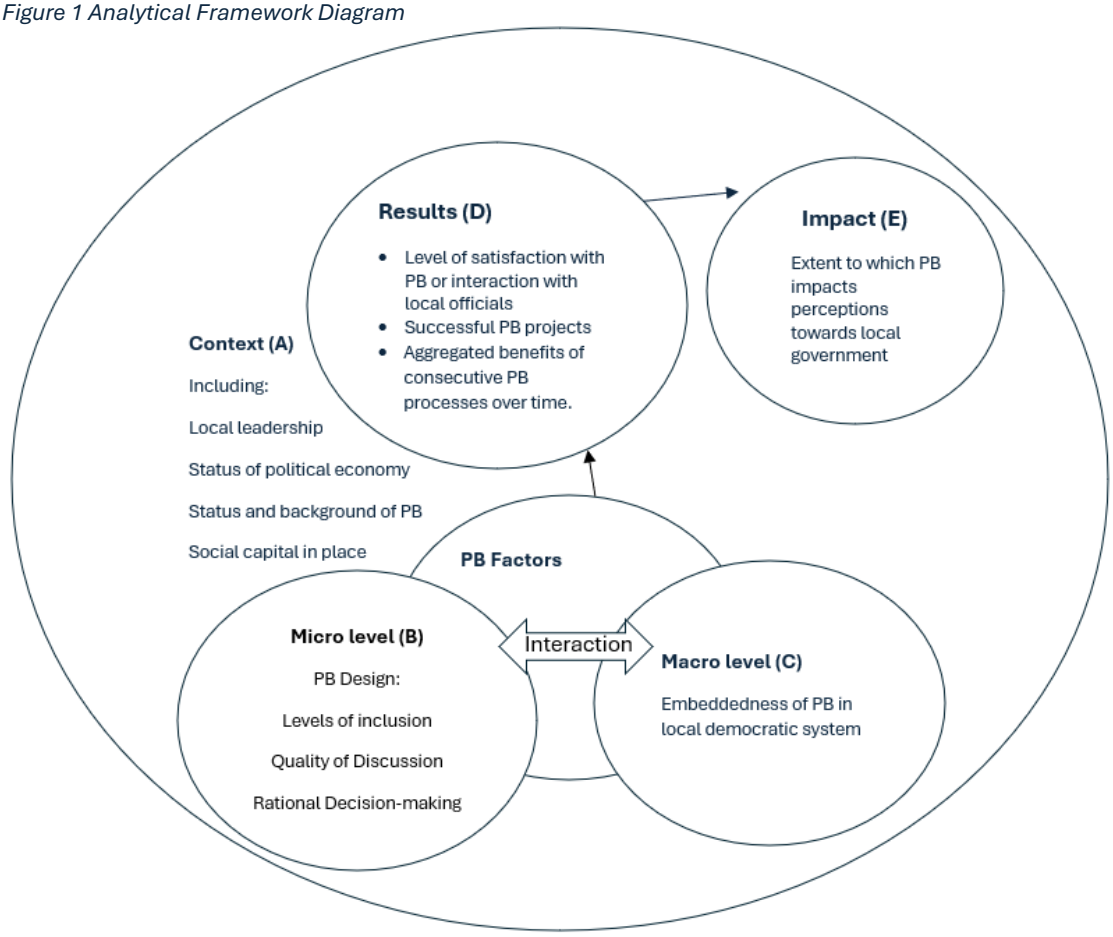
- How and why does PB improve local democracy?

To address this question, I will apply deliberative democratic theory and embeddedness perspectives to explore two key and inter-related dimensions of PB:

1. PB Design features. This includes the specific procedures, rules, and formats that structure PB processes. I will analyse how inclusivity, quality of discussion, and decision-making mechanisms influence experiences, perceptions, and outcomes from the perspective of stakeholders.
2. PB's Embeddedness in the democratic system. This focuses on how PB is integrated within broader political and participatory structures. I will explore temporal, spatial, and practices of embeddedness and how this influences experiences, perceptions, and outcomes from the perspective of stakeholders.

The research question is not only grounded in established theories but also positioned to advance theoretical understandings of how PB contributes to local democracy. This dual focus on the procedural (design) and systemic (embeddedness) aspects of PB enables a comprehensive examination of its democratic potential and challenges.

Figure 1 Analytical Framework Diagram



2.3. Context (A)

The analytical framework includes several contextual factors that can enhance the effectiveness of PB and shape perceptions of citizens towards governments. These factors set the backdrop against which PB's contribution to local democracy is assessed. As scholars have argued, the extent to which democratic outcomes may be understood as positive or negative is subjective and depending on factors such as people's expectations and the socio-political context (Owen and Smith 2015).

To strike a balance between comprehensive and practical, I have selected four key contextual factors for consideration in the thesis. This also served to assist case study identification (see section 3.3.1.2). The four factors are: the status of the local political economy, the performance, stability and credibility of local political leadership, the level of social capital, and the status and background of PB.

PB has found success in localities of diverse political economic contexts. However, one factor that the literature notes as being important for prospects of PB success is the relative affluence

of locations. This is because wealthy citizens are more willing and able to participate in PB (Doherty et al., 2024, p. 121), which poses challenges for the social justice potential of the mechanism. Significant levels of inequality and exclusion can reduce effective participation (Baiocchi et al., 2011), meaning some of those individuals and groups that stand to benefit substantially from PB may be less likely to attend.

Local leadership plays an important role in the effective implementation of PB, as it helps shape the form of the processes as well as the level of resources and importance placed upon the reforms (Shah, 2007, Ryan, 2021, Wampler et al., 2021). Leadership is also important for political trust given the visibility and accountability of elected officials for the direction and progress of local governance. Literature has noted their role in setting economic and social policy as particularly notable, making these stakeholders visible and important to citizens day-to-day lives (Christensen and Lægreid, 2005, Tanny and Al-Hossienie, 2019).

Social capital is considered to be valuable for establishing a successful PB intervention (Goldfrank, 2007). Social capital refers to the shared strength of connections and capacities within a community (Bhandari and Yasunobu, 2009). Given the complexity of the concept, this thesis has opted to consider civil society activity and engagement in the PB process as a sign of social capital being present.

Scholars have demonstrated that PB varies significantly in its forms, scale, and potential (Wampler et al., 2021, Sintomer et al., 2008, Sintomer et al., 2021). The history and status of PB is important to consider, particularly the number of years that PB has been in operation (Boulding and Wampler, 2009) and the level of resources allocated to enable effective delivery of projects (Shah, 2007, Wampler et al., 2021).

The thesis remains open to the possibility that cases in highly contrasting contexts can demonstrate greater degrees of similarity than we may expect (Baiocchi et al., 2011). Additionally, although there are proximities and overlaps between context and PB factors, I argue that these contextual factors act as ingredients that can either enable or hinder effective PB design and embeddedness. This analytical framework seeks to explore the relationship between context and PB factors in greater depth, starting with the first of these factors – PB design.

2.4. PB Factors: Design (B)

The first PB factor that this thesis has examined is the role of PB design. That is, the extent to which specific procedures, rules, and formats of PB can be seen to have contributed to the results (D) and the eventual impact (E) of the PB process. The research has utilised the theory of deliberative democracy as its primary analytical lens for consideration of PB design. While PB is often missing from research focusing on deliberative democracy, there is evidence that suggests that PB is more successful when it incorporates deliberative ideals (He, 2019, Wampler et al., 2021). Indeed, the original PB in Porto Alegre included deliberative aspects (as noted in section 1.2). Until now, little research has been done into how differences in PB design can lead to differences in results or impact (Ryan, 2021). Of the studies that have had an explicit focus on PB design they have often focused on the description of different PB processes in different settings (Röcke, 2014), or been focused on how different approaches to PB can impact upon more narrow considerations, such as populist attitudes (Theuwis, 2024).

Deliberative democracy rests on three central strands – representation, deliberation, and informed and justified decision-making (Fishkin, 2011), which are central to this research. Representation concerns the extent to which a plurality of perspectives has been incorporated into any given democratic process. Typically, this strand is thought about in terms of how inclusive a process is and framed in two different ways – the types of people participating, or the types of world views or opinions that participants are conveying. Meanwhile, deliberation should involve exposure to diverse arguments, the weighing of evidence, and mutual respect among those present. Finally, the decision-making strand relates to the extent to which final decisions are reached through effective deliberation, which may likely involve some groups changing their initial positions by the end of the process (Dryzek, 2009).

2.4.1. Inclusion

Charles Taylor (1998) points out the paradox of democracy's inclusive nature alongside its tendency towards exclusion. While democracy promises a lot in terms of giving voice to all in the direction that countries head in, this vision is challenging to put into action when the will of the majority meets those of minorities.

However, genuine inclusion in democracy positions citizens to learn from and arrive at understandings with others who are different, potentially developing an even stronger society as a result (Taylor, 1998, Carter, 2015). In the context of democratic principles, inclusion is often considered in two overlapping ways – identities and discourses.

Inclusivity of identity is perhaps the most typically focused on aspects of promoting pluralism in the contemporary world. This aspect is focused on ensuring a diversity of profiles (e.g. gender, ethnicity, sexual preference, religion, mobility, mental capacity) are engaged and participating in democracies, or what has been described as political equality (Fishkin, 2011, p. 65). For a political process to be legitimate it must strive to be representative of the population that its decisions pertain to, as challenging a goal as that is (Parkinson, 2006). However, individuals and groups face several barriers to participating, such as practical, personal, socio-economic, and motivational barriers, as well as low recognition or acceptance, each of which vary depending on the individual characteristics of a person. (Blake et al., 2008). Newcomers and socio-political outsiders find it particularly challenging to engage in participatory processes (ibid). For example, studies have shown that people with disabilities are often omitted from participation exercises (Edwards, 2001), or do not have their different physical needs catered to during such processes (Edwards, 2001, Attree et al., 2010). Moreover, disability activists have been found to display low levels of trust in formal participation exercises, due to a sense that organisers are not acting in their best interests (Parkinson, 2006). Studies have also shown how caring responsibilities (Han et al., 2015) or concerns about physical security (Ellard-Gray et al., 2015) can affect women's likelihood of public participation. Elsewhere, it has been argued that young people are unfairly excluded from full participation in democracies due to the limited rights that these group have compared to adults in society (Bessant, 2004). Such examples underline the importance of opening up new ways for the marginalised and excluded to participate, as a means of making our democracies more inclusive (Parkinson, 2006).

The literature here illustrates the specific importance to the process of participant selection in PB. Consideration of not only *who* is at the table but *how* they were invited, are key considerations for promoting diversity of identities in political processes, including PB. Classifying an event as "open to all" may seem like a simple, effective solution to the challenge of inclusion due to its emphasis on equality yet doing this alone risks inattention to issues of equity that will prevent certain groups or individuals from participating. Any analysis of inclusion of identity, therefore, should assess the extent to which organisers have been proactive in attempting to arrive at more representative groups of people attending (Curato et al., 2019). Approaches that could emblemise this include the creation of dedicated forums for marginalised groups to more actively participate in PB (Feruglio and Rifai, 2017), or the use of affirmative action to deliberately invite and encourage specific profiles to attend, or conversely to limit access to events to groups that are understood to be more typically overrepresented at events (Curato et al., 2019). While imperfect and not addressing the inequalities in wider society, such methods

can help to: "*provide opportunities for people to experience a discursive exchange…[where] inequalities are mitigated"* (ibid, p.67). However, most PB processes tend to be open and self-selected.

Elsewhere, consideration of the focus of a participatory process can provide further insights into the extent to which it can be regarded as inclusive. As more PB processes focus on discrete themes (Cabannes and Lipietz, 2018), this can have a side-effect of excluding groups that themes do not readily apply or appeal to (Pape and Lim, 2019). In contrast, early examples of PB empowered participants to decide the breadth of discussion rather than pre-limiting topics which may risk excluding certain issues of concern. This was the case in Porto Alegre, for example (Shah, 2007, Wampler et al., 2021, Su, 2017).

Beyond identities or demographics, others have argued that inclusion in deliberative theory can or should strive to foster a **plurality of discourses** within democratic processes (Stevenson and Dryzek, 2014, Dryzek and Niemeyer, 2008). In this context, discourses are defined as: "*a set of categories and concepts embodying specific assumptions, judgments, contentions, dispositions, and capabilities*" (Dryzek and Niemeyer, 2008, p. 481). However, more simply, discourses refer to vantage points, perspectives, or preferences on a given issue or topic (ibid). At the micro-level in PB a plurality of discourses may well be a by-product of there being a diverse group of stakeholders participating in a PB event – people with different local concerns or priorities. However, this is by no means certain to be the case (Dryzek and Niemeyer, 2008). Consideration of discourses helps with an understanding of the depth and breadth of viewpoints that may be held on a topic within society and can reveal limits of demographic inclusion. For example, issues considered particularly relevant to women are highly complex (Breitenbach, 2006), to the extent that it would be unfair and unrealistic to expect a selection of women engaging in a participatory process to be able to represent all relevant discourses. Moreover, advocates of discursive representation have also stated the case for the representation of viewpoints in deliberations that no one holds, as a way of ensuring the strongest testing of policy proposals (Dryzek and Niemeyer, 2008). While allowing for a plurality of discourses in place of a diversity of identities allows for the possibility that perspectives of the marginalised may still be represented in absentia (ibid), a critique by people with disabilities illustrates that such an approach can be deemed exclusionary or paternalistic even if it is well-meaning (Edwards, 2001). Evidently then, the context behind whether organisers of participatory and deliberative processes give precedence to discourse or identity in participation is an important factor in understanding the extent to which a genuinely inclusive design has been pursued or arrived at.

The degree to which participants feel comfortable sharing their ideas and whether they feel these ideas are truly valued also influences whether issues or concerns will be raised during participatory processes like PB. This issue also relates to quality of discussion (see section 2.4.2). Such considerations fall within what has been described by Young (2002) as internal inclusion. Democratic spaces and systems that value diversity demonstrate this in the way that they frame, organise, and arrange the arenas and processes in which discussion takes place (Eliasoph, 1998, p. 169). This includes the way mechanisms are established and whether they suitably capture diverse inputs, in addition to whether the mechanisms monitor whether commitments towards inclusivity are being achieved.

However, it is impossible for organisers to achieve a perfect environment for participation. The worldviews of those organising participation inevitably shape the setting and therefore may not fully align with the needs of all participants. It is, however, important to work as reflexively as possible in seeking to attain the goal of a fully welcome and inclusive forum. Indeed, scholars have argued that inequalities should be more openly acknowledged and differences celebrated, rather than seeking to sanitise them from the picture (Pallett et al., 2019, Curato et al., 2019). Doing so best positions actors to disrupt and emancipate themselves and others from unjust or exclusionary ways of conducting democracy (Curato et al., 2019).

2.4.2. Quality of Discussion

While deliberative quality incorporates considerations of inclusion (see section 2.4.1) and the way decision-making is undertaken (see section 2.4.3), the critical aspect of the concept relates to the way deliberations specifically take place – or the quality of discussion that occurs. Deliberations reach the requisite standard when they are conducted in an equitable manner – with no difference in weight given to the points being made by individual participants, regardless of status, profile or ability (Fishkin, 2011, Bächtiger et al., 2010). Another key aspect is whether thoughtful interaction of different perspectives is occurring (ibid). Participants should also be open to changing their minds on an issue that is under consideration (Parkinson, 2006). In addition, deliberations should be undertaken with sincerity and with respect for the views of others (Fishkin, 2011, Bächtiger et al., 2010). Indeed, when done well, deliberation can facilitate a deeper understanding of issues and potential solutions for those taking part (Papadopoulos and Warin, 2007). Finally, while the duration of the discussion stage is not necessarily a guarantor of quality, sufficient time is important for meaningful participation and deliberation (Redman and Carson, 2020), and therefore I argue a logical pre-requisite for thoughtful deliberations to be possible. Other markers of deliberative quality include the value of storytelling (Bächtiger et al., 2010), however, due to the research design of this thesis not incorporating substantive

observation of PB processes, the analytical framework has prioritised reaching an understanding of aspects already described above.

While there is broad consensus about the normative value of the above conditions, scholars have noted that there are trade-offs in achieving each aspect (Parkinson, 2006), and even that participatory democracy - including mechanisms such as PB - may not be conducive to quality deliberation (Mutz, 2006, Ganuza and Frances, 2012).

Regarding potential trade-offs, there is a risk that discussion quality can decline when sensitive or highly contentious topics are discussed (Parkinson, 2006), thus giving greater importance to the issue or themes included in a PB process (see section 2.4.1). Similarly, depending on the forum in which deliberation is taking place, proposed solutions may be overly focused on parochial concerns and ill-suited to tackle deeper systemic causes (ibid). On a more procedural level, ensuring quality of discussion can be particularly challenging when processes involve large numbers of people (ibid), resulting in dilemmas for institutional design. Considerations on the role and capacity of those facilitating deliberative processes, is one aspect that can aid an understanding of how such trade-offs are handled, as is the way a deliberative setting has been arranged (Ganuza and Frances, 2012).

As for the suitability of deliberative democratic theory for assessments of PB, scholars have downplayed the possibility of incongruence between the two, while emphasising the importance of design and institutional context for maximising the deliberative potential of PB processes (Papadopoulos and Warin, 2007, Ganuza and Frances, 2012). Indeed, it is important to emphasise that while participatory and deliberative democracy may be parallel schools of democratic thought, many PB processes have emphasised the importance of deliberation for transformative outcomes (Boulding and Wampler, 2009, PB Scotland, 2019a, Feruglio and Rifai, 2017). The deliberative potential of PB processes can be helped or hindered by the decision-making modality that has been opted for by organisers (Escobar, 2021b). This aspect is explored in the proceeding section.

2.4.3. Decision-making

This thesis also directly examines deliberative quality in relation to the decision-making process itself. When examining how final allocations have been arrived at and by whom, two specific democratic qualities are particularly important to consider: popular control and considered judgment. Popular control refers to the power of the majority to reach decisions, and considered

judgement involves reaching thoughtful conclusions (Smith, 2009). Deliberative decision-making can support such an effort as it requires that decisions are reached after participants weigh-up the issues on their merits. Participants should reach decisions according to the merits of each possible course of action, rather than trying to advance their cause through transactional efforts or other tactics (Fishkin 2011), as is more typically the case with participatory democracy (Ganuza and Frances, 2012).

The very direct and tangible consequences of decision-making in PB in comparison to other more purely deliberative methods (e.g. citizens juries, and mini publics) arguably make the decision-making stage a particularly significant element of the PB process. Decisions can be reached in PB processes in a variety of ways, with some models more aligned with deliberative democratic values than others (Escobar, 2021b). Perhaps the least deliberative is an aggregative method of voting, where participants merely vote in support of their favoured initiative (ibid). However, efforts can be made to improve the deliberative quality of vote-based models of PB through introducing ranked voting, or ensuring voting occurs after deeper deliberations have taken place (ibid). Indeed, the preference in the literature for voting as a decision mode in democratic innovations is on the understanding that it is sequenced after such considered exchanges between participants (Goodin, 2008). In some rare instances, voting has been eschewed altogether in favour of consensus-based decision-making (Escobar, 2021b), which have the potential to be highly deliberative, but can also create opportunities for undue elite influence (Sheely, 2015, Feruglio and Rifai, 2017) .

In leveraging these insights, this thesis has examined whether participants merely propose suggestions, arrive at a consensus view, have decided through a simple majority vote, or through some other adapted mode of voting. The implications arising from these differences have been critically explored. In addition, the analysis has considered whether budget allocation decisions by participants are binding or merely advisory with policymakers making final decisions. Moreover, the research has sought an understanding of how satisfied participants are with the way that decisions have been reached in PB processes, in each of the case studies.

Beyond the specific decision-making model, there are several other aspects that deliberative democratic theory highlights as being supportive of decision-making that is adequately deliberative. Firstly, accurate information should be available to assist participants arrive at decisions (Fishkin, 2011). Similarly, the importance of transparency for the potential of democratic innovations to succeed has been emphasised (Smith, 2009). Of course, transparency can also refer to there being clarity over exactly how final decisions have been

arrived at. Decisions should be arrived at through justified, well-reasoned arguments, devoid of coercion or undue influence (Bächtiger et al., 2010). Moreover, the focus of the decisions should be on what is in the best interests of communities, rather than narrow self-interest of those participating (ibid).

2.5. PB Factors: Embeddedness in the Democratic System (C)

To analyse macro-level factors affecting the performance of PB, the analytical framework employs the concept of embeddedness to consider how PB integrates into the local democratic system. This approach to studying participatory mechanisms such as PB is relatively new, but has significant potential for unlocking understandings around how institutional settings can hinder or enable democratic innovations due to its focus on the interaction of the structures, norms and values inherent to specific cases (Bussu et al., 2022). Some scholars have written of embeddedness and institutionalisation as being one and the same (Chwalisz, 2020). While others have argued that while similar concepts, embeddedness factors in informal aspects such as local attitudes and norms, which institutionalisation typically does not (Bussu et al., 2022, p. 3/4). Embedded institutions are secure fixtures within institutional settings that have widespread buy-in among elites and citizens alike (Bussu et al., 2022).

Embeddedness and contextual factors (see section 2.2) share similarities in terms of their ability to either play enabling or hindering roles in the prospects of democratic innovations such as PB. However, contextual aspects including the local leadership context, the extent of social capital in a locale, and the status and background of PB are foundational features that combine and coalesce to help shape embeddedness prospects. The analytical framework focuses on the interaction between the micro-level (PB design) and macro-level (embeddedness), based on an understanding that the iterative and messy process of developing locally suited processes is what ultimately enables more embedded participatory reforms such as PB (Bussu et al., 2022, Escobar, 2021a). Indeed, a combination of effective design and institutionalisation have been shown to improve participants' satisfaction with PB processes (Fernández-Martínez et al., 2020).

In the last two decades, beginning with deliberative systems theorists (Parkinson and Mansbridge, 2012, Dryzek, 2009), there has been a shift away from the consideration of democratic innovations in individual siloes to more holistic considerations on how they perform as part of a wider system of deliberation (ibid) or participation (Bussu et al., 2022). Furthermore,

other scholars have opted for a wider lens by arguing for considerations of *democratic* systems (Owen and Smith, 2015), with others putting forward frameworks for how democratic systems can be understood (Dean et al., 2019). Such a framing extends beyond individual democratic values of deliberation and participation to consider systems which demonstrate a range of democratic values. Others have underlined the importance of micro-level and macro-level aspects of systems (Hendriks, 2006). Regardless of differences in approach, the broad point is that without macro-level considerations of interaction and interdependency with other arenas or stakeholders (Dean et al., 2019), assessments of democratic innovations focused solely on micro-level considerations of design can be overly narrow. Consequently, such assessments can overlook wider aspects which can affect the performance of a specific mechanism (Bussu et al., 2022, Ganuza and Baiocchi, 2019, Owen and Smith, 2015).

Embeddedness thinking aids systemic considerations, as the concept provides a lens through which to assess individual mechanisms or institutions in relation to other aspects of a local political environment. Indeed, when institutions such as democratic innovations are embedded, they are understood to be operating in harmony with their contextual surroundings (Bussu et al., 2022). Or alternatively, the innovations can be considered to be suitably designed for the contexts in which they are set (Goodin, 1996a). While embeddedness has attracted a range of reflections from academics, leading scholars recently worked to better define the concept and identified three core dimensions which can aid an understanding of the concept. They are the temporal dimension, the spatial dimension, and practices of embeddedness (Bussu et al., 2022). The interaction of these dimensions lies at the heart of how embeddedness can occur (ibid), while also implying a degree of overlap and ambiguity between each of them.

In this analytical framework, the **temporal dimension** concerns the extent to which PB is regularly occurring in each context, as well as the degree to which these temporal aspects help or hinder the functioning of other elements of the wider democratic system (ibid). Mechanisms that are considered more temporally embedded are more regularly occurring and more in tune with other institutions. Temporality has been regularly presented as being pivotal to embeddedness (ibid). Some scholars have considered temporal aspects of democratic innovations considering a spectrum spanning from rare occurrences to an ever-present status (ibid). Indeed, it is generally accepted that frequent processes are more likely to be embedded than ad hoc, occasional processes (Bussu et al., 2022).

However, formal regularity provides only a partial understanding of temporal embeddedness (Chwalisz, 2020) and is also no guarantee of embeddedness (Syrett, 2006). An understanding of the temporal dimension also needs to take the informal into consideration, including whether norms of participation shift in response to formal expectations to do so (Bussu et al., 2022, Parkinson, 2006). The extent to which a process can become embedded within existing participatory channels and networks of stakeholders is central here, including the way its temporality is supportive or restrictive of this dynamic (Dean et al., 2020). Indeed, the temporal features of a specific PB intervention may have differing levels of alignment with other features of the local democratic system, resulting in a dynamic that is either mutually supportive or mutually destructive (Dean et al., 2019). In situations of greater alignment, PB and wider system features serve to strengthen one another, including through bridging deficits in the established system (Dean et al., 2020) . When alignment is less prevalent, participatory mechanisms such as PB and wider system features can weaken one another (Bussu et al., 2022), or even lead to the displacement of participatory traditions that arose in more emergent ways (Dean et al., 2020).

The **spatial dimension** relates to the level of governance PB is situated in, as well as what policy issues the mechanism is focused on and having an impact on (Edelenbos et al., 2008, Bussu et al., 2022). The question of which level of tier of governance PB is embedded in is an important focus of this dimension (Dean et al., 2019). PB processes that can be understood as being spatially embedded are invariably closer to decision-making power (Bussu et al., 2022), as this positionality increases the significance of the process to the local democratic system. Efforts to embed an institution at multiple levels can be particularly challenging due to the increased risk of different priorities or local and national policy conflicts (ibid). Given its suitability for resolving of key issues of concern to communities, the local level is invariably considered to be well-suited to embed participation (ibid). However, a possible downside of participation at the local level is a risk that mechanisms become overly parochial and unable to address root causes that are affecting society more broadly (Parkinson, 2006, Sintomer et al., 2021).

A further feature of spatial embeddedness that has the potential to alleviate the risks of parochialism is the extent to which a PB process is embedded across policy spaces (Bussu et al., 2022). This feature overlaps with PB design, particularly the extent to which a variety of themes or issues are tackled by a PB process. A wider thematic focus of a PB process could be suggestive of greater spatial embeddedness, as it is positioning PB to reach decisions across a breadth of issues. Conversely, a PB design that is focused on a narrow issue could indicate a

lower extent of embeddedness on the spatial dimension. Another aspect to consider of this spatial feature, is the policy impact that the PB process results in. Mechanisms that have a wider policy impact can be considered more embedded (Edelenbos et al., 2008). While PB is somewhat unique among democratic innovations as typically being more directly tied to decision making, the way in which decisions are taken in a PB process, as well as the scale of the issue being addressed can have implications for embeddedness. Indeed, if decisions are not binding or are being taken on issues that have limited scope for wider policy implications it could indicate lower embeddedness, or a poor status on what others have referred to as the sovereign dimension of PB (Ganuza and Baiocchi, 2019).

Some scholars have gone as far as to suggest that participatory processes can be considered more embedded when the decisions taken in the processes are better aligned with the priorities of authorities (Edelenbos et al., 2008). Alignment with elite preferences can attract a greater degree of take-up and support from these key stakeholders, or what some have referred to as 'absorption' (ibid), which shares similarities with 'transmission' in deliberative systems thinking (Boswell et al., 2016). The advantages of aligning with the priorities of authorities for embeddedness could indicate the prospect of tensions within PB processes. This is because of the driving purpose of PB in centring the concerns of local people, which alignment with authorities' priorities may diminish, dilute or even displace completely. In such circumstances, alignment could come at the expense of communities having their critical needs responded to, potentially reducing legitimacy or engagement in the process in the future.

Crucially, considerations of the spatial dimension also help with an assessment of how PB connects to and relates to civil society and the broader public sphere (Bussu et al., 2022). The power of civil society can be a useful counterweight to the power of government in support of healthy democracies, as has been argued by scholars (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2019). Moreover, it has been found that PB processes that give space for civil society to be both collaborative and confrontational towards authorities are better placed to strengthen democracies (Ryan, 2021). Such strategies have also been linked with greater likelihood of CSO participants securing resources through PB (Montambeault and Goirand, 2016). Participatory processes such as PB can be embedded within individual CSOs or networks of them, which can have benefits for the relevance of these initiatives due to a pooling of understandings from across the community (Bussu et al., 2022, Sørensen and Torfing, 2005). However, the possibility of PB being overly influenced by the priorities and interests of organised civil society actors has also been discussed in the literature (Aleksandrov and Timochenko, 2018), which risks being detrimental to embeddedness prospects unless anchored in democratic principles such as

being accountable to and representative of citizens (Sørensen and Torfing, 2005). On this aspect there is again the possibility that PB design choices can support such an endeavour, such as through the inclusion of a wide range of participants, ensuring design features are open to challenge and adaptation by participants, or ensuring transparency in decision-making (Ganuza and Baiocchi, 2019).

The third and final dimension of embeddedness relates to its **practices.** Embeddedness practices relates to the formal rules and the informal attitudes and behaviours of key stakeholders observed in and around PB processes, as outlined by scholars in relation to participatory governance more broadly (Bussu et al., 2022). Practices of embeddedness include other elements of embeddedness such as administrative-bureaucratic and executive embedding, which have previously been explored in relation to interactive policymaking exercises (Edelenbos et al., 2008). The administrative-bureaucratic sphere concerns the level of fiscal and human resource commitment to ensuring the success of PB (ibid). Formal commitments to allocating a proportion of budget via PB is one example of practice that can support embeddedness of this kind (Bussu et al., 2022), in addition to legislating to require participation in policymaking (Chwalisz, 2020). Such commitments would exemplify legal means by which embeddedness is promoted (ibid). The executive sphere concerns the degree to which authorities are seen and understood to be committed to processes like PB and active stakeholders in ensuring the success of such processes (Edelenbos et al., 2008). Signs of local authorities being highly visible and present during a PB process would be considered evidence of positive practices of embedding (ibid). Notably, the active engagement of politicians has been found to be critical to imbuing democratic innovations with greater legitimacy, as well as ensuring long-term sustainability, both of which can increase the prospects of PB increasing political trust (Harris, 2019). Interestingly, however, there may be limits to the benefits of involvement of authorities, as repeated interjection of policymakers in domains such as rulemaking can be destabilising and lead to a loss of trust in these stakeholders or in the institutions they are engaging with (Offe, 1996).

In addition to the above examples of practices, some have noted the significance of whether an intervention has imbued a sense of loyalty among key stakeholders that can help sustain it (Offe, 1996), thereby increasing its embeddedness. Indeed, such considerations also refer to the actions, motivations and strategies of street level bureaucrats in their efforts to implement participatory reforms (Escobar, 2021a). Ensuring the success of PB can be particularly challenging within the parameters of modern bureaucracies, which are not naturally suited to

participatory modes of governance (Aleksandrov and Timochenko, 2018, Escobar, 2021a). In addition to bureaucrats, loyalty also extends to the extent to which citizens have or develop a strong affinity with a process and its modus operandi (Offe, 1996).

A proxy for understanding the level of loyalty a PB process inculcates is a consideration of attendance and whether it is seen to be consistent, as well as whether it is increasing or decreasing, which is a sign of another overlap between design and embeddedness factors. However, another consideration is the relative importance PB appears to have in the local democratic system in comparison to other participatory channels which it may be situated alongside (Ganuza and Baiocchi, 2019). Indeed, institutions that are not sufficiently embedded may deteriorate, become damaged, or disintegrate either through the arrival of better alternative avenues or by way of simply not performing roles as required (Offe, 1996). In such instances, citizens could precipitate the decline of innovations such as PB through their decision to not participate in favour of participating via other means (Goodin, 1996a). Moreover, the existence of enclaves, online and offline spaces in which more radical or out of the mainstream topics are discussed (Stevenson and Dryzek, 2014, Curato et al., 2019), could also be suggestive of dis-embedding practices (Bussu et al., 2022). While providing marginalised groups with a vital opportunity to raise their voices (Stevenson and Dryzek, 2014), the presence of enclaves could indicate that PB and other formal features of the democratic system are insufficiently welcoming of diverse perspectives (Curato et al., 2019), serving to undermine the legitimacy of PB and the system alike.

2.6. Results: relative success of PB (D)

The results of participatory processes such as PB are as important if not more so than the process through which decisions were made (Mendonça and Ercan, 2013). The analytical framework identifies three core PB results for analysis across the four case studies: the perceived success of PB projects; the cumulative benefits of PB processes over time; and the extent of satisfaction with PB processes and interactions with local officials. I argue that these results position PB to strengthen local democracy by improving the responsiveness of local government to local people and their needs. Moreover, as I will detail later (section 2.7), these features can be understood as important prerequisites for PB to influence perceptions towards local government, another important metric for considering local democratic strength.

The perceived quality of the PB projects that were selected is an important feature of understanding PB effectiveness (Ganuza and Baiocchi 2019), as well as whether initiatives are deemed to have been responding to a clear need. While the two are often linked, they are not always mutually supportive. PB research has demonstrated that while participatory processes may lead to higher quantity of services that are more responsive to the stated needs of communities, that does not guarantee quality. Indeed, services delivered via PB at times being shown to be of a reduced quality to the alternative (Jaramillo and Wright, 2015, Boulding and Wampler, 2009). In addition, while findings in China have shown that increased infrastructure spending has led to increases in trust (Li and Mayraz, 2015), for participation to promote trust in government more consistently it requires both aspects to be present – delivery of services that the public wants, but also delivering them in a way that is of the quality that is to be expected (Wang and Wan Wart, 2007).

In addition to the positive effects of effective service delivery, scholars have also observed that satisfaction in a service can build trust via 'softer' aspects such as the relational process of interaction with others which occurs when service users partake in services (Berg and Johansson, 2020). This can manifest itself in several distinct but associated ways including the extent to which service is understood as being conducted fairly, the values that are seen to be present in the service, the sense of ownership one gets from participating in and contributing to the existence of a service, as well as the extent of satisfaction that service users have in the service more broadly (ibid). When those representing the government demonstrate ethical practice and this is witnessed and felt by the general public during a period of participation, their trust in government can also increase as a result (Wang and Wan Wart, 2007). PB is both a process of participating and a local government service in of itself, as an event that is run and organised by the local authority. Therefore, satisfaction has a dual role – the satisfaction derived from participating as well as the satisfaction derived from the outcomes of the participation.

The satisfaction derived from participating has several components. The first, informed by deliberative theory, is the extent to which participants felt respected and listened to during the process, as well as if the participants felt like it was a good use of their time. This aspect has overlap with quality of discussion (see section 2.4.2) When participation is not done well it can have adverse effects ranging from unhappiness amongst participants to poor delivery outcomes (Wang and Wan Wart, 2007). Secondly, the extent to which participants were satisfied with the interactions they had with organizers and other local authorities that were present at the events

is also important (Bouckaert and Van de Walle, 2003). As I will explain in the following section, these elements can be valuable for shifting perceptions towards local government.

2.7. Impact: the contribution of PB to trust in local government (E)

Trust in government is a vital component of democratic health (OECD, 2022) and is therefore an element of the analytical framework for assessing the contribution of PB to local democracy. Evidence of a link between PB and political trust (see section 1.4) indicates a highly conditional relationship shaped by various factors including context, design and institutional setting (Fölscher, 2007a, Sintomer et al., 2021, Swaner, 2017). This thesis aims to explore the relationship and interaction of these factors and whether and how they may contribute to the improvement of local democracy through PB.

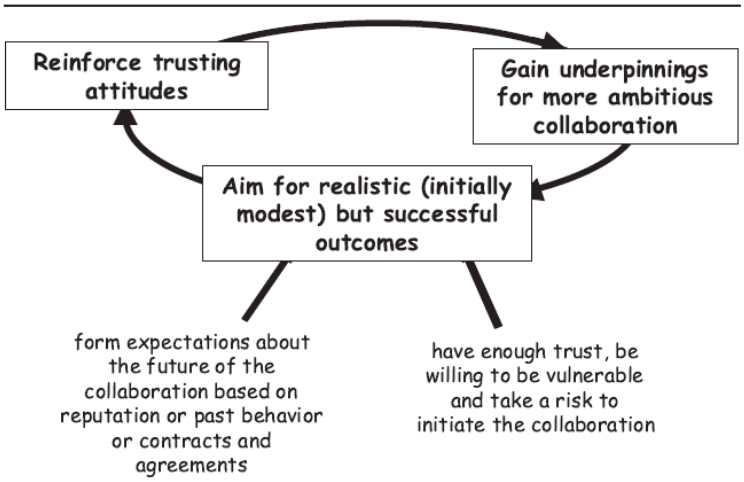
First, it is important to define what is meant by trust in government. Scholars note that trust in government is synonymous with faith in its performance (Wang and Wan Wart, 2007, Bouckaert and Van de Walle, 2003). If citizens feel confident in the performance of the authorities, they intrinsically trust them to carry out their duties. Other research has shown that people are more likely to trust politicians when they see them as accessible, dependable and that they can be trusted to follow through on their commitments (Stoker and Evans, 2019).

Moreover, trust also encompasses a feeling of legitimacy in the way a government is perceived to be conducting itself. This means there is diffuse support for its policies or interventions, and/or a belief that the outcomes of policymaking processes are fair and not tainted by unethical practices (Easton, 1975). A meta review of PB and legitimacy literature found that institutions, participation and deliberation were the most common sources of legitimacy in PB processes (Bernhard et al., 2024). Considerations of trust in government for citizens are wide ranging, but mostly relate to the extent to which people consider the political system to be functioning effectively (Stoker and Evans, 2019). Political trust has widespread ramifications with the extent to which citizens trust politicians affecting their own levels of political engagement as well as whether they trust fellow citizens (Levi and Stoker, 2000). Such aspects serve to further underline the importance of trust for our democracies. Evidence also suggests a circular relationship between trust and policymaking. A lack of trust can reduce political engagement and make governing more difficult including addressing persistent policy challenges (ibid). Conversely, however, distrust in government can also be expected to promote political participation in certain circumstances (Levi and Stoker, 2000) .

Trust is a complex concept with different approaches measurement, assessed either as a one-dimensional or multi-dimensional set of views (ibid). While some may consider trust in terms of a general perception (Stoker and Evans, 2019), others may instead apply a range of criteria such as delivery performance or ethical behaviour. As perceptions of public sector performance increase, corresponding levels of trust in governments often follows (Wang and Wan Wart, 2007, Berg and Johansson, 2020, Mizrahi et al., 2010).

However, trust dynamics are not linear but complex and multifaceted. In developing thinking further, a cyclical model of trust building has been developed in which trust grows in cycles as each interaction meets the expectations of parties involved in a particular relationship (Vangen and Huxham, 2003). See Figure 2. Notably, this feature of cyclical trust-building theory has commonalities with the importance of temporal embeddedness (see section 2.5).

Figure 2 The Cyclical Trust-Building Loop



Source: Bryson, 1988 in Vangen and Huxham, 2003.

Reflecting this temporal complexity, as I will explain further in chapter 3 (methodology) the unit of analysis for this research is participatory budgeting experiences in a locality over a period of five years, rather than looking at a one-off PB event. As a result, the research will be better placed to assess the extent to which each phase performed as well as in gauging how each cycle impacted upon perceptions towards the local government among the research participants.

In addition to the above considerations, public understanding of the term 'government' is not straightforward. Indeed, scholars have advocated for research into political trust to focus on specific institutions rather than the broad term of government (Levi and Stoker, 2000). Research suggests that the public often associate government with either the provision or failure of services rather than with policy formulation or governance structures (Bouckaert and Van de Walle, 2003). Moreover, contextual considerations play an influential role in shaping trust in government (ibid), including differences in expectations about what governments should and should not do, as well as differences in the political environment (Owen and Smith, 2015). The differences in political environments often reflect governance structures. This thesis

distinguishes between local administrations directly interacting with citizens in PB initiatives, and national policymakers with the responsibility for broader legislative frameworks (Wang and Wan Wart, 2007).

This distinction is important in the case studies (Scotland, UK; and Central Java, Indonesia), where multi-level governance may complicate the public's perception of government competences. In Scotland there are two levels of national government (Holyrood for Scotland, and Westminster for the United Kingdom), while PB is only officially mandated as an approach in Scotland (not across the whole of the UK). Indonesia has a directly elected parliament at national level, but also powerful provincial tiers of governance (such as Central Java) led by elected governors with substantial autonomy. As has already been described, these intricacies also have implications for questions of spatial embeddedness of PB in the case studies (see section 2.5).

2.8. Conclusion

The analytical framework underpinning the thesis incorporates considerations of contextual variables shaping PB performance, assessments of two key PB factors, namely design and embeddedness, and examination of PB outcomes, all of which, taken together, enable an analysis of whether and how PB can improve local democracy. The concept of deliberative democratic theory informs analysis of PB design, specifically inclusion, quality of discussion, and justified decision-making. Meanwhile, three dimensions inform the assessment of embeddedness of PB in the case studies: temporal, spatial and practices of embeddedness.

Successful PB projects, positive interactions with government, and satisfaction with the PB process are particularly important for building trust in local government, a critical lever to strengthen local democracies. Such results can contribute to cyclical trust-building over time. Various drivers of trust along with factors such as context can also shape attitudes towards local government and how they evolve.

3. Methodology

3.1. Introduction

Building on the analytical framework, the focus now shifts to the methodology employed in the thesis. The methodology draws on the pragmatist research paradigm, using a range of methods that are suited to addressing the research question. I will now elaborate on how the pragmatist philosophy links to the ontological and epistemological positions underpinning the research, with a position that is balanced between realism and idealism. I will also present the constructionist approach of the research, focusing on achieving a contextualised understanding of what works.

Building on the implications of the literature review previously outlined in section 1.7, I describe a research design that seeks to understand how differences in design and the extent of embeddedness of PB processes can lead to different outcomes from PB, including the extent of community-level changes observed and shifts in citizens perceptions of local government. The outline proceeds with an elaboration of the comparative case study approach that this thesis has used. This commences with an overview and justification of the methods used: semi-structured interviews, observation field notes, and triangulation of secondary data sources. I also explain the procedural steps that have been followed in using these methods.

Following this, I detail the case studies that this thesis has focused on, including the rationale for their selection and key features. The approach to the interview sampling and the total interviewee sample that was consulted during the data collection period are also described. Next, an outline of the approach to data analysis is provided, with an explanation of how data from interviews and field notes were coded and analysed. A justification for why these specific approaches have been used is also provided. Finally, I elaborate on ethical considerations that have been considered during this research, as well as key steps that were taken to ensure alignment with expected ethical standards.

3.2. Philosophical Perspective

The practice of PB is constantly evolving with significant real-world implications, particularly in a time of declining faith in institutions and government (Kriesi, 2013). I am motivated to seek as full an understanding of problems and contexts as I can, acknowledging that I may never gain a true and full understanding of the world. I believe research that reflects this position and seeks to

solve problems and facilitate policy change is imperative. The **pragmatist research paradigm** is well suited to this effort (Kaushik and Walsh, 2019, Morgan, 2007, Moon and Blackman, 2014).

As the literature has emphasised (see sections 1.4, 1.5 and 1.6), it is important to engage with context to understand more deeply how PB functions in practice. This understanding has influenced my decision to seek out and examine case studies across diverse contexts of Scotland, UK and Indonesia. Drawing on a range of insights and different perspectives among research participants at various vantage points of the PB process, I have been both respectful of differences, while also seeking to arrive at sensible conclusions that speak to the range of views that have been put forward by research participants (Morgan 2007).

Through utilising diverse methods that have been adapted to suit my specific research context and focus (Kaushik and Walsh, 2019), I hope to deliver practical and actionable recommendations (Moon and Blackman, 2014).

3.2.1. Ontology

My ontological perspective lies somewhere between realism and idealism. I am somewhat drawn to the goal of identifying a shared objective sense of reality, whilst also being wary of ignoring context or other intangible aspects of the world which are unmeasurable or even difficult for us to comprehend. The view that reality is found in socially constructed meanings that are shared within boundaries, such as specific cultures, is an appealing one to me. Such an understanding is shared by **subtle idealism** (Legard et al., 2003) and **bounded relativism** (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). Furthermore, and in line with my sympathetic viewpoint of decolonising theory (Smith, 1999, Chakrabarty, 2000), I also believe that positivist approaches often wrongly position western knowledge at the pinnacle of achievement, to the detriment of other cultures and perspectives.

The view that I hold is that we must seek to get as close to an understanding of reality as is humanly possible. In this thesis, I have approached this goal through considering a plurality of perspectives (recruiting citizens, civil society, local government representatives and researchers/academics as interviewees) and sources of information (various secondary sources of differing levels of detail and quality, incorporating observation notes and photography). While I would stop short of labelling the understanding I have developed as a true representation of "reality", the approach is close to those taken by **critical realists** (Zhang, 2023, O'Mahoney, 2016).

3.2.2. Epistemology

In alignment with my pragmatic philosophical perspective, my epistemological position is **constructionist**. I believe strongly that people perceive the world in different ways according to the experiences and backgrounds that they have. Moreover, meaning and understandings about the world arise out of human activities and interactions (Harris, 2010, Moon and Blackman, 2014). My focus is on arriving at a contextualised understanding of what works.

My position also draws influence from **interpretivism** (Ercan et al., 2017), as well as concepts of **decolonisation** (Chakrabarty, 2000, Smith, 1999). With both schools of thought the role and perspectives of the researcher are not understated. Interpretivist research has a pluralistic approach that centres the views of the researcher, along with the views of anyone else who the work engages with. The approach is well-suited to in-depth qualitative research which considers context carefully, and seeks to include research participants and other stakeholders who are prone to being left out (Ercan et al., 2017). My approach to interviews reflected this perspective. For example, through efforts to being gender sensitive (utilising a female interpreter in Indonesia, and the proactive recruitment of female interviewees), as well as proactive recruitment efforts to seek out peripheral viewpoints (people with disabilities, those less engaged in politics or social work, or other marginalised groups including the young or religious).

As a researcher, I understand that I do not function in a vacuum, and that the way I present myself and communicate will impact upon what others are willing or able to elaborate to me – particularly during highly communicative activities such as interview processes. This has meant an added importance being needed on being respectful to the time and cultural practices of research participants (see section 3.3.3). As a white heterosexual male researcher from a WEIRD context (western, educated, industrialised, rich and democratic) I have a certain way of seeing and understanding the world, which I have sought to be cognisant of throughout the research. Advocates of decolonisation feel strongly that the hegemonic perspective that I represent retains an undue role in global affairs, and that an overdue correction is needed to place greater value on alternative perspectives and world views (Chakrabarty, 2000, Smith, 1999). Given the history of PB itself as “wisdom traveling from the global south to the North” (Escobar et al., 2018), as well as being a mechanism that was intended to be inclusive (Boulding and Wampler, 2009), I believe this makes an even stronger case for consideration of such insights, which I am incredibly sympathetic to.

However, such considerations have also been tempered by an understanding I cannot simply shed the socio-cultural baggage that is part and parcel of my identity. All that I can do as a socially

minded and responsible researcher is to be self-aware and reflexive in the way that I conduct my work, as an effort to provide a proportionate counterbalance to the perspectives that I bring. This includes the manner I conduct myself in day-to-day research, but also in the way that I have sought to design this research assignment. My decision to undertake field research in Indonesia prior to Scotland, was an effort to de-centre western knowledge and consider these cases on their own merits rather than in comparison to a western ideal (Chakrabarty, 2000). While the incorporation of diverse sources, and an ongoing process of private journaling and debriefs with my interpreter (in Indonesia) were efforts to continually question the understandings I was developing.

Finally, the research is shaped by my lived experience of working for over a decade in Asia with an awareness of what observers have termed the "Asian century" – the projected rise of the continent of Asia in global geopolitics (Asian Development Bank, 2011). I have also been increasingly aware while working in the international development field that the issues and challenges we are facing can no longer be separated in terms of "Global North issues" and "Global South issues". Now more than any other time in my living memory the issues that the world is facing seem to have converged globally – the climate crisis, increased feelings of powerlessness and distrust amongst the global population, growing inequality, shrinking civic space and democratic backsliding (UN DESA, 2021). Set against this backdrop of poly-crisis (Lawrence et al., 2024), there is what others have described as a new clash of civilisations between West and East – predominantly between the United States and China (Allison, 2017), but with knock-on effects for their spheres of influence in North America, Australia, and Europe in the case of America, and in Asia-Pacific in the case of China. Arguably there has never been a more prescient time for political science research that seeks to find common ground between the west and the east. My research starts from a position that global crises require global answers, and that we in the west need to be humble about the failures of our own systems and be enthusiastic about the possibility that we can learn from the systems of others - what others do well and not so well.

3.3. Methods

This section outlines the methods that have been utilised as part of this thesis, beginning with a description of the comparative case study approach.

3.3.1. Comparative Case Study

This thesis employs comparative case studies as the primary method to address my research question. Yin describes the case study method as "*an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context*" (Yin, 2014, p. 16). Such an approach uses multiple sources of evidence and seeks to develop an understanding of the complexity inherent in a situation (ibid).

Undertaking case study research is highly advantageous for digging deep into a phenomenon. By spending time exploring every facet of a situation we are more able to grasp its complexity (Gerring, 2004, Mason, 2017). Beyond the above, case studies have several other benefits that suit the research question that this thesis addresses. Case studies enable a combination of methods and data from different sources, as well as to the assessment of multiple cases as part of the same study. As scholars have explained the *"comparative case study is the systematic comparison of two or more data points ("cases") obtained through use of the case study method"* (Kaarbo and Beasley, 1999, p. 372). In comparative case studies, through extending the number of cases, researchers can generate further evidence and potentially produce more rigorous and convincing research outcomes (Yin, 2014). Indeed, "*meaningful analysis rests on comparison*" (Boswell and Corbett, 2017, p. 801).

Through asking the right research question, developing a systematic design, and exploring data in ways that increase the validity of findings – such as through triangulation - researchers can increase the rigorousness of their endeavours (Yin, 2014). Moreover, by drawing influence from interpretive research, this comparative case research has been positioned to understand and convey context and explore insights that emerge from assessing similarities and differences between cases following after in-depth examination (Boswell et al., 2019).

3.3.1.1. Subnational paired comparison

This research has utilised subnational paired comparison. First and foremost, subnational comparison has enabled a comparison of PB in two very similar contexts within a single country. These contexts are outlined further in section 3.3.1.2. The subnational approach has increased the number of observations that have been possible (Snyder, 2001) within a small pool of cases that have nationally legislated PB globally (McNulty and No, 2021). A paired subnational design has been utilised in previous studies of PB, with a key difference being that the comparison was made between locations with and without PB in effect (Baiocchi et al., 2011), rather than between locations with different PB design features. Utilising a subnational paired comparison has facilitated the generation of new, in-depth insights at country level which have enabled a deeper

understanding of how PB functions and varies within a specific country than a single case study allows. Furthermore, extending the design to include a second set of cases, enables deeper insights into cross-national dynamics and comparisons. As well as uncovering differences across contexts, this design has allowed this research to uncover similarities across all cases – what some refer to as 'eclectic affinities' (Boswell, Corbett et al. 2019) – which further extend understandings of PB design and embeddedness in different settings.

This research has not pursued generalisability. It has preferred depth of insight over breadth, through uncovering complex understandings of the nature of PB in four cases across two countries. Moreover, the findings that the design have generated are not representative or the "reality" of cases that have been examined (Legard et al., 2003, Easterby-Smith et al., 2012, O'Mahoney, 2016). Indeed, this is an unattainable goal in small-n qualitative research. However, the findings do reflect an in-depth understanding of each individual case which has been arrived at through seeking a plurality of perspectives and making use of a diversity of sources (see sections 3.3.2, 3.3.3 and 3.3.4) (Ercan et al., 2017).

3.3.1.2. Case Selection rationale

Scotland and Indonesia were chosen from the 12 countries with nationally legislated PB (McNulty and No, 2021) for their contrasting approaches to PB, PB legal frameworks demographics, and governance structures. PB has also been utilised in the rest of the United Kingdom (Harkins and Escobar, 2015), but is only being used nationwide thus far in Scotland. While PB is not explicitly mandated by binding legislation that obliges councils to implement PB, it is nonetheless promoted as a preferred policy tool for delivering on the commitment to citizen participation outlined in the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act. The literature commonly refers to Scotland as an example of nationwide PB (Escobar et al., 2018) or nationally legislated PB (McNulty and No, 2021). It is from this understanding, that the selection of Scotland as a case study country, as well as the outlining of background information in a proceeding chapter (see section 4.3) has been pursued.

Scotland has been undertaking PB nationwide for almost ten years at the time of writing, making it one of the frontrunners of the approach in Europe, particularly among the few with national legislation place (Poland being the other) (McNulty and No, 2021). Nevertheless, it has also been evaluated as featuring unexceptional PB examples relevant to my research design (O'Hagan et al., 2019). Meanwhile, Indonesia has been undertaking PB nationwide for approximately 20 years, with evidence also revealing that the country possesses median examples of PB

processes, rather than widespread best practice (Feruglio and Rifai, 2017). My desire to find common ground between western and eastern cultures (see section 3.2.2) was also influential behind the selection of these two countries.

The advantages of selecting Scotland and Indonesia as the two countries of focus for this research are listed below. While the two countries have nationally legislated PB in common, they are otherwise very different on a broad range of other aspects, including but by no means limited to:

- Approach to PB (highly structured regulations in Indonesia, loose framework in Scotland, see sub-sections 4.2.1.2 and 4.3.2.2)
- Specific legal framework used for PB (National planning and development law for Indonesia; Citizen-participation law for Scotland) (McNulty and No, 2021)
- Demographics (ethnicity, religion, languages, average age)
- Nation state vs. constituent nation within a wider union
- Political Economy (Scotland a relatively high income western European nation vs. Indonesia a middle-income Asian country; various other socio-political and historical differences)
- Levels of trust in government (Scotland/UK – 30%, Indonesia – 73%) (Edelman, 2024).

Sub-national cases within these countries were selected based on primary criteria relating to the key factors addressed by the analytical framework of this thesis (see sections 2.4 and 2.5):

- observable differences in PB design
- anticipated differences in embeddedness of PB

In addition to these primary criteria, cases were prioritised if they had been implementing PB for at least 5 years, had similar socio-economic contexts to each other, as well as having relatively stable political and leadership contexts, to best ensure comparability on contextual factors (see section 2.3).

In Indonesia, the cities of Surakarta (hereinafter referred to as Solo) and Semarang in Central Java were selected. As neighbouring cities they feature highly similar socio-economic contexts, including their urban nature but also their cultural roots and economic profiles. Both cities have also been implementing PB for approximately 20 years and feature observable differences in PB design despite both jurisdictions both being subject to the highly prescriptive national approach of PB. Solo was the pioneer of PB in Indonesia (Grillos, 2017), and its PB design has incorporated

a focus group discussion (FGD) channel in which stakeholders gather to discuss specific themes or issues. Solo's PB process also features a synchronisation forum aimed at reconciling community project requests with government priorities. In addition, PB in Solo features an explicit requirement to further priorities outlined in local strategic planning processes (see Table 3; chapter 4). Semarang's PB design does not feature such a requirement but has incorporated a special forum to advance the interests of women and children (see Table 4; chapter 4). These design differences, coupled with the historical leadership role of Solo in driving PB forward in Indonesia were indicative of likely differences in embeddedness dynamics of PB in the cities, given the importance of issue focus, systemic alignment, and attitudes of key stakeholders to embeddedness (Bussu et al., 2022).

In addition, both cities had evidence of active civil society engagement in the advancement of PB (Prihadi, 2021, Feruglio and Rifai, 2017). While Semarang had recently undergone a change of Mayor at the time of identification, both cities could otherwise be considered politically stable. Solo and Semarang also had the advantage compared to other prospective case locations due to their accessibility, availability of data, and interest from local authorities. A table outlining case study candidates that were considered in Indonesia can be found in Annex 1.

In Scotland, the regions of Fife and Moray were selected. Fife is in the East of Scotland, and Moray in the Northeast of Scotland. For the purposes of this study, however, I have opted to use a shorthand term of Northeast Scotland to collectively describe both (see chapter 4), given their relative proximity to each other. Fife and Moray had each been implementing PB for at least 5 years and featured observable differences in PB design. Fife has also been considered a nationwide leader in PB, with 13 years of implementation at the time of data collection (Democratic Society, 2020). A variety of models of PB have been utilised including some experimentation with deliberative practices (see Table 5), In contrast, PB in Moray had featured a large focus on children and young people (see Table 6), and less of an explicit attempt to incorporate deliberative features than Fife. The differences in issue focus, preferred format, and length of time implementing PB were also suggestive of differing embeddedness dynamics that warranted closer examination through this research. In addition, the regions were similarly rural in context to each other, and both featured active civil society engagement in the advancement of PB (Enston, 2021, Money for Moray, 2018). Within the contexts of Scotland and the United Kingdom, both regions could be considered politically stable. Finally, interest from local authorities was more readily forthcoming than other contenders in Scotland. A table outlining case study candidates that were considered in Scotland can be found in Annex 1.

3.3.1.3. Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis for this research is the specific geographic jurisdictions of local authorities responsible for PB policy at the local level over a period of five years (2018-2022). In Indonesia, the authority level responsible for PB at the local level is the municipal government (or Kota). While in Scotland it is what is commonly referred to as local authorities. The main advantage of this approach is its suitability for an analytical framework that recognises the time required for public perceptions of PB performance to develop in response to participation and implementation of projects, as well as integrating conceptions of cyclical trust building (Bouckaert and Van de Walle, 2003, Vangen and Huxham, 2003). As this theory illuminates, for trust to have had the opportunity to develop in each case study location, an aggregation of consecutive PB events over several years would have had to take place in which participants took part, were satisfied, and results were implemented (see section 2.6).

3.3.2. Semi-structured interviews

The primary source of data are semi-structured interviews of key stakeholders in each case study location. Interviews are the predominant approach in qualitative research (Legard et al., 2003), valued for qualitative, in-depth perspectives and capturing lived experiences. Given the inconsistency of available data concerning PB among organisers and governments across the world (Wampler et al., 2021, Feruglio and Rifai, 2017), interviews facilitate a level playing field from which to draw conclusions. This method aligns with my pragmatist philosophy as well as my constructionist ontology.

Following standard practice in qualitative research (Mason, 2017), an interview guide was developed (see annex 2) with reference to the main research question of this thesis, which was broken into sub-questions. Moreover, the format that I developed was one that prioritised open questions, enabling maximum space and flexibility for interviewees to help shape the direction of the discussion in the hope of facilitating a degree of interdependence between participants and myself (Mason, 2017, Moon and Blackman, 2014).

Wherever possible, I sought to frame the interviews as less formal 'conversations', in order to put people more at ease, and be sensitive to the notion that an interview may be intimidating to some people (Smith, 1999). Interviews are often thought of as conversations, except ones with a

specific intent (Legard et al., 2003). Indeed, I subscribe to the view that interviews should be as natural as possible, while not losing site of the goal of uncovering and arriving at knowledge (ibid).

In line with my philosophical, epistemological and ontological perspectives, I prioritised comfort, openness and flexibility to ensure that research participants were as relaxed as possible and therefore more likely to be honest and forthcoming with me, particularly as rapport developed during the discussion. In addition, I was respectful and very appreciative of people giving me their time and made extra effort to introduce myself in Indonesian Bahasa in the Indonesian cases.

There were trade-offs with the above approach. Firstly, the location of the interviews was occasionally of a very informal nature such as in a busy café or in someone's home where others were coming and going. The level of privacy was therefore not to the level I would have preferred in an ideal world. However, during times where others were present, I did make sure to check whether the research participant was comfortable to proceed or not. Secondly, the semi-structured, flexible and relaxed approach to the interview sometimes resulted in fewer questions from the interview guide being asked, and other ad hoc questions asked instead. However, on balance, I believe the approach was the correct one and yielded valuable insights that may not have been gleaned with a different strategy.

In Indonesia, an additional consideration was that most of the interviews were conducted in Indonesian requiring the support of a professional interpreter. I reflected seriously on the implications of using an interpreter in the research, a level of consideration that some have argued does not occur as much as it should do in research (Temple and Edwards, 2002, Temple and Young, 2004). Other choices to ponder included to what extent the interpreter was to be involved in analysis (Temple and Edwards, 2002).

I identified a female interpreter to promote gender sensitivity and help put interviewees at ease. An introductory meeting was had with the interpreter to initiate working relationship, make expectations clear, as well as to ask for feedback from her on what I was proposing. After this time, a draft of the interview guide was shared with the interpreter and feedback was sought on the use of certain words and phrases to ensure cultural sensitivity. Later, and immediately prior to the data collection commencing, I conducted a pre-interview with the interpreter to get sense of her profile, to help me reflect on how this may shape interpretations. Furthermore, to aid rapport, I ensured I introduced the interpreter to all interviewees and sought to get to know her better as the data collection process proceeded. Notably, I established a process of debriefs to discuss interviews, clarify any possible misunderstandings, as well as agree on whether any changes in strategy were needed for future interviews. I also conducted an exit interview with the

interpreter to get final reflections on the process. Overall, my intention was to acknowledge that the interpreter was a significant participant in the research in her own right, and that her perspectives and cultural expertise were valuable elements to be incorporated. The interpreter made a valuable contribution to understandings arrived at through the period of data collection in Indonesia, including in improving interview flow, advising on interviewee recruitment strategy, and contextualising interview responses.

The average length of time for interviews was 45 minutes in Scotland and 1 hour and 10 minutes in Indonesia. The translation procedure is available to review in annex 3.

3.3.2.1. Sampling

Due to the qualitative nature of the research, I did not seek to speak to or present a representative sample of respondents. Instead, I prioritised quality over quantity, and depth over breadth. In qualitative research, the key reference point for the decision around the appropriate numbers of respondents is the concept of knowledge saturation – that is, the point in which responses given in interviews are no longer providing new information to the interviewer and become repetitive. Saturation point in social science research tends to occur in the 12-20 respondent range (Guest et al., 2020). While saturation was a consideration, the priority – in line with constructionist and interpretivist thought – was to include a wide diversity of perspectives throughout the process.

A total of 56 interviews were conducted ranging from 13-16 across the four cases. Purposive sampling of different perspectives was sought to arrive at a broad base of views from across each case study location. A balance was sought between interviewees that had cross-authority perspectives and highly localised perspectives at ward (in Scotland) or urban village level (in Indonesia). Wherever possible multiple sources from the same area were sought to position the research to gain a more detailed understanding of the dynamics of a specific ward or urban village. However, perspectives from across the authority were also pursued to not place too much emphasis on the experiences of one specific ward or urban village. This was a delicate and ultimately imperfect balancing act. More on this aspect will be outlined in the limitations section of this thesis (see section 8.3).

Finally, the initial sampling strategy aimed for a minimum ratio of above 50% for PB participants vs. PB organisers, with a preference for attaining a ratio of roughly 2/3s participants to 1/3 organisers. This was to prioritise the views of participants over organisers and position the research to better respond to questions of perception of PB performance, the local government and trust. In addition, this approach aligned with the epistemological and ontological positions taken at the beginning of the research to seek to involve interviewees not typically included.

However, due to the realities on the ground this was an impractical strategy, due to challenges with recruitment which are further highlighted in the section below (3.3.3.2). Instead, sampling ensured that the perspectives of participants considered "purely" organisers accounted for a maximum of 40%, to ensure that the perspectives of other stakeholders were the largest in the interviewee pool.

3.3.3.2. Recruitment

The recruitment of interviewees was carried out in three specific ways. Firstly, advice and guidance were sought from on-the-ground contacts in each of the case study locations. In Indonesia, these contacts were one civil society organisation in each city, which were identified during the planning stage of the research and understood as being among the leading practitioners of PB in the country. In Scotland, contacts were officer-level staff who had responsibility for PB at the local authorities of each of the case studies. A list of criteria was provided to each contact to solicit recommendations of people to reach out to (see Annex 4). From a long list, specific individuals of interest were identified by me in line with the requirements of the research. In some cases, the on-the-ground contacts organised interviews, and in other cases this was carried out by me. This was largely done in an ad hoc manner in ways that supported efficiency and best use of available time and resources. Interviewees from this avenue accounted for roughly 60% of the total research participants for the thesis.

Secondly, both prior to and during the data collection process, the snowballing method was used to identify further suggested participants. The predominant intent of this snowballing was to further diversify the recruitment process, limiting the risk that the research would be biased to the viewpoints of those intentionally selected by the on-the-ground contacts, and seek views that were considered absent or under-reflected at that stage of the process. These views included the views of women, people with disabilities, and people that had not engaged with PB for whatever reason. Interviewees from this approach accounted for roughly 20% of the total research participants for the thesis. Finally, I undertook active outreach both prior to and during the field data collection process, via unsolicited emailing and other forms of online communication (including Twitter, both tweet and direct messages). This was again carried out for the purposes of diversifying the pool of research participants, and to go even further afield in ensuring diversity of perspectives with a greater prospect of separation from the first two participant recruitment channels. Interviewees from this avenue mostly consisted of civil society representatives and again accounted for roughly 20% of the total research participants. See Table 1 for a summary.

Table 1 Summary of research participant recruitment methods

Recruitment Avenue	Number of interviewees
Selected from long-list provided by research contacts in each case location	34
Ad hoc, independent outreach methods (public advertising, internet communications including unsolicited email and social media messages).	12
Snowballing method	10

Interviewees

Prior to data collection, there was an expectation that research participants would fit quite neatly into categories of "participant", "non-participant", and "organiser". However, during the research it became apparent that such a classification was unsuitable for the reality of the situation in each case study location. For a variety of reasons that will become more apparent in chapters 5 and 6, interviewees regularly had multiple perspectives from which to share insights, including participant, organiser, and technical support provider. This is in part due to the fluid contexts at community level where individuals move between roles or take on multiple responsibilities in the community. Indeed, it was quite typical across all four case studies for people to be living and working in the same geographic locale. However, it is also a result of the complex administrative set-ups that characterise PB processes in each of the case studies – where individuals in the middle of a process can be seen to be representing community interests but also fulfilling responsibilities on behalf of local authorities at the same time. In instances where research participants have such profiles, they have instead been given the label of "mixed", with more detail to their specific experiences included prior to any references to their commentary that have been included in the thesis. The four specific groups of research participants that the research has involved therefore are Mixed, Participants, Citizens and Organisers.

A summary of the characteristics of the interviewees can be found in Annex 5.

3.3.3. Observation Field Notes

Observation field notes complemented the primary data. While the time I spent in each place was not sufficient for a true ethnographic study of immersion and grounding in the local culture (time spent in location was limited – ranging from 5-7 days in total), I was determined to be as open to the experience as I could be in the hope that I might garner even a slither of further insight from doing so. In each of the locations, I engaged with my surroundings as much as I possibly could. In doing so, I drew influence from John Parkinson's "Democracy and Public Space" (2012) in paying close attention to where people gathered, where people were having conversations, and whether and how people were undertaking other forms of participation. Another aspect of my research context which contributed to this endeavour was the fact that budget and personal circumstances invariably limited me to basic modes of travel, namely walking and taking public transport. Furthermore, eating and drinking in public spaces was also a requirement of my visits as I did not have access to my own kitchen or other means of preparing small snacks and meals. Taken together these elements gave me multiple avenues to engage with my surroundings and with the residents of the locations. The act of walking and taking photographs has been acknowledged for its potential as an ethnographic method by scholars who understand its ability to place us in a sort of dialogue with our surroundings, allowing us to be open the unexpected, and to collect details about everyday life that can bring new understandings or complement existing ones (Yi'En, 2013, Courpasson, 2020). During visits to cafes, eateries, restaurants and bars/pubs I was open to and sought to initiate conversations with nearby people. When I made my way through public spaces, I sought to keep my eyes open to interesting visual stimuli and intentionally people watched to observe behaviours. When I saw things of note, I took photographic evidence as a reminder of what I had seen. In short, I eagerly embraced the opportunity to squeeze every ounce of understanding from my observations.

While observation field notes were not part of my original research design, I subsequently felt strongly enough about the added value of the notes and photographs that I had pulled together that I decided to incorporate them into my research design. The significance of notes and photography became apparent to me soon after observing street art in Solo (see section 5.3.2). The extent of this highly evocative work across the entire city was almost unavoidable, and I felt it was important to reflect as part of Solo's context and continue to be open to similar possibilities emerging elsewhere among my cases. It is my belief that they provide a contextual backdrop and complementary flavour to the other data sources.

3.3.4. Secondary data

To achieve a holistic understanding, my research used multiple secondary data sources. Doing so has helped to corroborate an overall account, while also raising questions and new lines of enquiry when facing contradictions in the data. Triangulation is a useful method when aspiring for rigorous research (Hantrais, 2009).

Table 2 presents an overview of secondary data sources which have contributed to triangulation efforts. These have been sourced through various means including direct requests to interviewees during or after interview, online searches of public databases, and liaising with civil society organisations active in the case study locations.

Table 2 Overview of Secondary Data Sources

Data Type	**Solo**	**Semarang**	**Fife**	**Moray**
Attendance data	X[1]	X[2]	X[3]	X[4]
Process Guidelines	X[5]	X[6]	X[7]	X[8]
Funding Decisions	X[9]	X[10]	X[11]	X[12]
Evaluation Reports			X	X
% of Projects Approved/Submitted	X	X		
Proposal Numbers per Ward	X			
Proposals Submitted per Agency	X			
Publicity Advertisements			X	
Data on Proposal Eligibility	X			
Scoring Matrix for Playpark PB				X

[1] Kota level only, 2019-2022
[2] Numbers/percentages only, 2020-2022 within unit of analysis period PLUS 2023.
[3] Limited to isolated case studies and generally not disaggregated by sex or age.
[4] Limited to isolated case studies and generally not disaggregated by sex or age.
[5] 2018 guidelines – no updates since that time.
[6] Annual guidelines for 2018-2022 period.
[7] A selection of guidelines from distinct processes during period of analysis.
[8] Miscellaneous process-related materials for a limited number of processes.
[9] 2019-2020 only
[10] Sub-district level (Kecamatan) only, 2022
[11] Isolated ward results 2018-2019
[12] Isolated ward results 2018-2022

While I have sought out the same basic data from each of the four case studies (guidelines, attendance data, and funding decisions), the data at the ward to municipal level in each place differs substantially, even within national geographic borders. Indeed, localised formats, formulations, and differing levels of importance placed on data collection and retention were the norm.

Rather than only analysing a type of data that each specific location possessed, I have instead taken the pragmatic step to use and review every single piece of relevant information that was made available to me in each location, as well as working to actively seek-out further sources of information via the internet. Where more than one location shares the same type of data, I have drawn comparisons, but otherwise I have used each available data source to paint a picture within each location. This approach was utilised as the comparability of data across case study locations is limited at best due to significant differences in data collection methods, analysis, and presentation.

3.3.5. Data Management & Analysis

Transcriptions

All interviews were transcribed by me in the weeks and months immediately following data collection concluding. Transcribing individually enabled me to develop a good grasp of the data (Point and Baruch, 2023). Intelligent verbatim transcription was used, in which grammatical errors and unhelpful repetitions were removed (McMullin, 2023). This was a pragmatic decision taken to increase efficiency and be more respectful to marginalised or disadvantaged individuals who may be less articulate (ibid). On a similar note, any irrelevant interactions not related to the content of the interview questions – such as interruptions by others, or overly long pleasantries - were marked as such and not elaborated upon. Likewise, all vocalisation in Indonesian language was marked simply as such, instead of writing out the specific Indonesian words used. Transcription of the Scottish case studies incorporated the automated transcription feature in MS Word, due to these recordings being more suited to this technology. Transcriptions took approximately 4-6 hours per one interview, which is roughly in line with the typical average that has been noted in the literature (McMullin, 2023). A quality assurance process involving a full read through of transcripts along with recordings was carried out to correct errors. This was done with an understanding of the propensity for errors in the transcription process, due to the

repetitive nature of the work that requires large periods of focus (Point and Baruch, 2023), and in the case of Scottish transcriptions, an understanding of the risks of low accuracy with automated transcription methods (McMullin, 2023).

Coding

Coding software was utilised to increase systematisation and efficiency, as well as aiding deeper analysis due to the available suite of tools (Basit, 2003). Coding was carried out using NVivo 2020 software with both open and closed forms of coding utilised. This abductive approach, informed by pragmatic philosophy, combined inductive and deductive reasoning (Morgan, 2007). A looser approach of highly detailed manifest coding (Spencer et al., 2003) was utilised during first-cycle coding (Mariel and Arthur, 2023), which enabled a fuller understanding of my data (Basit, 2003). I also undertook occasional offline coding exercises to enable deeper engagement with the data which some researchers advocate (Maher et al., 2018). These new codes were subsequently added to NVivo.

During second-cycle coding (Mariel and Arthur, 2023), my approach became more analytical as my understanding of the data set grew (Spencer et al., 2003). Here, the codes from the first cycle were grouped into higher level codes based on the analytical framework of the thesis. The coding framework consisted of broad headings which emphasised the main aspects of the analytical framework that has been developed for this thesis, which were: PB Process (Containing sub-codes: Inclusion, Quality of Discussion, Decision-making), Embeddedness & The Democratic system (Containing Sub-codes: Temporal Embeddedness, Spatial Embeddedness and Practices of Embeddedness), PB Outcomes, and Trust. Sub-codes within the above framework were also developed using an inductive process, which picked up on themes that were being found across transcripts and cases (Mariel and Arthur, 2023). As my familiarity with the data grew, so did my ability to code efficiently and make decisions that felt intuitively correct according to my understandings (Basit, 2003). All changes to coding were captured in memos in NVivo.

Analysis

My approach to analysis proceeded with an understanding that there is no definitive right or wrong way to analyse qualitative data (Spencer et al., 2003). As a creative person, this understanding was liberating, as I did not feel constrained in the way that I approached attempts to uncover insights from the data that I had collected. However, this open-minded approach was balanced with a methodical, step-by-step process to ensure rigour (ibid). Throughout the entire

research process, lines of enquiry had occurred to me, and I had taken note of them at the time – whether in my journal or ad hoc notes. I gathered these together and examined them one by one as the analysis proceeded.

The analytical approach utilised could be described as one of policy and evaluation analysis, given that it was focused on *"providing 'answers' about the contexts for social policies and programmes and the effectiveness of their delivery and impact"* (Spencer et al., 2003, p. 201). This approach is well aligned with the pragmatic paradigm, which is concerned with what works (Kaushik and Walsh, 2019, Morgan, 2007).

For the micro-level dimension of PB design features, the focus of analysis was – firstly - the extent to which evidence of good deliberative quality (in either inclusion, discussion, or decision-making) could be identified among the data collected in each of the case studies. The most observed themes were grouped into smaller child codes. Analysis also sought to identify perceptions among research participants regarding the experience of participating in PB, views regarding the success of specific projects funded by PB and any community-level changes perceived. Changes noted by interviewees and examples of successful projects were also grouped into smaller child codes, to aid understanding of the most regularly cited outcomes from PB processes. Secondly, the analysis sought to understand the relationships between these factors and the extent to which research participants felt that they were satisfied with PB, as well as their views towards the local administration.

To conduct this analysis, I also made use of both attributes and codes in NVivo, as well as the visualisation function, to examine patterns per location and per interview response. Firstly, it was helpful to understand the trust status in each of the case study locations, including the extent to which PB was felt to impact on trust in government. Secondly, it was helpful to understand which of the case studies had the most positive statements regarding the PB processes that they had participated in and explore within the data what nuances could be observed and unpacked.

For the macro level dimension of the embeddedness of PB**,** a thematic analysis was undertaken in which the most observed themes within the Embeddedness & The Democratic system parent code were aggregated and grouped together. These coded themes were subsequently grouped into smaller child codes denoting three dimensions of embeddedness – temporal embeddedness, spatial embeddedness and embeddedness practices (Bussu et al., 2022).

In addition, I undertook analysis of secondary data sources. Attendance data was manually entered into graph format in MS Excel for close analysis, including year-to-year changes. Trend

lines were added to aid understandings. Due to differences in data formats, quality and available periods (see section 3.3.4), detailed comparative analysis across cases was not undertaken. Instead, each available data source was analysed individually on their own terms. For example, attendance records in Solo consisted of lists of invitees and signatures of attendance. These were tabulated and entered into MS Excel and then analysed to see a) whether and how the number of invitees had changed over the duration, and b) whether and how percentage of attendees (from those invited) had changed over time. For Semarang, attendance statistics (including numbers invited and overall percentages) were provided by the local authority in the form of static images. Therefore, data from these images were entered into MS Excel manually to aid closer inspection. This included an assessment of any observable trends and changes in specific years, as well as closer inspection of women's participation to assess any effect from the advent of the special women and children's forum in this location (see Table 4; Chapter 4).

Attendance data in the Scottish cases was identified in reports that were made available by local authorities and civil society organisations during the data collection period. Invariably this data was in the form of figures collected regarding numbers of ballots or votes cast - the stage with the widest level of participation according to available information. To gain an understanding of percentage attendance per specific location, these vote figures were individually divided by official population data for each location. In the case of PB processes spanning multiple locations, population figures were combined for an aggregate number of total eligible participants. In one instance, young person's PB in Moray, voting figures from several events held within the same calendar year were held. These were entered manually into MS Excel in consecutive order, and a trend line added to ascertain whether participation was increasing or decreasing over the course of the series of events.

Written materials (regulations, process guides, evaluations, and reports) were read and analysed to uncover relevant content to aid the overall assessment of deliberative design features, or the extent to which PB was embedded in the local democratic system. This included the issues and themes that PB processes were open to addressing, information regarding any procedural steps taken to include participants, and information regarding time and format of deliberation stages. Any evidence of satisfaction with PB processes or assessments of performance in available reports or evaluations were incorporated into the analysis. All materials written in Indonesian Bahasa were translated using the automated translate function in MS Word, and then subsequently analysed.

A crucial point to acknowledge is that the analysis did not follow a variable-driven correlational logic across or within cases. Instead, it adhered to a qualitative logic, prioritising in-depth exploration of themes and associated relationships for a richer understanding of the connections between deliberative quality, participating experiences, perceptions of PB performance and attitudes to government, contextualised within the democratic frameworks of each case study.

3.3.6. Ethics

This research sought and got approval for its approach to ethics by the European Policies Research Centre of the Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Strathclyde. A data management plan was also developed at the planning stage of the research, with support from faculty staff in its improvement in line with good practice and expectations of the University. All research participants were aged 18+ and gave their informed, written consent to participate in the research. All identifiable information has been removed from interview transcripts to preserve the anonymity of research participants. All other data was either gathered through free to access sources via the internet or freely provided by research participants upon request. Data has been stored on OneDrive for the duration of the research and has been accessed only by the lead researcher. In line with best practice, this data and all hard copy data will be destroyed by 31/12/2030. A summary of research findings (including one translated into Bahasa Indonesia) will be developed and shared with all research participants as a recognition of their contribution, and in accordance with the ethical principles of the researcher, once the thesis has been approved and finalised. Participant Information Sheets which explained the research and the rights of those participating can be found in Annex 6, while the Data Management Plan can be seen in Annex 7.

4. PB Progress in Indonesia & Scotland

4.1. Introduction

Before setting out key findings from the research, it is useful to provide an overview of the development and implementation of PB in Indonesia and Scotland. The overview begins with a review of the political context and history, exploring the origins of PB (known as Musrenbang[13] in Indonesia) and broader socio-political dynamics that are important for effective PB in each country. The key features of the Solo and Semarang case studies in Central Java (Indonesia), and the Fife and Moray case studies in Scotland (United Kingdom) are then detailed. A concluding section summarises the key points of the chapter.

4.2. PB in Central Java, Indonesia

4.2.1. The Reformasi and PB

PB in Indonesia was introduced through the Development Planning Law (2004) and later reinforced in the Village Planning Law (2014) (McNulty and No, 2021). The initial law were introduced as part of a swathe of changes that were ushered in under the banner of the Reformasi – a process of democratisation and decentralisation that followed the end of General Suharto's authoritarian regime in 1998 (Grillos, 2017, Panjaitan et al., 2022). Suharto's regime – dubbed the New Order – had overseen a widespread purge of leftists after seizing power in 1967 (Pisani, 2014), and a longstanding choking off of dissent and civic participation, which had previously been so spirited (Strassler, 2020). The regime had also established a highly structured bureaucracy which was to be the same five levels across the country: nation, province, district, sub-district, and village (Pisani, 2014). See Table 3 for a summary of reforms.

Table 3 Indonesia Local Government Reform Timeline

1998 – Reformasi
1999 – Political and Economic Decentralisation Laws
2004 – Development Planning Law
2007 – National Programme for Community Empowerment (PNPM) Established
2012 – Establishment of National Online Complaints Portal *(SP4N-LAPOR!)*
2014 – The Village Law

Source: Grillos, 2017, Evans and Millott, 2020, World Bank, 2015.

[13] From a combination of three Indonesian words *Musyawarah Rencana Pembangunan* (meaning deliberative development planning).

The Reformasi policies – including PB – were actively encouraged by the international donor community and were expected to bridge a perceived gap between government and the people, as well as to promote the accountability of politicians to the electorate, to bring an end to the cronyism of previous administrations (Panjaitan et al., 2022).

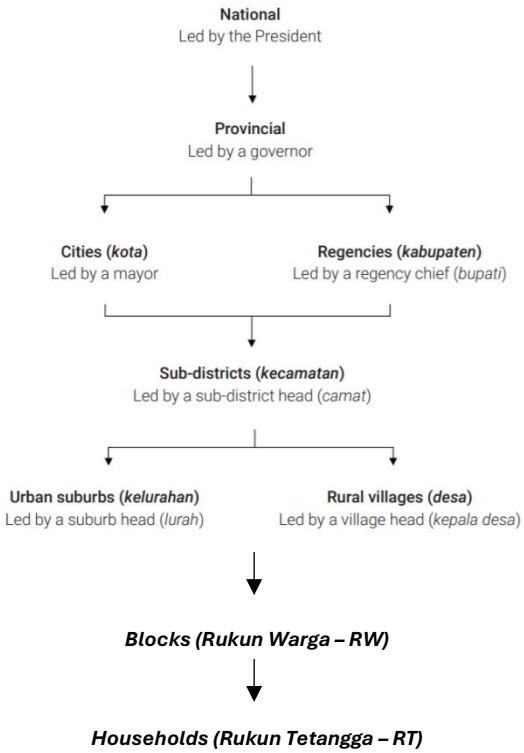
Two initial policies from the early period stand out. Notably, laws 22/1999 and 25/1999, implemented in 2001, gave local governments increased financial powers as well as greater authority over a range of social services (Grillos, 2017, Vidyattama, 2021). In addition, moves to develop and roll-out official complaint mechanisms across the country have provided citizens with alternative avenues to raise their voices and participate in local problem solving (Pramusinto, 2014).

The initial ambitions of the Reformasi have yet to be fully realised. While decentralisation has given local people a greater voice (Russell, 2020), despite a promising start - rather than deepening democracy, recent years have instead seen democratic backsliding in the country, which has included growing restrictions on civil society space, as well as increasing levels of division and intolerance (He et al., 2021). Nevertheless, a 2024 survey showed that 73% of Indonesians trust their government (Edelman, 2024). However, a 2018 survey found comparatively low levels of trust among specific elements of the system such as political parties, both houses of parliament and the supreme court compared to other institutions (Russell, 2020). The President, the Armed Forces and the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) were more positively favoured (ibid). While others have stated the view that the process of bringing civil society organisations closer to the mechanisms of governance – including through mechanisms such as PB - has compromised the ability of these actors to effectively challenge the government (Baker, 2023).

4.2.1.1. Governance Structure

Indonesia has a five-tier governance structure headed by the President, with two further community-level structures beneath (see Figure 3) (Evans and Millott, 2020). Of relevance to this thesis, cities or municipalities (Kota) are headed by elected Mayors (ibid). These mayors oversee sub-districts (Kecamatan) which are led by bureaucrats known as Camats, who in turn manage fellow bureaucrats known in urban areas as Lurah who oversee urban suburbs or villages (Kelurahan) (ibid). Notably, these local officials have been described as some of the least trusted in Indonesian society, with one survey stating that 97% of people regarded Camat's as corrupt (Russell, 2020).

Figure 3 Overview of Indonesia Governance Levels



Source: Evans and Millot, 2020 (with additions).

The regional planning agencies (Bappeda) who exist at municipal and provincial level play a pivotal role in the development of the annual budget in partnership with the Regional Budget Financial Management Agency (APBD). While, the House of Representatives (*Dewan Perwakilan akyat Daerah* – DPRD) has ultimate responsibility for passing the annual budget, following the PB deliberation process (Evans and Millott, 2020).

In urban areas, the lowest tier of government is the Kelurahan (or Desa in rural areas). While rural areas have substantial levels of autonomy to decide their own matters, the Kelurahan is government-run and appointed, and features different mechanisms for decision-making (Evans and Millott, 2020). While rural villages have self-appointed representative councils to legislate locally, urban villages have what are known as LPMKs (Purwanti et al., 2019). These are community-led membership forums operating at the urban village level to connect the wishes of the community to the PB process (Purwanti et al., 2019). The name translates as the *Community Empowerment Institution of Kelurahan* (Purwanti et al., 2019). The institution is expected to have parity in power and influence as the urban village administration when it comes to local matters (ibid). Alongside administrative functions, the LPMK typically includes representatives focused on the economy, education, health, culture and sport, development, sanitation, religion, and

security, all of whom are responsible for delivering these functions locally and reporting to the municipal government (ibid).

Beneath the Kelurahan level, neighborhoods are divided into blocks of residential areas known as “Rukun Warga” (RW). In turn, these RWs are also divided into “Rukun Tetangga” (RT), which bring together multiple close by households (Yuliastuti et al., 2015).The RT and RW system was established by the Japanese during the second world war, and these forums provide day-to-day support to administer local communities, including on the documenting of needs and vulnerabilities (Evans and Millott, 2020). These data inform PB processes (Mayor of Surakarta, 2018, Semarang City Government, 2021).

4.2.1.2. PB

PB built on and leveraged traditions of public deliberation (Saputri and Simbolon, 2023), that had been previously highlighted in the guiding philosophy of Pancasila (‘Five Principles’) of President Sukarno, the first President following independence (Pisani, 2014). The mechanism was established with the intention of giving people from the village level and above the opportunity to participate in process of local planning and budgeting (Saputri and Simbolon, 2023).

It has been well-documented in the literature that PB in Indonesia is dominated by local elites (Feruglio and Rifai, 2017, Akbar et al., 2020, Grillos, 2017). However, this over-arching understanding hides a degree of nuance underneath the surface. Indeed, the efforts to promote participatory budgeting in Indonesia have been as diverse as the governance structure of the country is complex. At the village and sub-district level, there has been a push since 1997 – initially with World Bank support (World Bank, 2015) – to provide funding to enable communities to decide their own priorities through what was then called the Kecamatan Development Programme (KDP). In addition, various cities including Solo had made use of the latitude afforded to them by the national government to experiment with different resourcing options at the local level (Grillos, 2017). In 2007, the KDP was taken on by the Indonesian government and called the National Program for Community Empowerment (Program Nasional Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Mandiri or PNPM Mandiri), according to a World Bank report (World Bank, 2015). By 2014, this work was further reinforced with the passing of the Village Law which substantially increased resources available to villages, as well as taking measures to strengthen village administrative structures and enable local fund-raising (Antlöv, 2019). Ultimately, the sub-municipal arenas were to be subsumed into the overall PB structure (Grillos, 2017).

Studies of the effectiveness of the sub-municipal PB forums have shown more mixed results than those widely critical of the municipal tier, with evidence of empowerment of marginalised groups

as well as contributions to social cohesion noted in the literature (ibid). Indeed, some of the better performing examples have been observed to be examples of genuinely deliberative joint decision-making (He et al., 2021). This may be more apparent in urban areas where the dominance of the elites may be less entrenched (Grillos, 2017). Unfortunately, these are believed to be in the minority across the country (He et al., 2021), with wider political dynamics and local challenges often stymying effective implementation of the Village Law (Antlöv, 2019).

4.2.2. Overview of Case Studies

With the background of decentralisation and PB now established, the socio-economic and political contexts of the case studies will now be outlined, beginning with an overview of the province of Central Java, where both cities are located.

4.2.2.1 Central Java

Central Java is a province of significance in Indonesia. The island of Java is the cultural heartlands of the country, and home to a sizeable majority of its overall population (Pisani, 2014). This demographic feature coupled with its geographical centrality means that Javanese culture is influential in Indonesia. Javanese culture is considered hierarchical and elitist by observers (Pisani, 2014, Van Reybrouck et al., 2024), and the formal bureaucracy that has been in place in the country since the Suharto regime is informed by this mode of thinking (Pisani, 2014).

Despite of - and in some ways reinforcing of - its hierarchical and elitist structure, Indonesians still find themselves connected to one another through mutual obligations (Pisani, 2014), such as political loyalties, kinship, religion, ethnicity, or more transactional reasons (Muhtadi, 2021). This distinct form of collectivism has deep roots in Indonesia, and is entrenched through the expansive bureaucracy that has been described in section 4.2.1.1 (Pisani, 2014). In Java, this dynamic is most typically found in the way in which villages are organised, although this is now understood to be stronger in rural areas than urban areas (Pisani, 2014), perhaps due to the differences described in organisation models between the two contexts (see section 4.1.2.1 above).

4.2.2.2. Solo

Solo is a medium-sized city of approximately 530,000 people – although there may be up to 50,000 people not reflected in the official records (Obermayr, 2018). Solo is the centre of politics,

economy and culture in the eastern part of Central Java Province and is divided into five sub-districts (Kecamatan) (as referred to in Figure 3) and 51 quarters/urban villages (Kelurahan) (ibid).

Solo is regarded as a major centre of industrial production and trade in Java. Despite its strong economy, the poverty level rests at 15.4%, and is dispersed relatively evenly across the city, but with significant levels in the south east of the city, including along the Bengawan Solo River (Obermayr, 2018). Insufficient housing is also a cause for concern (ibid).

While Solo is one of the smaller cities in Central Java, it has a high human development index (HDI) score of 0.832 (or 83.1%) (Haznur and Setyowati, 2023). At the time of the study taking place, Solo's Mayor was Mr. Gibran Rakabuming Raka, the son of Indonesian President Joko Widodo, and represents the PDI-P Party (Subekti et al., 2023).

The city has also found notoriety in recent years as the home of outgoing President Joko Widodo and the place where he first came to political prominence with a leadership style that eschewed traditions of hierarchy and sought to bring government closer to the people. This coupled with an ambitious agenda of change for the city, which leveraged its cultural heritage, made Jokowi (as he's more commonly known) a popular Mayor (Bin Shamsudin et al., 2021).

Despite reforms including PB, evidence has shown a decline in participation in Mayoral elections in Solo in recent years, with participation declining from 76.1% in 2005 to 70.52% in 2020. Moreover, in the most recent Mayoral election that saw the arrival of Jokowi's son Gibran to the position, there was a marked increase in the rate of spoiled ballots cast in the election. This along with declining participation indicates a degree of dissatisfaction of the citizens of Solo with the political process (Subekti et al., 2023).

PB was first pioneered in Solo, prior its nationwide roll-out (Grillos, 2017). Research has found that poorer sub-districts received a smaller per capita percentage of funding than more prosperous areas, with this difference being most likely caused by a lack of proposals from poorer communities (ibid).

In Solo, the PB process operates annually across various geographical tiers, including neighbourhoods (*RT*), blocks (*Musling*), urban villages (*Kelurahan*), districts (*Kecamatan*), and the municipal (*Kota*) level, with each layer discussing ideas and proposing projects to be either funded, advanced to next tier, or rejected. The process is overseen by the municipal government, with implementation carried out by relevant governance tiers and the Community Empowerment Institution (*LPMK*) at the urban village level. Participants include leaders of community stakeholder groups on specific topics, representatives from government agencies, NGOs,

religious leaders, business representatives, and other assorted stakeholders. Participation requires formal group registration, while quotas are in place to encourage participation of groups such as women and people with disabilities. Two specific design innovations are notable in Solo: the focus group discussion (FGD) which engages stakeholders on specific themes, and the synchronisation stage which aims to align local requests with government priorities. In addition, proposals at block level are explicitly tied to the priorities decided through a participatory local strategic planning process. A summary of the PB process in Solo is provided in table 4.

4.2.2.3. Semarang

Semarang is the largest city in Central Java and the 5th biggest in Indonesia, with a population of approximately 1.7 million people, according to a UN and World Bank report (UN-Habitat, 2023).

Semarang is a municipality consisting of 16 districts (Kecamatan), sub-divided into 177 urban villages (Kelurahan) and therefore considerably larger than Solo. Semarang is also divided into five urban areas for the purposes of planning: Central Semarang, East Semarang, West Semarang, South Semarang, and North Semarang. The city's HDI is 83.55%, the highest in Central Java, while the poverty rate is low at 4.56% (compared to 9.22% nationally). Life expectancy is also improving, reaching 77.6 on average in 2021. The benefits of the city's economic strength are not always broadly felt across society. In dynamics that appear to mirror some of those observed in Solo, a budgetary analysis and poverty mapping study argued that the municipality is unduly prioritising wealthier sub-districts of the city that have less urgent economic, sanitation and water needs (Muktiali, 2018).

In recent years, Indonesian scholars have noted that Semarang leadership has shown a commitment to increasing women's political participation (Purwanti et al., 2018), as well as to delivering more accountable and transparent administration, which it is argued has positioned the municipality to make progress on public trust (Puspawati, 2016). Indeed, the same study in a comparison between Semarang and neighbouring Magelang found that that Semarang citizens considered local authorities to be performing with integrity (ibid). Semarang's Mayor Ms. Hevearita Gunaryanti Rahayu is also a member of the PDI-P Party and previously served as Deputy Mayor prior to her inauguration (VOI, 2024).

Semarang is a partner of the Open Government Partnership initiative, which has been supporting work on a variety of initiatives including efforts to improve the city's PB process (Prihadi, 2021).

However, the above positive signs around leadership do not yet appear to have translated into a PB process that is able to leverage the energies of local people. Indeed, a recent study stated the view that the process does not involve meaningful participation of citizens, and that decisions are overly top-down (Haqi and Dühr, 2022).

In Semarang, the PB process operates annually across various geographical tiers, including neighbourhoods (*RT*), blocks (Citizen Rembug/Pre-Musrenbang), urban villages (*Kelurahan*), districts (*Kecamatan*), and the municipal (*Kota*) level, with each layer discussing ideas and proposing projects to be either funded, advanced to next tier, or rejected. The process is overseen by the municipal government, with implementation carried out by relevant governance tiers and the Community Empowerment Institution (*LPMK*) at the urban village level. Participants include leaders of community stakeholder groups on specific topics, representatives from government agencies, NGOs, religious leaders, business representatives, and other assorted stakeholders. Participation requires formal group registration, while quotas are in place to encourage participation of groups such as women and people with disabilities. PB in Semarang has recently incorporated a designated forum to raise the voices of women and children. Table 5 summarises the key aspects of the Semarang PB process.

Table 4 Overview of PB Design: Solo

Timeline	Geographic unit	Responsible Party	Implementer	Participants	Design summary	Funding allocation mechanism
Annual process	Neighbourhood (RT), Block (Musling), urban village (Kelurahan), district (Kecamatan) and municipal (Kota) levels	Municipal government	Each relevant local authority governance tier plus the Community Empowerment Institution (LPMK) at urban village level	Leaders of community stakeholder groups on specific topics (disabilities, health, culture, children and youth, elderly, religion, etc.), reps from government agencies, NGOs, religious leaders, business reps, and other assorted reps. NB: groups must be formally registered and constituted to participate.	Layered process from local level up to city level, each layer discussing ideas and proposing projects to be either funded, advanced to next tier, or rejected. **Key features:** Decisions aim for consensus, deadlock broken by elites. 30% quota for women. 10% quota for people with disabilities. Focus Group Stream (FGD) to engage NGOs and registered community groups on specific themes and issues. 5 of 6 proposals made at Block level taken from Local Strategic Plan (Renstramas); Synchronisation stage (Desk Sinkronisasi) to reconcile/align local requests with government priorities.	% of regional budget; funding allocated at Kelurahan, Kecamatan and Musrenbang levels.

Source: Mayor of Surakarta, 2018

Table 5 Overview of PB Design: Semarang

Timeline	Geographic unit	Responsible Party	Implementer	Participants	Design summary	Funding allocation mechanism
Annual process	Neighbourhood (RT), Block (RW//Citizen Rembug/Pre-Musrenbang), urban village (Kelurahan), district (Kecamatan) and municipal (Kota) levels	Municipal government	Each relevant local authority governance tier plus Community Empowerment Institution (LPMK) at urban village level	Leaders of community stakeholder groups on specific topics (disabilities, health, culture, children and youth, elderly, religion, etc.), reps from government agencies, NGOs, religious leaders, business reps, and other assorted reps. NB: groups must be formally registered and constituted to participate.	Layered process from local level up to city level, each layer discussing ideas and proposing projects to be funded. **Key features:** Decisions aim for consensus, deadlock broken by elites. 30% quota for women. 10% quota for people with disabilities. Women and Children Forum (Sangpuan) held at urban village level (since piloting in 2019) to prioritise participation and issues for these groups.	% of regional budget; funding allocated at Sangpuan, Kelurahan, Kecamatan and Kota levels.

Source: Semarang City Government, 2021

4.3. PB in Northeast Scotland, UK

4.3.1. The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act and PB

PB in Scotland, UK is part of broader efforts to enhance community involvement and local decision-making which have occurred in the years following the 2014 referendum on Scottish independence from the UK. While the vote for independence was unsuccessful, ongoing efforts to decentralise government and empower local communities occurred following the referendum (Escobar et al., 2018).

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act (2015) was a wide-ranging policy which outlined reforms required to empower communities in areas as diverse as public decision-making, forestry, football, tax, and land use (Scottish Government, 2017a). Importantly for the focus of this thesis, PB is a policy action that has been put in place by the Scottish Government as a way of delivering on the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act, 2015 (McNulty and No, 2021).

Table 6 Timeline of Local Government Reform Process

- 1978 – Barnett Formula Introduced
- 1994 - Local Government Act (Scotland)
- 2003 – The Local Government in Scotland Act
- 2011 – Christie Commission Published
- 2015 – The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act
- 2017 – At least 1% PB Budget Allocation Agreement
- 2019 – The Planning Act

Sources: Campbell, 2015; Gray and Barford, 2018; McGarvey, 2020.

A key element of the push to implement the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act was the establishment of Community Planning Partnerships (CPP), which formalised a concept of which had first arisen in a 1995 draft policy statement for local government developed by the Labour Party titled *Renewing Democracy, Rebuilding Communities*, and had previously been the focus of the Local Government in Scotland Act (2003) (Campbell, 2015). CPPs bring together diverse stakeholders across the public sector, voluntary sector, and private sector in support of shared objectives for local improvement (Scottish Government, 2023a). The main plans at CPPs disposal are Local Outcomes Improvement Plans, which cover a council area, and Locality Plans which are more targeted interventions on areas seen as having a specific need (ibid).

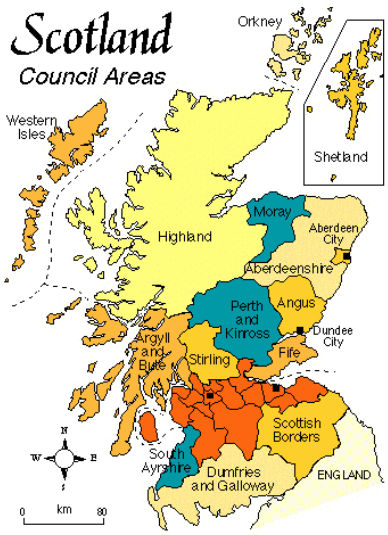
Other instruments devised in the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act were Community Asset Transfers (CATs) and Participation requests. CATs give communities the right to make requests to become the new owners of public assets that they believe they can make better use of (Scottish Government, 2020). While Participation Requests position community bodies to undertake dialogue with the local authority about local issues or services that they believe they can positively

affect outcomes in (Scottish Government, 2017b). These instruments were further augmented in 2019 through a new Planning Act, which included legislation for local place plans, which set out proposals for how local land could be used and developed (Scottish Government, 2022a). While community action plans are documents setting out local priorities in an area as well as a strategy for making them a reality (Scottish Community Alliance and Community Enterprise, 2020). Each of these mechanisms can be considered elements of the democratic system in which PB is situated within. A summary of relevant reforms in Scottish local government is found in Table 6 (previous page).

4.3.1.1. Governance Structure

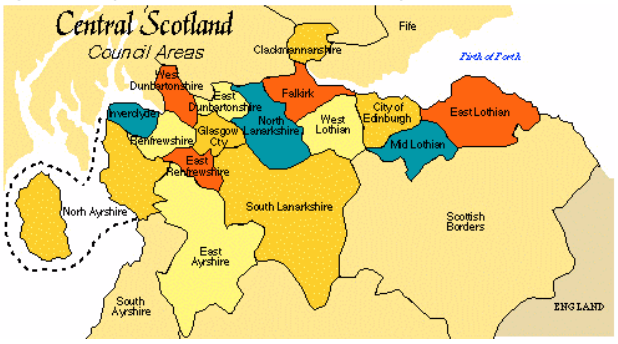
Scotland, as both a region and a country in its own right within the unitary state of the UK, is an unusual proposition in governmental terms (Game, 2016). This dynamic has been the backdrop to several periods of attempted reform to improve ways of working in support of local communities. The UK – particularly Scotland – has one of the largest population sizes per council in Europe (Escobar et al., 2018), with each of the lowest tiers of government responsible for an average of approximately 164,000 people. These unitary local authorities (See Figure 4 and Figure 5), totalling 32 across Scotland, hold the responsibility for providing a variety of public services.

Figure 4 Map of Scottish Unitary Councils



Source: Electric Scotland, n.d.

Figure 5 Map of Central Scotland Unitary Councils



Source: Electric Scotland, n.d.

The Local Government in Scotland Act (2003) formalised the expected responsibilities of local councils in Scotland, including the provision of services, as well as powers on tax regulations. Importantly, it also sought to put in place a holistic approach to community planning, bringing together responsible stakeholders from across the local community in partnership (McGarvey, 2020, Campbell, 2015).

Mandatory responsibilities of local councils include primary schooling and social services, permissive powers including recreational services, and regulatory powers such as tax and environmental health regulations (Scottish Government, 2017c).

Unitary authorities are divided up into wards for electoral purposes, represented by councillors. Beneath local councils are voluntary groups known as community councils (CCs). These entities are formed of volunteers elected by the community, and function as a connecting agent between the local authority and the community (LGiU, 2025). However, there is a need to build the capacity of CCs, better resource them, as well as to make them more inclusive and democratic (Escobar, 2014).

Local governments are heavily reliant on central government for resources in the UK (Gray and Barford, 2018). Despite an enthusiasm for reform, concerns of how to maximise local relevance and efficiency of service provision while ensuring appropriate levels of accountability have persisted (Alexander and Orr, 1994).

A key feature of budgeting between the constituent members of the UK is the Barnett Formula which was first introduced in 1978. This method ensures that any reductions in English budgets are applied at a per capita basis in the other devolved nations as a means to ensure equality and fairness (Gray and Barford, 2018). Notably for Scotland, devolved administrations have more flexibility over how to apply any changes in funding, which has led some to believe that these countries have been able to shield their local governments from some of the harshest effects of austerity since 2010 (ibid). Indeed, figures have shown that councils in England had budgets cut by over 20% during 2010-2019, more than 10% above the cuts made in Scotland and Wales (Paun et al., 2019). Although, it has also been noted that this even-handed approach to budgeting is not helpful to areas that are already behind in living standards (Gray and Barford, 2018).

A few years prior to the advent of the Barnett Formula, COSLA was formed. COSLA is a non-partisan and council run organisation working on behalf of local councils across Scotland to advocate for increased local power and resources (COSLA, n.d.). COSLA plays a key role in advancing PB at the national level in Scotland (ibid).

4.3.1.2 PB

PB has been noted by CPP stakeholders as one of the more ambitious and potentially transformative reforms that arose as a result of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act (Escobar, 2021a). Since PB was first introduced in Scotland a period of experimentation and testing has led to a wide array of different models and process features being attempted across the country. One of the most high profile of these was the Community Choices Fund, set-up by the Scottish Government to

support the goals of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act (Escobar et al., 2018). However, perhaps the key thing to note is that by far the most common approach to PB that had been observed up until 2018 was that of distributing small grants to communities, rather than involving participation in the allocation of local government budgets for specific services (O'Hagan et al., 2019, McNulty and No, 2021). Small grant PB has been termed 1st generation PB in Scotland by scholars, with the allocation of mainstream government budgets via PB being framed as 2nd generation (Escobar et al., 2018). Common issues and topics observed in the focus of these grants included social care, isolation and inclusion, recreation and leisure, and support for children (O'Hagan et al., 2019). However, it has been argued that significant shifts in culture, politics and resourcing are required to make a success of the reform (Harkins and Escobar, 2015). An evaluation of PB in Scotland commended the progress that had been made up until 2018, however, concerns were raised about the levels of inclusion seen in the process, as well as the extent to which real change could yet be observed at the community level (O'Hagan et al., 2019).

In 2017, a concerted effort to move PB in Scotland towards 2nd generation PB was made as Scottish Local Authorities and the Scottish Government agreed a framework which committed to have begun allocating a minimum of 1% of local government budgets within a five-year period (COSLA, 2021, PB Scotland, 2019a). The introduction of a PB Charter in 2019 also outlined 7 guiding principles for effective PB: Fair and inclusive, participatory, deliberative, empowering, creative and flexible, transparent, and to be part of democracy (PB Scotland, 2019a). Moreover, the approach of PB was expected to involve a deeper level of participation of communities than had been present up until that stage (ibid). In addition, a commitment was made to target PB on the areas of greatest need (O'Hagan et al., 2019).

4.3.2. Overview of Case Studies

Having described the background in Scotland at the national and union level, the contextual factors that characterise the two case study locations will now be detailed, beginning with Fife and proceeding to Moray.

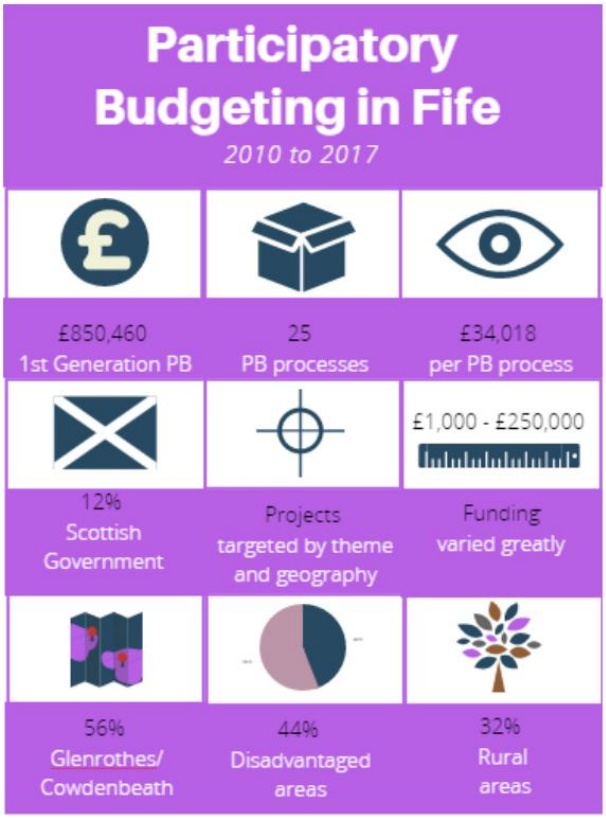
4.3.2.1. Fife

Fife is a large and geographically diverse region in the east of Scotland, characterised by large spreads of rural areas and several moderately sized economic centres. Until recently there were no cities in Fife, but that recently changed with the ascendence of Dunfermline to city status (Fife Council, 2022).

Fife is among the wealthiest locations of Scotland, and home to three major towns and a population of approximately 370,000 people – the third highest in the country (Fife Council, 2024b). The region is home to several former mining communities which have suffered from economic decline since the end of the mining industry in the 1980s and early 1990s (McCollum et al., 2021). Fife's unemployment rate of 4.1% is above the national average (nomis, 2024a). The workforce profile also shows signs of marked inequality, with the two largest groups being the top and bottom rungs by classification (49.1% employed in major group 1-3, and 13.5% employed in major group 8-9) (ibid). These socio-economic factors are useful to keep in mind when assessing PB as they may indicate a challenging context for political trust (see section 2.3).

At the political level, at the time of the research taking place, the local council had featured a leadership role for the Labour Party since 2014, including a period of co-leadership during 2017-2022 (Fife Council, 2023a) - meaning a relatively stable context over the past three local election cycles. At parliament level, there had been 2 SNP MPs in place since 2015 – again for two election cycles - with the remaining two places being split between the Liberal Democrats and the Alba party – both members elected in 2019 (Fife Council, 2024c) .

Figure 6 Key figures of PB in Fife, 2010-2017



Source: Fife Council, 2017

While local councils have faced significant cuts to funding in recent years, Fife-based respondents to the annual Scottish household survey in 2022 found that 49% of citizens felt that the council provided good services, considerably higher than the rate of 42% found nationwide (Scottish Government, 2022b). While 39% felt that the council designs its services around the needs of the people who use them, compared with a national rate of 31% (ibid). This thesis has sought to better understand whether and how PB has played a role in shaping such perspectives.

Since the wholesale closing of the mines and economic reforms of the 1980s, the local economy has declined and there has been a growth in pockets of deprivation across the region (McCollum et

al., 2021). These shifts made Fife a logical place in which to pioneer PB, which occurred in 2010 (Democratic Society, 2020).

Since 2010, over £1m has been distributed via PB, with the local council playing a lead role in facilitating this process (Enston, 2021). Various methods and models have been trialled in recent years, including online modalities (Fife Council, 2017). Until quite recently, Fife Council had been widely understood as being the national leader of PB within Scotland and the United Kingdom. As well as being among the first locations in the country to meet the Scottish government's target of allocating at least 1% of mainstream budgets through PB, the region was identified in a national evaluation as featuring some of the most advanced examples of PB (O'Hagan et al., 2019). Fife Council was awarded a Nestor prize for democratic innovation in 2020 (Democratic Society, 2020). The largest PB process that Fife Council has managed to date was the "Let's talk about transport" exercise that ran between 2019-2021 and sought to allocate approximately £22m of the subsidised Passenger Transport services budget (Enston, 2021). There are a variety of different PB models that have been utilised in Fife. A summary of the predominant models which have been assessed as part of this thesis can be found in Table 8. While a snapshot overview of the Fife PB experience during 2010-2017 is seen in Figure 6.

Whether or not a direct result of the above experiences, Fife scores above Scotland on the question of whether its residents believe that they can influence decisions in their local area. In the 2022 Scottish household survey, 26% of those in Fife stated they believed this was the case, which is above the Scotland-wide average of 18% (Scottish Government, 2022b). In addition, 31% felt they would like to be more involved, compared to a higher level of 33% nationally. Furthermore, 31% felt that the council was good at listening to local people's views before it takes decisions (24% nationally) (ibid).

Table 7 Overview of PB Design in Fife

Type of PB	Timeline	Geographic Unit	Responsible Party	Implementer	Typical Participants	Design summary	Budgetary information
Small grant	Ad hoc	Ward, combined ward, authority wide.	Local Authority or Funding Body.	Fife Council	Local community groups and CSOs apply and discuss/review applications. Wider public participate at vote stage.	Open call for applications for projects on specific theme. Committee reviews/approves projects to proceed to vote stage. Public pitches to persuade voters. Ballot voting to decide. Funding allocated to small/large projects or proportionate to vote (50/50 model).	£5,000-£65,000 budget range
Public works	Ad hoc	Authority-wide	Local Authority	Fife Council	Local residents, representatives from civil society, voluntary groups and local businesses.	Stakeholders meeting based around small group discussions identified priority areas. Voting on specific ideas and preferences online and via events.	Approximately £25,000 budget
Local Action Planning	Ad hoc (Plans cover a 5-year period)	Area	Local Authority/CSO Partnership (+ funding body)	CSO	Local residents, members of voluntary and civil society groups.	Stakeholder workshops to discuss community priorities and propose ideas, centred around small group deliberations. Decisions on strategic priorities made via open prioritisation/multiple vote process.	£20,000-30,000 to selected priorities.
Commissioning of services	Ad hoc	Authority wide	Fife Council	Fife Council	Service users, members of relevant voluntary and civil society groups, elected members.	Decisions around budget of mainstream service provision. Based around idea of *Discover, Dream, Design, Decide*. Stakeholder consultations to educate on existing service set-up; canvas widely for ideal scenarios of services; develop specific options for future configuration; decisions reached through closed deliberation process of elected members.	£9.5m budget allocation (reduced from £22m)
School PB	Ad hoc	Individual schools	Fife Council (+ Pupil Equity Funding)	Schools	School children, teachers, and parents	Idea generation with children, discussion about ideas with children, teachers and parents, selection of three choices for voting; secret ballot voting to pick one winner.	£1,000-5,000 budget range.

Sources: Fife Council, 2023b, Armstrong et al, 2019, PB Scotland, 2015, Fife Council, 2020

4.3.2.2. Moray

Moray is a predominantly rural region in the northeast of Scotland. The percentage of unemployment is 3.4% (in line with the Scotland average), the percentage of workless households is 15.4% (below the Scotland average of 18.6%), and the gross pay average is £598.80 GBP per week (below the Scotland average of £640.30 per week) (nomis, 2024b). Meanwhile, out of work benefit claimants are 2.3% of the population (below the Scotland average of 3.2%) (ibid). The economy seems to be more evenly spread than Fife, with employment by occupation statistics showing that the largest group is major group 1-3 at 47.9% (below the Scotland average), with the next highest being the second rung of major group 4-5 at 22.1% (above Scotland average) (ibid).

In recent years, Moray has differed from Fife in terms of its party-political trajectory, with council control and members of parliament for Moray being predominantly of a Conservative persuasion (Moray Council, n.d.-a, UK Parliament, 2024).

The 2022 Scottish household survey found that 49% felt that Moray Council provided good services, compared to 42% nationally (Scottish Government, 2022b). In addition, 31% felt that the council was good at listening to local people's views before it takes decisions (24% nationally), and 39% that council designs its services around the needs of the people who use them (31% nationally) (ibid).

Relevant structures or fora in Moray's local democratic system include the Moray CPP and area forums. Another local structure of relevance are area forums which are groups that are established according to catchment areas of secondary schools. Currently, only half of the relevant areas have area forums in operation: Buckie, Forres, Milnes and Speyside. While Keith, Elgin North, Elgin South and Laich areas are yet to set one up (Moray Community Planning Partnership, 2024). This absence is suggestive of a decentralisation process that is a work in progress, which may pose difficulties for effective PB at the local level.

PB was first pioneered in Moray in 2016, by a voluntary working group that was established for the purpose (Money for Moray, 2018). Since that time, PB in Moray has been characterised by a broad variety of stakeholders that have organised processes across civil society and local administration, as well as a mixture of funding sources from national to local (ibid). In recent years, the biggest PB process to date has been part of the Just Transition process, a 10-year £500m fund managed by the Scottish Government and implemented in three regions across the Northeast of Scotland to advance a fair transition to net zero carbon emissions (Scottish Government, 2023b). Over £300,000 was distributed via PB in Moray in the first year, and £500,000 in year two (TSIMoray, 2024). There are

a variety of different PB models that have been utilised in Moray. A summary of the predominant models which have been assessed as part of this thesis can be found in Table 8.

Similarly with Fife, Moray also performed well on the 2022 Scottish household survey with regards to participation and local decision-making. Indeed, 21% of Moray citizens believed that they could influence decisions affecting their local area, which is above the Scotland-wide average of 18% (Scottish Government, 2022b). Moreover, 27% said they wished to be more involved in local decision-making, compared with a higher rate of 33% nationally (ibid). This thesis has sought to understand to what extent PB has played a role in this status.

4.4. Conclusion

I have detailed how PB in Indonesia and Scotland, UK has been shaped by the respective historical and socio-political contexts of each country. In Indonesia, PB emerged as part of a wider push for decentralisation and democratisation that occurred following the end of authoritarianism at the close of the last century. The highly structured bureaucracy as well as a deliberative consensus-building at the village level have shaped PB, while also contributing to less desirable phenomena such as clientelism and authoritarianism.

As I have explained, the specific cultural dynamics of Java have been significant in shaping the socio-economic and political dimensions of the case study cities of Solo and Semarang. Both locations have similar urban contexts, as well as historical examples of leadership commitment to improvements in governance. However, I have detailed common challenges with regards to ensuring socially just policies and effective PB, within the highly structured parameters set by the national legislation. Yet differences in PB approach between the two cities are also evident, with Solo having first pioneered PB in Indonesia and having pursued notable design innovations such as a discussion channel for specific issues, and a synchronisation forum to promote greater alignment between community and government priorities. In contrast, the Semarang municipal government has recently established a women and child forum within the PB process to empower these groups.

In Scotland, I have shown how PB emerged in response to ongoing administrative reform which has sought to arrive at a more effective balance between central and local concerns and ultimately bring decision-making closer to Scottish communities. The notable importance of the Scottish independence referendum has also highlighted, as well as an already existing push to empower communities – punctuated by the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act. Regarding the specific contexts of Fife and Moray, both locations are predominantly rural in nature, with broadly

comparable economic contexts that are similar to the Scottish averages, and both locations performing relatively well in the Scottish household survey on participation and local decision-making. With regards to PB, while both locations have several years' experience, Fife has allocated more funding via this method and has also experimented more widely with different approaches. Moray PB has been progressing in recent years, including through its largest process to date – the Just Transition PB – working on assisting communities shift towards net zero energy emissions.

Having set the background context for PB in the case studies, this thesis will now set out its core assessment of PB in the case studies, structured around the key components of the analytical framework: PB design, PB embeddedness, and PB outcomes.

Table 8 Overview of PB Design: Moray

Type of PB	Timeline	Geographic unit	Responsible Party	Implementer	Typical Participants	Design summary	Budgetary information
Playpark PB	Ad hoc	Village/community	Local Authority	Community volunteers	Local residents	Locations identified through park condition scoring; ideas canvassed among community for design suggestions. Put to tender. Three design options put to public vote. Results weighted against technical scoring for final decision.	£30,000-120,000 budget.
School PB	Ad hoc	Individual schools	Local Authority (+ Pupil Equity Funding)	School leadership	School children, teachers, and parents	Idea generation with children, discussion about ideas with children, teachers and parents, selection of three choices for voting; secret ballot voting to pick one winner.	£1,000-5,000 budget
Small grant	Ad hoc	Authority-wide	Local Authority or Funding Body (e.g. Big Lottery)	Voluntary Group; CSOs	Local community groups and CSOs apply and discuss/review applications. Wider public participate at vote stage.	Open call for applications for projects on specific theme. Committee reviews/approves projects to proceed to vote stage. Public pitches to persuade voters. Ballot voting to decide. Funding allocated to small/large projects or proportionate to vote (50/50 model).	Approx. £50,000 funding pot.
Just Transition	Annual (over defined funding period)	Authority-wide	National Government	Voluntary Group; CSOs	Local community groups and CSOs apply. Wider public participate at vote stage.	Open call for applications for projects on theme of energy transition. Committee reviews/approves projects to proceed to vote stage. Public pitches to persuade voters. Ballot voting to decide. Funding allocated to small/large projects.	Approx £300,000 funding pot.
YP Decide	Ad hoc	Ward	Local Authority & CSO Partnership	CSOs	Young people aged 5-25.	Open call for applications for projects on specific theme. Committee (formed of youth) reviews/approves projects to proceed to vote stage. Public pitches to persuade voters. Ballot voting to decide. Funding allocated to small/large projects or proportionate to vote (50/50 model).	£10,000-50,000 budget

Sources: Money for Moray, 2018, Moray Council, 2023b, Just Transition, 2024, Moray Council, 2022c

5. Assessing PB in Central Java - Indonesia: The cases of Solo and Semarang

5.1. Introduction

Drawing on interviews with PB stakeholders and other data, this assessment of PB in the Central Java province case study cities of Solo and Semarang explores the relationship of PB design, PB embeddedness and PB Outcomes. First, the chapter examines differences in PB designs observed in Solo and Semarang. In line with the analytical framework, the focus is on deliberative quality in PB design in terms of inclusion, the quality of discussion, and the appropriateness of decision-making methods. I argue that Solo's PB design is more deliberative, owing to design adaptations that have widened inclusivity and promoted greater deliberation in comparison to Semarang. Next, the chapter explores PB embeddedness in the democratic systems across temporal, spatial and practice dimensions. Findings also suggest that Solo again demonstrates stronger evidence of embeddedness, due to a greater degree of alignment with other local participatory channels and a wider issue focus which embeds the role of PB in multiple thematic areas in the city. Finally, I evaluate PB outcomes, including the extent to which the mechanism has prompted visible change at the community level, and whether and how PB is perceived by its participants to have contributed to trust and satisfaction with local government. In doing so, I highlight key drivers of changes in attitudes and consider how they may relate to the design and embeddedness of PB in each case.

5.2. PB Design in Solo and Semarang

PB in Indonesia follows a standard format in many ways, owing to the prescriptive approach that the nationwide institutionalisation effort has taken. However, within broad similarities promoted by the highly structured methodology (see Table 4 and 5), there is space for local authorities to make incremental modifications. The following section assesses design differences found in Solo and Semarang's PB processes with consideration of three core features of deliberative democratic theory: inclusion, quality of discussion, and decision-making (see sections 2.4.1, 2.4.2, and 2.4.3).

5.2.1. Inclusion: notable variations within closed processes

A critical detail to note with PB in Solo and Semarang is that participation is limited to those that have been formally invited by a process steering committee in each location, formed of local elites

and representatives (Mayor of Surakarta, 2018, Semarang City Government, 2021). Therefore, the extent to which participation can reflect a truly diverse and representative sample of each municipality is inherently limited from the outset. However, as I will illustrate, the decisions taken within these parameters can still have material repercussions for the degree of inclusion within a closed process.

There are signs that the invite-only aspect of PB is leading to certain groups and types of people being prioritised by organisers. Several interviewees in each location confirmed that this is the case in their experience. A citizen and activist from Solo, who had attended a PB meeting in the past but is no longer invited, provided a particularly critical view highlighting the partisan nature of selection.

> *"... it's not fair because the participants were selected only because they were related to the [ruling] party... [I do not] participate in this Kelurahan [urban village] because [I'm] not invited..."* ***Solo Participant 10_Citizen***

This suggests a narrow interest group is being represented in PB with invitation guided more by political considerations than an interest in inclusive representation. The view that those close to the government were prioritised in attendance was corroborated by other interviewees. Several participants underlined that it was often the same people who participated, while others noted that it was often the same organisations or groups representing specific issues that joined.

PB participation is also limited to elites and those with a history of attending in Semarang, according to an interviewee who has observed, as well as advised communities on, PB in the municipality.

> *"So usually only the elite only and those who have experience in the meeting [attend]."* ***Semarang Participant 5_Mixed***

The emphasis on "elite" participants is consistent with findings from previous studies (Grillos, 2017), highlighting a tendency for PB to be dominated by those with established connections or a certain status. The comment also suggests an entrenched pattern of participation, where the same individuals, perceived to have the appropriate profile or attributes, are repeatedly invited. Such a viewpoint was also espoused by other interviewees.

One of the key reasons for the selection of the two cases was the observable differences in design that each possesses within the parameters that are allowed in the Indonesian PB process (see section 3.3.1.2). The various channels of participation in Solo's PB makes the process more diverse than other locations, according to the interviewee below who works for a CSO.

> *"You know…the representativeness for me is compared to other cities really really good because they can come to Kelurahan [urban village], Kecamatan [sub district], Kota [municipality] or to FGD [focus group discussion]. It's like they come to specialist issues, the sectoral, or they come to territorial, so it's like open."* ***Solo Participant 8_CSO***

The existence of a sectoral channel (FGD) in Solo's PB provides one more avenue for stakeholders to engage than is typically observed in Indonesia. Actors engaging on social issues have a forum especially established for them. While there is insufficient evidence to suggest that the sectoral channel has directly contributed to a more diverse participation in PB, it is plausible to suggest that it has helped, including through widening the circle of civil society representatives engaged in the process. Moreover, it could also go some way to explaining why interviewees in Solo noted a wider range of issues being discussed in PB than in Semarang. This could be contributing to the diverse outcomes, where PB has been understood to contribute to improvements in general well-being in the city (see section 5.4.1).

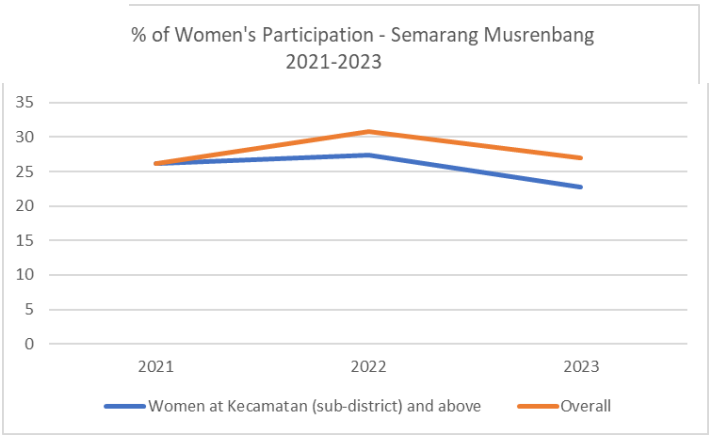
By contrast, Semarang lacks a sectoral channel but has introduced another unique design feature which aims to ensure more representation of women and children. The following interviewee, with diverse experience of PB, sheds light on the development of this initiative.

> *"Okay, so about the Sangpuan [women and children forum]– so starting 2019 where there were pilot projects in three different Kelurahans [urban villages] for this Sangpuan [women and children forum] at that time [it was] still [called] rembug warga perampuan [women residents discussion] – we started this because we felt that Musrenbang [PB] is masculine, it was not represented by the women so we urged…the women and children department to do the rembug perampuan [women residents discussion] to get the issues forwarded to the Musrenbang Kota [municipal level PB]…"* ***Semarang Participant 11_Mixed***

The women and children forum is an attempt by organisers of PB in Semarang to give added significance to the needs and wishes of women and children in the municipality. The process began in 2019 with piloting in three urban villages but became fully regulated across the municipality in 2021. Despite its relatively recent implementation, there is some evidence of its impact on inclusion. When asked if inclusion had changed at all over the last 5 years, several interviewees believed the situation had improved in Semarang, with the women and children forum noted as the reason by many of them. Interviewees felt that the new forum had led to a widening of topics being discussed beyond infrastructure, which they noted had historically been the predominant focus of Semarang's PB process as well as being a male dominated topic for discussion.

Furthermore, attendance data suggests that the women and children forum has coincided with a slight increase in women participating in the PB process overall over the last three years, increasing substantially in 2022 and falling in 2023 but still above 2021 levels (see figure 7). Notably, however, when analysis focuses more specifically on higher tiers of PB – Sub-district (Kecamatan) and Municipal (Kota) – a decrease was observed in 2023, after a slight increase in 2022. While this data is far from conclusive and indeed does span a period of intense instability during the pandemic, it does raise questions about how far reaching the impact has been on the empowerment of women due to the women and children forum thus far. Those participating in the forum at the urban village level surely appreciate having the opportunity to air views. However, there is the possibility that the forum may be indirectly contributing to a reduction in inclusion of women elsewhere in the process, where decisions of greater significance are being made.

Figure 7 Percentage of Women in PB Semarang



Source: Bappeda Semarang, 2023a

Beyond specific design features, local regulations provide formal guidance on how PB should be implemented in each city, issued at the municipal level and endorsed by the mayor. These documents formally outline the local PB design including who is responsible for each stage of the process, who should be invited at each stage of the process, and what the outputs are at each stage of the process.

In the last issued guidelines in Solo in 2018, there are references to the participation of women and vulnerable groups (elderly, children, poor families, pregnant women, and people with disabilities) (Mayor of Surakarta, 2018). Participation for these groups is "sought at" 30% and 10%, respectively (ibid). Meanwhile, there are other efforts to promote a diversity of perspectives through the encouragement of inviting religious leaders, business representatives, community organisations (ibid). Furthermore, several themes for discussion are specified: governance, economics, socio-cultural issues, and infrastructure. Meanwhile, in the most recent Semarang regulations, issued in 2022, there are similar points made regarding the types of stakeholder groups expected to be involved, with informal sector groups a notable additional difference compared to Solo (Semarang City Government, 2021). However, there are no specific references to quotas of vulnerable groups. Instead, representatives of the poor, persons with disabilities listed as invitees of the neighbourhood

level PB forum, and women delegates noted as a “must” at the sub-district level (ibid). Regardless of the specific formulation, it is evident that those drafting the guidelines are encouraging of at least a degree of diversity in the process.

The perspectives of interviewees provide further understanding of the level of inclusion. In Solo, several responds referred to the 30% quota for women during interviews. Often, they referred to this being a target they met with ease, as was the case with the below comments from a civil society representative.

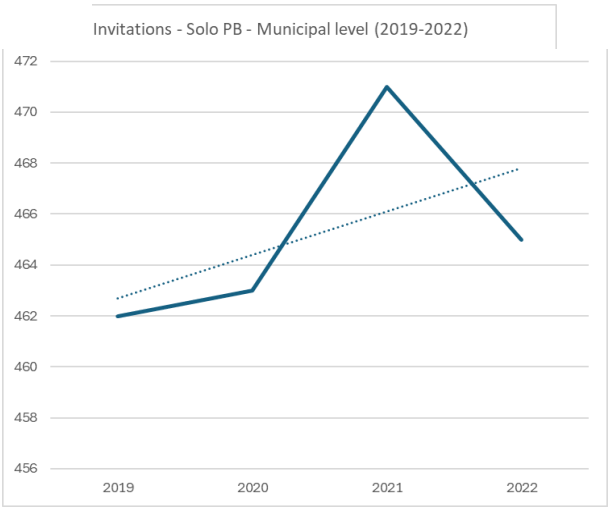
> *“Okay, so the diversity and the yeah the diversity and the participations are already regulated, so the 30% female but in reality actually it’s more because the number of females are more.”* ***Solo Participant 4_CSO***

The 30% target for women is in use and often it is being surpassed. This finding is encouraging for the gender mix of PB in Solo. Indeed, it is higher than what is evidenced in Semarang statistics (Bappeda Semarang, 2023a). Although there is a question of why the quota cannot be closer to 50% given natural occurring gender ratios in society.

Beyond questions of gender, there is also evidence of compliance with the regulations on other socio-economic characteristics. For instance, in 2022 there were 5 members from "vulnerable groups" attending the municipality-level PB after being invited (Bappeda Surakarta, 2023). While there was also an increase in the number of NGOs present in the same forum (up to 7 from 5 in 2019) (ibid). However, people with disabilities remain largely excluded from meaningful participation in PB, according to an activist that has participated in PB through multiple tiers and channels:

> *“…the [people with] disabilities…are not yet involved and their voices are not represented.”* ***Solo Participant 16_Mixed***

Figure 8 PB Municipality - Solo Invitation Statistics

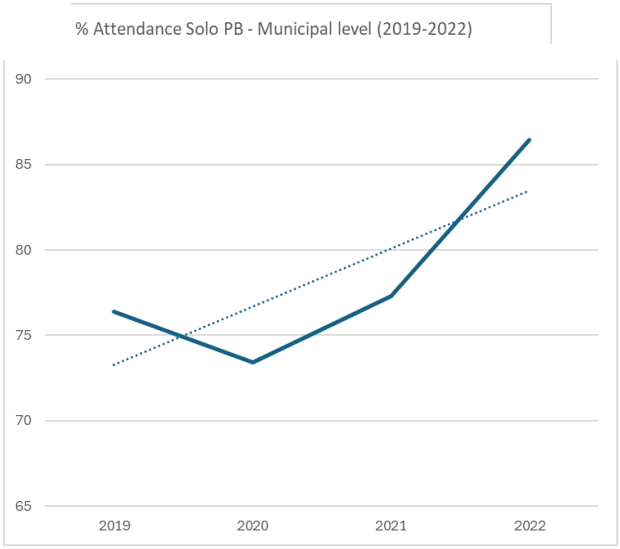


Source: Bappeda, Surakarta, 2023

People with disabilities do not currently have their views taken on board in PB in Solo, despite the form of regulated inclusion in Solo having a degree of success in diversifying attendance. Interestingly, the participation of people with disabilities was less regularly noted as a factor in Semarang than in Solo among interviewees – whether as something that was notably strong or

poor. This could mean that it's either less of a challenge to involve this identity group, or that interviewees were less sensitised to the importance of doing so.

Figure 9 PB Municipality - Solo Attendance Statistics

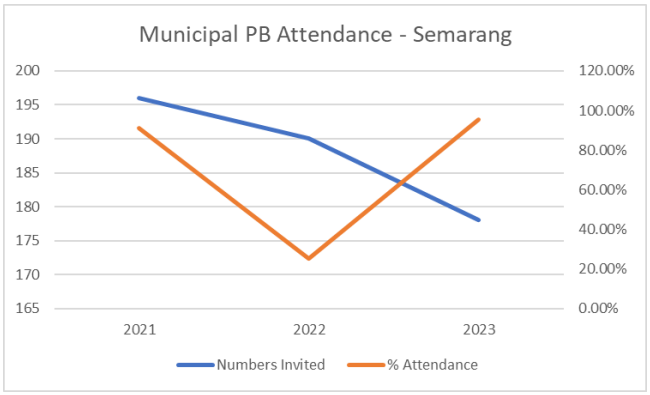


Source: ibid

Attendance data provides more insights into how representative or diverse PB is in both cities. In Solo, attendance lists for the municipal level during the period 2019-2022 was provided by its regional planning department. While in Semarang, overall attendance in each of the forums (from RT level up) for the period 2021-2023 was provided by its own regional planning department. As can be seen with Solo data (Figure 8, previous page), there has been an increasing trend of invitees to municipal PB in recent years. Furthermore, overall attendance has also been increasing, beginning at just over the 75% mark in 2019, before rising above the 85% mark by 2022 (see Figure 9).

Meanwhile, in Semarang, a substantial dip in attendance at municipal-level PB occurred in 2022, with approximately 25% of those invited attending (see Figure 10). Given the instability in recent years caused by the global pandemic, a dip in attendance is not particularly surprising. However, Semarang also performs less impressively than its Central Java neighbour when it comes to the numbers of invited guests at municipal level. These are also considerably lower in Semarang than in Solo, with numbers declining over a three-year period and continuing to decline post-pandemic. The data is suggestive of a decreasing circle of those included in the highest tier of PB in the city.

Figure 10 PB Municipality - Semarang Attendance Statistics



Source: Bappeda Semarang, 2023a

With considerations of evidence concerning inclusion in PB design now complete, the next section examines relevant evidence regarding quality of discussion.

5.2.2. Quality of Discussion: broadly comparable and routinised, local level most vibrant discussions

An enabler of discussion quality is adequate time and space to conduct dialogue (see section 2.4.2). A review of the PB regulations in Semarang revealed that between 100 mins and two hours is allocated to discussion in each of the PB tiers *below* the municipal level, which does not have a specified discussion duration outlined in the regulations (Semarang City Government, 2021). By contrast, there are no references to duration in the Solo regulations (Mayor of Surakarta, 2018). While the regulated approach to discussion duration may differ, there are broad similarities observed in how research participants described the time allotted to discussion during the PB process in each location. The multi-level design of PB leads to a process of filtering of ideas from very local level up to the municipal level, which leads to a significant amount of time discussing issues when taken in aggregate, according to an interviewee who has engaged with PB at various levels.

> *"Yeah we have enough time and space for the discussion because of the good mechanism of levelling and filtering. So, like for example from the bottom we have 7…this time we have 792 ideas so then like 130 for the infrastructure, 100 for social, etc. and then in the second pre-Musrenbang [block level PB] it's all narrowed down… into 785, then everything…so the levelling and the filtering makes it efficient, so we have enough time in the end."* ***Solo Participant 2_Mixed***

The sense is that the total time allotted to discussions is sufficient discussion because of the filtering process of projects at each stage which ensures an efficient use of time. The benefits of filtering for discussion time were also noted by a civil society representative in Semarang:

> *"Yeah it's sufficient because there are some different layers, levels – the needs in the rembug warga [neighbourhood level discussion] as the smallest unit – of course they've got so many discussions but that's around 2 hours and still enough, and these priorities are taken to Kelurahan [urban village] but will not be too long because already filtered, and in the higher level – in Kecamatan [sub district] two hours maybe so sufficient because already the super filtered."* ***Semarang Participant 8_CSO***

Filtering aids efficiency of discussions and keeps the duration to an appropriate length. While some levels of discussion may be brief this is because the issues and projects needing to be discussed have been reduced in previous levels of the process. The filtering set-up means that discussions are

more vibrant at the local level, as the below comments show – first from a local authority representative in Semarang, and secondly from a local level participant in Solo:

> *"In the pre-Musrenbang the quality of discussion is more dynamic and then because people fight for their aspirations."* ***Semarang Participant 13_LocalAuthority***

> *"...in RW [block] and RT [neighbourhood] level it's very detailed – the discussions are very detailed because [it concerns] every problem in the houses or in the blocks."* ***Solo Participant 11***

Forums held at the very local level can be among the most active of the PB process although this does not always mean deliberation is occurring. Deficits in discussion quality include superficiality of just listing ideas and not debating them, and dialogue focused on complaining rather than finding solutions to problems as the following comments from individuals closely involved in PB in each city highlight.

> *"So, what she knows from the Musling [block discussion] is that it's not really debating, because only listing down to take to Kelurahan [urban village level]."* ***Solo Participant 12_Citizen***

> *"They just talk to each other about the government as an [obstruction]."* ***Semarang Participant 5_Mixed***

While the structure and time allocation for PB discussions appear to be generally adequate, the quality of dialogue varies, influenced by how well the filtering process is implemented and whether the participants are engaging in meaningful deliberation or simply going through the motions.

As I will explain in section 5.3.1, the comments relating to government obstruction may be linked more to poor compliance in delivering PB more widely, than a specific design flaw, with evidence that suggests several urban villages are not actively promoting participation of communities in the process. However, for the time being, the assessment will move to consideration of decision-making aspects of PB design.

5.2.3. Decision-making: Top-down priorities have precedence – some mitigation via design features in Solo

For decisions to be appropriately deliberative, they need to be informed by the best available evidence and justified with appeals to the common good via an exchange of public reasons (see section 1.5 and 2.4.3). Notably, positive views on the quality of information in Semarang were less apparent among interviewees than those with similar perceptions found in Solo. One factor affecting

the quality of information that decisions are based on are the standard of project proposals submitted, which are not always of good quality according to one interviewee from the local authority.

> *"But unfortunately sometimes the proposals are not really problem based from the community....in the RW [block level discussion] it doesn't reflect the diversity [of the community]. So the ideas or the proposals are often based on assumptions. It's not based on the real data."* ***Semarang Participant 3_LocalAuthority***

Projects being put forward in the Semarang PB process are not always backed up by specific evidence of local needs. Making proposals without supporting evidence appears to be occurring despite the regulations noting the importance at each tier of PB of referring to local demographics, data on urban poor, and various planning documents, including the district strategic plan (Semarang City Government, 2021). In addition to substandard proposals, interviewees also noted that various materials used to inform deliberations – including proposals – are not always provided to participants in ways conducive to full consideration, as the following comments from a civil society representative note.

> *"So what often happens is first – the materials are not given before the meeting, so they don't have enough time to read and the second is even when it is given then the materials are too much for them to read, so the community cannot comprehend."* ***Semarang Participant 5_CSO***

Late provision of supporting documents places the PB process in Semarang at a disadvantage, limiting time for proper review of proposals and other supporting evidence. This poses challenges to the prospects that final decisions will be justified and informed. In contrast, various sources are being effectively leveraged in Solo, particularly at the local level, according to an interviewee representing a CSO:

> *"So...documents used in the lowest level of Musrenbang [PB] is the strategic plan – or renstramas...And then....family data...Economic empowerment which is focused on women...and youth. Both poor women and teenagers..."* ***Solo Participant 4_CSO***

The lowest level that the interviewee refers to is the block level. In this arena there are three specific sources of evidence that informs discussions – a strategic plan, family data (or household data), and economic data. The comments also algin with what is stated in the PB regulations in Solo that refer to village poverty data profiles as well as the strategic plan as key documents for the process (Mayor of Surakarta, 2018).

The multi-tier design of PB means that decisions about funding allocations can be made at each level of the process – block, neighbourhood, urban village, sub-district, and municipality (and beyond), according to the scale and scope of the proposal (Mayor of Surakarta, 2018, Semarang City Government, 2021). Some smaller projects can be funded locally, but invariably proposals are put forward for consideration at the municipal level. National and provincial priorities guide proceedings, as noted by an experienced PB stakeholder below.

> *"Okay, yes so for example the national theme of 2023 is sustainable and inclusive economic growth, and then the province will also have its own theme. So …the Musrenbang [PB] in the Kota [municipal] level should refer to these two themes."* ***Solo Participant 3_Mixed***

The implication is that project proposals by communities that do not align with these two themes will not be funded. This understanding was shared by other participants. The importance of alignment with wider priorities was also noted in Semarang, although without explicit reference themes, as the following response from a local authority representative exemplify.

> *"…when the proposals go to Kota [municipal level PB] we need to consider, the first is the budget – how much it is; The second – is it in line with the master plan? And number three – is the document complete? Is it in line with the regulations in that area?"* ***Semarang Participant 13_LocalAuthority***

The term "master plan" refers to wider priorities that must be adhered to for a project to be approved by the municipal PB. In both cases then, there appears to be evidence of what has been described as "cherry picking", where local authorities are more likely to support initiatives proposed in participatory processes that they personally support or that are fiscally easy to implement (Font et al., 2018). Moreover, the mention of complete documents underlines another aspect that applicants need to ensure is correct to maximise their prospects of success.

In addition to the added weight given to government priorities in decision-making, elites play an active role in each specific PB event. It is usually local leadership that has the final say in resolving disagreements and making final decisions during PB deliberations, as the below comments from experienced PB participants in both cities show.

> *"…when there's a disagreement …usually the Kelurahan [urban village] head will lead."* ***Semarang Participant 1_CSO***

> *"[Decisions are taken] Usually by [the head of the urban village]."* ***Solo Participant 14_Citizen***

Rather than decisions being made through consensus or by vote, it is the urban village leadership that invariably retains decision-making power at this level of the PB process. While officials at higher levels of the PB process are also exerting their authority in decisions, according to an interviewee in Semarang who has engaged with PB in various capacities:

> *"For example, when in the Kecamatan [sub-district] level we already select and classify the programmes to go to which government agency....For example, to make public space it should go to the environment agency, for example, but no – usually they just cross out because and they say, "this is not our authority"...So in Kota [municipal] level the issues are not there."* ***Semarang Participant 10***

The evidence suggests that projects selected are later being rejected due to being deemed to be outside the competence of the agencies they are allocated to. The projects are therefore removed from further consideration due to perceived unsuitability. Inconsistencies in the project approvals process are an issue in Solo, as the following comments from a local authority representative in Solo highlight.

> *"...the inconsistency, for example in one of the sectors here – health, for example they've got...in the discussions they've come up with 10 programmes for the priority and then 8 are approved for the budgeting...in the planning, but then in the budget it comes up like 9 programmes, so this is inconsistency."* ***Solo Participant 1_LocalAuthority***

Whether due to error or more nefarious reasons linked to elite preferences, final project approvals do not always reflect the perceived outcomes of deliberation. Instead, ultimate decisions rest with politicians and authorities with responsibilities for finalising the budget.

In both locations then, there are several conditions that proposals need to meet to be funded – alignment with wider government priorities, compliance with expectations around data and process, and conforming to the interests of agencies and other elites at various levels. While alignment with government priorities, and procedural requirements are somewhat understandable, there was a widely shared sentiment among interviewees that these conditions were invariably used to provide spurious reasons for proposal rejections, such as the judgement that projects have been submitted to the 'wrong' agency. The prevailing view was that the process is both complex and non-transparent, leading to requirements not being clear to applicants, but also decisions being taken that do not conform with participants understanding of the rules, leaving a sense of unfairness.

Design adaptations have been put in place in each location, to varying degrees, that could have the potential to mitigate some of the above challenges. The strategic plan is referenced in the

regulations of both cities as a document that is used to help guide deliberations and decision-making. The below series of comments from a civil society representative in Solo outline how it is developed in the city and its content.

> *"Tools that we use in making the renstramas [strategic plan] 1) social mapping… to analyse the root of the problems. There are 5 issues that we map in every blocks: health, infrastructure, education and culture, economics, and…. house settlement. When we get the result it will be forwarded to Kelurahan [urban village] ….to get the overall problems and especially about the waterways and roads…From the Kelurahan [urban village] then we analyse using…venn diagram or venn chart to analyse the problems and then to forward this to the right organisations or right agency, so the problem goes to which agencies or which sector….And they identify the needs …to overcome the problem.* ***Solo Participant 4_CSO***
>
> *"[With social mapping] we….train…the people in Kelurahan [the urban village] to analyse and assess the problems and the roots of the problems."* ***Solo Participant 4_CSO***
>
> *"[For the strategic plan we] worked together with the facilitator in Kelurahan [urban village], [to conduct] the PPA…the participatory poverty assessment…"* ***Solo Participant 4_CSO***
>
> *"…every block there are 6 issues that will be taken [to the next tier of PB] – 5 should be taken from the renstramas – the strategic plan, plus one extra.* ***Solo Participant 4_CSO***

The Strategic Plan is a technical document that is developed through various types of cross-cutting and participatory analyses, which involve people from the local area. Further evidence confirms this understanding (Jalatera Foundation, 2017). Notably, the plan has particular importance at block level PB, where there is an expectation that many of the plan's priorities will be advanced to the urban village level PB stage in Solo. This is documented in the official Solo PB regulations, which also note the importance of identifying other issues that are believed to be important but not reflected in the Strategic Plan (Mayor of Surakarta, 2018). As a result of this link between strategic plans and PB, more proposals are reflective of evidence, positioning deliberations and eventual decisions to be better informed.

In Semarang, the following set of comments from representatives of civil society and the local authority respectively suggest that while there is a Strategic Plan process in the city, it is not developed in a participatory way. Moreover, it is not normally the focus of discussions during Semarang's PB process.

> *"And even yesterday there is a forum…for government….For Renstra [strategic plan]….Document of 5 years – but the concept of forum is like a seminar…And. *Laughs*. So*

*there are three speakers maybe – three speakers – they speak about some materials, and then there is discussion – discussion also like the participants only two or three. *Laughs*. So it's not like asking input or proposal something like that – no."* ***Semarang Participant 14_CSO***

"But in Musrenbang [PB] maybe it's mainly discussed what is not in the Renstra [strategic plan], but what's happening in the community during that time." ***Semarang Participant 13_Local Authority***

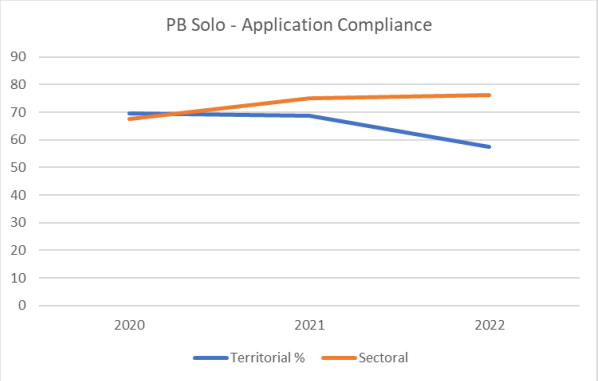
A less rigorous or considered process to developing the strategic plans appears to be the norm in Semarang, and the plan plays a less significant role in the PB process there, thereby reducing its role in strengthening the evidence base for locally relevant proposals in Semarang's PB.

Beyond strategic plans and variations in their importance to PB in each city, the Synchronisation Forum in Solo is an attempt to better reconcile the bottom-up requests of PB participants with the priorities of governments, as explained by a PB participant below.

"[The role of the Synchronisation Forum is to]…synchronise the policy and the targets of the government with what the community asks [for]…" ***Solo Participant 13_Citizen***

From observing a synchronisation forum event first-hand in Solo, I came to understand that the forum brings together different stakeholders to discuss, categorise and refine proposals, and make decisions on their compliance with governmental priorities. This design feature – mentioned repeatedly throughout Solo's PB regulations (Mayor of Surakarta, 2018) – is in place to overcome one of the earlier described shortcomings in which PB risks being an overly top-down and driven by the priorities of the government. As the above interviewee and others noted, however, this is still a work in progress that is having only limited success in raising the voices of communities thus far. Indeed, as municipal statistics show (Figure 11), recent years have shown contrasting compliance records for Territorial (or traditional PB) and Sectoral (FGD) PB project requests. In this context, compliance refers to the number of proposals adjudged to have been submitted to the correct channel. The data shows that while there has been a moderate increase in proposals via FGD being found to be appropriately submitted, there has been

Figure 11 PB Application Compliance Solo (2020-2022)



Source: Bappeda, Surakarta, 2023

a decline in the percentage of proposals requested via traditional PB considered to be acceptable. Such a finding suggests there is more work to do for the synchronisation forum to be promoting greater responsiveness to community needs, given that it has most recently reduced the number of community-level proposals being considered for approval. Nevertheless, while the forum is imperfect in Solo, there is no specific synchronisation forum in Semarang.

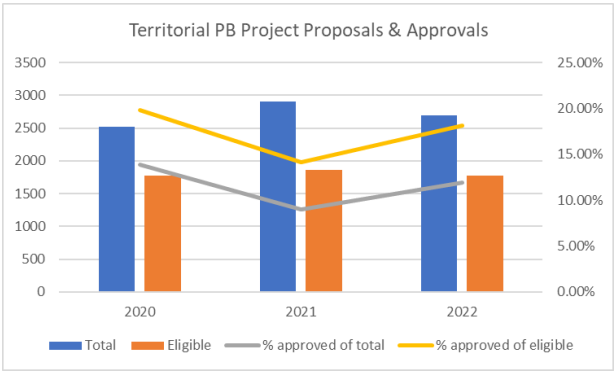
By contrast, there is less evidence of specific design innovation regarding the decision stage in Semarang. As was already outlined in section 5.2.1, while the women and children forum was primarily set-up to deal with issues of voice and representation, the forum has had positive impact on the types of projects being approved. The women and children forum has led to more genuine projects (that really exist) being approved, as the following comments from an individual with experience at multiple levels of PB underline.

> *"...so before Sangpuan [women and children forum] there are not many real projects, so the budget is used for different kinds of projects which is like the projects that do not exist."*
> ***Semarang Participant 11_Mixed***

Given the limited scope of the women and children forum in the scheme of the overall PB process in Semarang, it would be unrealistic to suggest the design feature has materially increased the approval rates at the municipal level. However, the forum may have played an indirect contributory role through increased accountability and expectations being placed on local authorities to deliver a responsive process.

A final aspect of decision-making worthy of attention is the official data regarding the projects that are approved. The rate of project approval is a useful metric to consider in the Indonesian context because of the concerns already raised about PB being insufficiently responsive to bottom-up priorities, as well as the view that spurious reasons are provided to reject proposals. Indeed, as highlighted previously (see section 1.5), scholars have underlined the importance of approvals as an indicator of PB effectiveness in Indonesia (Feruglio and Rifai, 2017).

Figure 12 PB Proposals & Approvals: Solo Territorial Channel

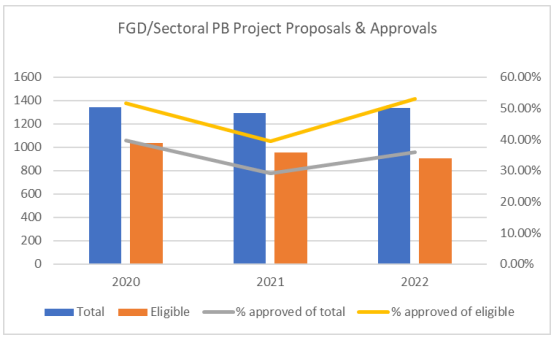


Source: Bappeda Surakarta, 2023

While the period of data that was made available by both local authorities differed (Solo 2020-2022, district level results; Semarang 2018-2023, overall results), the data is revealing, for differing reasons.

Among eligible projects for territorial PB in Solo, approximately 15-20% were approved over a three-year period ending in 2022 (see Figure 12, previous page). While of projects deemed eligible for the FGD channel, approvals broadly range 40-50% over a three-year period, with the highest approval percentage reaching just over 50% in 2022 (see Figure 13). The data show that more applications are made through the territorial PB in Solo, but that a higher proportion of proposals from the FGD channel get approved. While the cause of the gap between these rates of approval is not clear, it is plausible that it could be explained by participants of the FGD channel being more attuned to government priorities than participants in the territorial channel, thereby pitching ideas that are more likely to attract the support of decision-makers. Another possible factor is that FGD participants may have greater capacity to provide supporting evidence for their proposals, which would aid the chances of the ideas being approved. Regardless of the differences in the data between the two channels, the approval rates in each could be described as relatively modest, as it is apparent from the data that many people who seek support in Solo's PB process do not receive it. This finding was corroborated through the interviews which provided several examples where participants noted examples of projects not funded.

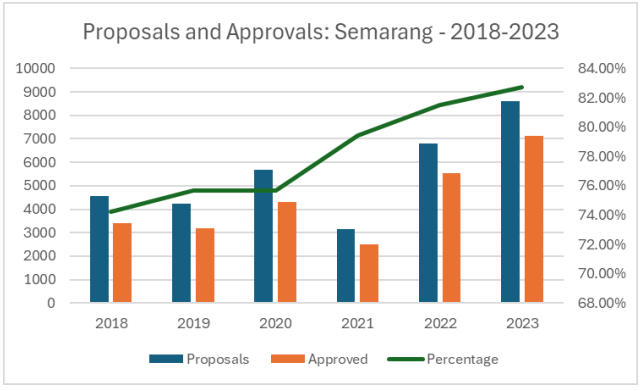
Figure 13 PB Proposals & Approvals: Solo FGD Channel



Source: Bappeda Surakarta, 2023

In contrast, Semarang's approval percentages are much higher, increasing from approximately 74% in 2018 and reaching over 82% in 2023 (see Figure 14). Some argue that these statistics are emblematic of a comparatively stronger economic position for Semarang which have positioned the city to outperform other cities in providing for its community, as the below comments from a local authority staff member illustrate.

Figure 14 PB Proposals & Approvals: Semarang



Source: Bappeda Semarang, 2023b

> *"It's actually based on our fiscal [situation] at the city and in Semarang it's loose or flexible, so we can select more flexibly and maybe we compare to other areas they're only 20-30% [approval of projects] because for the staff is too much, but in Semarang the approval is up to 70-75% and we prioritise based on the urgency…our budget is flexible because for the staff it's only 30% - that's all the salary, operational cost and 70% for the community [via approved PB projects]…"* ***Semarang Participant 4_LocalAuthority***

Stronger economic conditions provide the Semarang local authority with the capacity to fund more projects than other locations. However, contradicting the above account, Semarang interviewees had notably less positive perceptions towards decision-making than in Solo. Indeed, several interviewees believed approval rates to be lower than the official figures suggest and provided various reasons for the notable difference in statistics between the two cities. These included the suggestion that the Semarang figures may have been presented in a way that ignores proposals that have already been filtered out in previous stages (and therefore considered ineligible), or the suggestion that the overall approval rate was weighted more heavily in favour of approvals that had been made at the urban village level, where more project applications are submitted. Indeed, one local authority member suggested that municipal level PB approvals were closer to 25-30%, which would support this theory.

The above findings suggests that the headline figures may not be entirely accurate, a position which is further supported by the perception shared by one interviewee active in civil society that local authorities in Semarang participate in information manipulation when reporting their data (see section 5.4.2).

Aside from the above differences in overall approval percentages between the case studies, another notable data point concerns the year 2021 in both cities. According to the data, the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the rates of projects being funded by PB in both locations. In Solo, fewer projects were funded in 2021 (the budget year corresponding with the peak of the pandemic) than in 2020, despite their being a higher number more projects requested in 2021 than had been in the previous year. As a result, the percentage of approvals dips in 2021. In Semarang, both the number of project proposals and approvals were significantly down in 2021 (almost half the amount of the previous year), while the percentage of approvals increased from the previous year's total but from a smaller pool of proposals.

Notably, proposals and approvals rebounded in both cities in 2022 to near (or beyond in the case of Semarang) pre-pandemic levels, suggesting that any reduction in the responsiveness to participants was temporary during the pandemic. Differences in data are indicative of a different approach to

decision making during the pandemic. In Solo, a reduction in approved projects alongside relatively stable numbers of applications in both territorial and FGD channels suggests that while PB was still being administered as close to normal as possible, decision-makers were not selecting as many projects to fund at the final stage.

Whereas in Semarang, an overall reduction in both applications and approvals suggests that PB was not being administered at the usual levels during this time. In some ways, it could be said that the result was the same in both locations – fewer projects getting funded via PB. However, it is important to note that proposals not approved in a previous year are among those prioritised in the following year according to the regulations of both municipalities (Mayor of Surakarta, 2018, Semarang City Government, 2021). Within this context, Semarang's approach to decision-making in 2021 can be seen as more limiting to participants than that the approach taken by Solo, as the approach of the former takes proposals out of consideration entirely.

5.3. PB Embeddedness in Solo and Semarang

The following sections assess differences of PB embeddedness in Solo and Semarang's PB processes with respect to the three dimensions of embeddedness – temporal, spatial and practices. The highly structured governance set-up of Indonesia previously outlined (see section 4.2.1.1), provides a similar foundational context in which efforts to ensure the embeddedness of PB have occurred in the municipalities of Solo and Semarang. Moreover, as neighbouring locations there are also various common socio-cultural factors which can support or undermine embeddedness prospects. Nevertheless, there are differences in the way that PB in each location has been established and integrated in the local democratic system.

5.3.1. Temporal Embeddedness: frequent PB processes, mixed compliance and alignment with system

This section explores the temporal embeddedness of PB, focusing on the frequency in which PB processes are held, and the extent to which this temporality of PB can be understood as being aligned with other aspects of the local political sphere such as the workings of government bureaucracy and other policymaking mechanisms (see section 2.5).

A key feature of PB in relation to Indonesia's local democratic system is how closely intertwined the two are structurally. As noted (see section 4.2.1), PB is an administrative requirement enshrined in law, a point emphasised by interviewees in Solo and Semarang.

"And [PB] implementation is based on the regulation … it's something that should be there, it should be in place every year…" ***Solo Participant 3_Mixed***

"… Musrenbang [PB] is only a forum to legalise. So the government holds or organises this Musrenbang [PB] because it should take place…to legalise the spending… It's regulation, formal to spend the money. To spend the public budget." ***Semarang Participant 5_CSO***

PB must occur annually in every administrative region for local government budgets to be approved by the provincial and national governments. This is formally institutionalised by nationwide legislation. This requirement provides a firm legislative position for temporal embeddedness to take root.

Given that PB has been in existence across Indonesia for approximately 20 years, one would expect a large degree of alignment between PB's functioning and the day-to-day operations of the local authority. Indeed, if alignment was not present at all it would be difficult to see how the mechanism could have survived this length of time. As noted in chapter four, this alignment extends to the realm of fiscal concerns. The administrative apparatus that facilitates PB – the community empowerment institutions (LPMK) (see section 4.2.1.1) - is funded from the regional budget of the municipality, as the following comments from a PB participant at urban village level imply.

"And these meetings are facilitated – before [PB funding] meetings are not facilitated." ***Solo Participant 14***

Beyond funding specific projects selected during PB, the funding earmarked for PB from the regional budget provides the community empowerment institutions with the resources to carry out basic functions such as local coordination, which positions them to deliver social services at the local level (see section 4.2.1.1).

In Semarang, a similar dynamic of PB budget facilitating general administrative work is also apparent, as these comments from a civil society representative help explain.

"…the amount of the money [from the budget used to fund PB] was used by the Kelurahan [urban village] for routines and operations like – routine programmes … ***Semarang Participant 6_CSO***

The PB portion of the regional budget not only funds community projects but also funds the routine work and business of local governance stakeholders, such as the community empowerment institutions and the urban village officials. PB is inextricably linked to local governance and policy delivery in both locations, with activities at the very local level and the wider municipality contingent

on both its existence and its annual occurrence according to the current institutional framework.

However, within the apparent institutional cohesiveness in both locations, the extent to which implementation reflects the official regulations differs between Solo and Semarang, as the below series of comments from two individuals close to PB in Semarang elaborate upon.

> *"So in other Kelurahans [urban villages] it is LPMKs [community empowerment institutions] are only implementers because it is regulated that in the Balaikota [Mayoral] regulations that there should be organisations like this in Kelurahan [urban village] who will…empower the communities. So they give trainings and they empower the communities…In other Kelurahans [urban villages] sometimes they say that the other LMPKs [community empowerment institutions] are not active….Maybe 90% not active."* ***Semarang Participant 11_Mixed***
>
> *"[The local budget]…can be split into the number of the RWs [blocks] all the same amounts, so the priorities will be met from the budget."* ***Semarang Participant 6_LocalAuthority***
>
> *"…this is a Kelurahan [urban village] decision because the LPMK [community empowerment institutions] is not active so [the urban village leaders go] "okay how many RWs [blocks] we have" then split [the budget equally rather than based on specific PB requests]."* ***Semarang Participant 11_Mixed***

The community empowerment institutions are required to represent community interests in the PB process, according to the official regulations (see sub-section 4.2.1.1). However, in Semarang, these entities are often inactive resulting in processes in which budget allocations are arbitrarily set by government, rather than in response to a PB process occurring at the urban village level. In effect, PB is not taking place in Semarang in a high proportion of urban villages. This is a less positive sign of temporal embeddedness for the Semarang case, as it suggests a more superficial commitment to frequent PB processes at this level of governance. Several urban village PB processes are occurring on paper but not in practice, reducing the ability of local people to participate in PB in Semarang. This finding provides new context for suggestions of government obstruction at the urban village level noted previously in Semarang (see section 5.2.2).

However, it is important to note that Semarang's status as a significantly larger geographical location than Solo could go some way to explaining such challenges regarding delivery consistency and regulatory compliance in Semarang. Indeed, there is evidence that service experience diminishes the further recipients live from municipal centres (Kopczewska, 2013).

In contrast to Semarang, while implementation was not always consistent in Solo, there was no

evidence that arbitrary decisions on funding were being taken at the urban village level in the absence of meaningful PB processes.

As outlined in the analytical framework (see chapter 2), embeddedness in the democratic system extends beyond activities of the local government to whether and how PB relates to wider features of the system such as other participation channels and other modes of securing resources for local priorities.

The evidence of alignment between PB and other channels are mixed in each of the two locations. One specific example is the role of corporate social responsibility (CSR), in which private sources also contribute to local community projects. CSR is formally acknowledged as a source of funding for PB projects in the PB regulations of both municipalities (Mayor of Surakarta, 2018, Semarang City Government, 2021).

CSR funding can provide valuable funds for various initiatives requested by communities that would otherwise go unfunded when rejected for funding from PB, as the following comments from an individual who has engaged with PB at multiple levels in Solo notes.

> *"[we had] a bank [provide] for waste management and then a company for something else… we had a motorbike from the rotary club for a mobile library. Actually all that [type of activity] goes to CSR and the other, it goes to Musrenbang [PB] first. But we have the list so when it is not funded we can get from the others."* ***Solo Participant 15_Mixed***

A structured approach to budgeting means that the private sector can provide funds for social services when it is not possible via PB. A similar dynamic was also found in Semarang, whereby CSR is filling vital gaps in local resourcing to respond to local demand, as the following statement from a local level official noted.

> *"…[we] are active not only in Musrenbang [PB] and to get the budget from APBD [regional budget] because maybe it's not enough so we also find the CSR because around here there are hotels, restaurants and cafes. For example, for stunting at that time we've got from Indonesian bank for 40m [IDR]."* ***Semarang Participant 7_LocalAuthority***

To fund work to counteract stunting (low height for age as caused by malnutrition (WHO, 2015)) in the local area, funding was secured from a local bank to cover costs that could not be covered from the PB budget. This ensured that the work could go ahead despite budget shortfalls. While the above comments are less explicit than the previous on this matter in Solo, the implication from both is that PB is the primary and preferred channel for securing resources, and that CSR provides an alternative

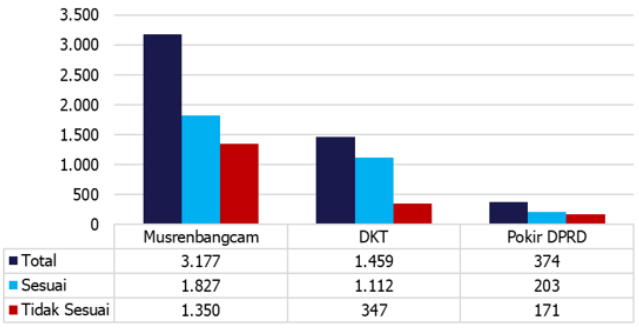
means when required. This dynamic suggests that private sectors in both municipalities have slotted into the annual cycle of PB as alternative sources of funding.

According to interviewees in both locations, other routes to securing resources for local priorities include direct lobbying for funding to political stakeholders, such as the Mayor and the House of Representatives. The House of Representatives (DPRD) in both locations are empowered to propose initiatives during PB (Mayor of Surakarta, 2018, Semarang City Government, 2021). These stakeholders propose ideas from specific interest groups, as noted by the individual below who has both participated in and facilitated PB events at municipal level.

> *"...the process is not different because both still go through the [PB] process but the proposal from the house of representatives [are] usually from certain groups..."* ***Solo Participant 3_Mixed***

As was regularly stated by interviewees in both locations, the initiatives proposed by DPRD are often arrived at following direct advocacy from specific interest groups outside of the PB process. Despite the high status of the DPRD, the regulations still require these suggestions to be made during PB processes. Indeed, as figure 15 shows, the local authority also incorporates these into their internal statistics relating to the PB process overall (see: "Pokir DPRD" column). Moreover, not all proposals are accepted from this source (*Tidak Sesuai* means not approved).

Figure 15 Synchronisation Process Statistics - PB Solo



	Musrenbangcam	DKT	Pokir DPRD
Total	3.177	1.459	374
Sesuai	1.827	1.112	203
Tidak Sesuai	1.350	347	171

Source: Bappeda Surakarta, 2023

Accessing special grants from the mayor is another avenue that interviewees in both locations regularly cited, where proposals are made directly to the elected leader of the municipality. This method is referred to as a special activity in Solo's PB regulations, and the activities are formally agreed during PB (Mayor of Surakarta, 2018), as the following comments from a local official in Solo confirm.

> *"...usually the community makes... this proposal, but they need this idea or this project needs to go to the Musrenbang [PB] first..."* ***Solo Participant 2_LocalAuthority***

Again, despite the power of mayors, special activities are advanced through the PB process in Solo. While special mayoral grants are not specifically cited in the Semarang PB regulations (Semarang

City Government, 2021), local actors there remain conscious of the formal role that PB has in the local system, as the following comment from a civil society representative note.

> *"Okay – it will be more effective or faster [to get support] through the short-cut, but we cannot use this for all issues, and we still respect the [PB] process, so we need to go through the [PB] process."* ***Semarang Participant 11_CSO***

While securing the support from the mayor for an initiative can ensure preferential treatment, the importance of PB in the local system is understood. Across each of the above examples– CSR, DPRD and special grant from mayors – it is evident that various other channels for advancing local priorities have been oriented around PB as the formal gateway or fulcrum for raising concerns and seeking resources in the municipal budgeting process each year. I will return to this subject later (see section 5.3.3), when examining whether and how informal attitudes and behaviours complicate the formal primacy of PB in the local democratic system.

While the examples explored thus far suggest that PB is at the centre of a highly structured participatory system in each case study, the examples are illustrative of a one-way relationship in which other participation channels are officially subservient to PB. The incorporation of other decision-makers or funding sources into the PB process serves to underline the centrality of PB to local governance in the case studies. However, true alignment in embeddedness terms involves mutually reinforcing mechanisms. It is questionable whether the examples explored thus far are evident of a deep alignment or harmony, as is required for embeddedness (Bussu et al., 2022). The nature of the relationships between PB, CSR, DPRD and grants from mayor appear to be of a pragmatic or transactional nature in which regulations have been formalised to reflect the reality on the ground.

In Solo, the clearest marker of deeper alignment was seen in how organisers and civil society organisations had moved to a situation in which the PB process was required to be informed by the priorities that had been outlined in the Strategic Plan (Mayor of Surakarta, 2018). As detailed, this plan is informed by participatory analysis tools at each urban village level (see section 5.2.3). This approach ensures local people can help develop the medium-term priorities covering a 5-year period for each block in an urban village. The expectation that 5 of 6 priorities selected by the urban village PB are from the strategic plan ensures that proposed projects are more evidence-based, as well as more relevant and responsive to local needs. Crucially, the linkage of the strategic plan and PB in Solo better positions the strategic plans of each block to be implemented and put into action through funding that can be secured through PB. As a result, each mechanism is both supporting and benefiting from the work of the other. In contrast, this alignment between PB and strategic plan

was less apparent in Semarang (see section 5.3.1). While the strategic plan is referenced as a document to be referred to during the PB process in Semarang, there is no formal expectation that priorities outlined in the document be selected as proposals to be prioritised during PB (Semarang City Government, 2021), thereby making alignment between these two mechanisms more loose. It is plausible to suggest that without this link the strategic plans are less likely to be delivered, thereby weakening both the plan and PB in Semarang.

A final consideration regarding alignment in the democratic system in Solo and Semarang concerns the role of official government complaint mechanisms. As noted previously, complaint mechanisms in Indonesia funnel concerns raised by citizens from social media and official government websites directly to civil servants to be addressed (see section 4.3.1). These mechanisms were among the most referenced by interviewees when considering prominent modes of participating in their localities. The complaint mechanism facilitates year-round online inputs for improvement from local people, which the local authority is responsible for putting into action, as the following from an official in Solo explain.

> *"Okay, there are different channels of communicating ...with the authorities. The digital way is [where] people can give complaints and...also suggestions, and then it's the administration then who will filter and then forward that to the related agencies. And ...they need to respond to this.... [within] 24 hours."* ***Solo Participant 5_LocalAuthority***

The mechanism is a more direct way of raising concerns to the local authority than PB, and as the comments show, suggestions go directly to relevant government departments for consideration. Given how PB and the complaint mechanism both deal with problem solving in the local area, and participation in the complaint mechanism is open to anybody with access to the internet, it is conceivable that PB could leverage this other channel to be more inclusive. The complaint mechanism has the added benefit as being continually active and therefore accessible at any point in the year. However, PB does not currently have any relationship with the complaint mechanism in Solo. The same is also the case in Semarang, where one interviewee actively suggested that greater alignment between PB and the complaints mechanism could be beneficial.

> *"... Musrenbang [PB] should come at the end. After all the discussions, after the digital way [complaints mechanism], and all, and then Musrenbang [PB] is the end of the tunnel where all the ideas are already listed and what the priorities should be."* ***Semarang Participant 5_CSO***

Greater alignment between PB and the complaints mechanism could make for a more inclusive and

dynamic process in which ideas generated across the city via different channels are aggregated and deliberated upon in an augmented PB process. This appears to be a missed opportunity for alignment in the participatory system, which may be partly a result of the differing temporal dimensions that each mechanism has – PB being held once annually, and the complaint mechanism accessible throughout the year.

5.3.2. Spatial Embeddedness: wider issue focus in Solo, mixed findings regarding connection to civil society

This section explores the spatial embeddedness of PB, focusing on its positioning in the local governance framework, the range of issues it addresses, as well as how it connects to and/or relates with the local democratic system. The relationship of PB with civil society more broadly is also an important aspect of this dimension (see section 2.5).

In both cases, PB operates as a multi-tier structure in which separate forums deal with issues of different size and scope, as well as being resourced by different budgets (Tables 4 and 5; Chapter 4). Consequently, PB can be understood as a mechanism that is multi-level in nature.

The multi-tier dynamic is important to consider further, as it has potential ramifications for the prospects for effectiveness of PB. Indeed, national government priorities can overshadow local priorities, as the below comments from interviewees in both cities suggest.

> *"Local issues should be given more space in the priorities…So like poverty for example, even though it's national issue but what is the local or unique thing about the poverty in certain area."* ***Solo Participant 3_Mixed***

> *"So in Indonesia in general and in some locations there is a big change in terms of budgeting. So it's centralised…. It's getting more centralised now and the central is getting stronger."* ***Semarang Participant 5_CSO***

While the comments differ substantively, they share a common concern about the influence of central government outweighing local considerations. In Solo, the suggestion is that national priorities are given undue precedence over local issues. Meanwhile, the comments in Semarang speak to a central dominance when it comes to the resourcing of PB, whereby the national government has reduced the amount of freedom and flexibility that local authorities possess to make budgetary decisions. These aspects reveal a complex *locational* dynamic in terms of decision making and funding.

Within the context of complexities arising from a multi-tier PB process framed by national legislation, Solo's synchronisation forum takes on added significance. Beyond the prospective benefits for improving responsiveness to local concerns within each specific PB process (see section 5.2.3), I argue that the forum has the potential to mitigate some of the tensions between national and local levels through sustained efforts to reconcile the priorities of both. Doing so would require an observably even-handed approach that gave "more space" to local issues, as the above interviewee in Solo stresses.

Another important aspect for spatial embeddedness is the breadth of policy space or focus covered by a mechanism. The broader the focus the more spatially embedded an institution can be considered because it is understood as providing people with the opportunity to shape several different policy issues (Bussu et al., 2022). As seen in section 5.2.1, there is a notable difference in focus between Solo and Semarang – with the former location having a wider range of themes addressed in PB (including infrastructure, education, and health). Whereas, Semarang has a narrower focus with several interviewees observing that infrastructure was by far the most dominant thematic of focus – with a marginal shift occurring in recent years towards issues relevant to women and children, since the advent of the women and children forum.

As I will explain in section 5.4.1, the extent and scope of the observed outcomes across different policy areas also varies, with Solo interviewees perceiving broader community changes, while Semarang's outcomes are perceived to be more narrowly focused. Taken together, the broader policy focus and outcomes of PB in Solo are indicative of stronger spatial embeddedness than what is currently found in Semarang.

The connection of PB to civil society and the broader public sphere is important for genuine bottom-up participation. Within an embeddedness perspective, the role of civil society takes on added importance in pressuring governments to pursue social change (Henderson et al., 2021). However, as was explored in section 5.2.1, there is a sub-optimal degree of civil society or public participation in PB in Solo and Semarang, with final funding decisions often not reflecting genuine community needs. In Solo, interviewees with considerable experience participating in PB revealed the strategies they used to try to ensure PB is more responsive to local demands.

> *"We try to lobby at the agencies, the related agencies directly but still the same – not approved."* ***Solo Participant 16_Mixed***

> *"Yeah I proposed [the project idea] in so many occasions."* ***Solo Participant 8_CSO***

These responses give insight into the determination of civil society representatives to advance the

causes they believe in via PB. This persistence shows a sincerely held belief in the importance of their initiatives, even though their chances of success may be low. Importantly for embeddedness, it demonstrates that civil society actors are willing and able to push for PB and for the local authorities to be more responsive to their needs. In Semarang, a similar level of commitment to the process was observed. The below comment from an individual involved at multiple levels in the PB process show a determination to have their project's proposal approved.

> *"For example we demand for children friendly neighbourhood but for now already four times changing of the Camat leader [district head] but issue is not there- it doesn't go to the Kota [municipal] level. So we need to make sure that the issues are accommodated in the list."*
> ***Semarang Participant 10_Mixed***

Imperfections in final decision-making of PB have been outlined in Section 5.1.3, but what these responses from stakeholders across both case studies imply is that the rates of success in PB may be even lower but for the ongoing effort of committed stakeholders participating in the processes. Nevertheless, the fact that projects in both locations are being proposed several times by participants without being approved suggests that the power and influence of civil society is limited, which has negative implications for spatial embeddedness in both locations.

Considerations of how PB connects to wider civil society must also take account of the broader public sphere, which includes those who may not be active participants in either PB or other avenues in the participatory system. An examination of news articles can aid an understanding of the extent to which PB is present in the public psyche and thereby positioning the public to exert pressure on the mechanism. Various online media outlets accessed during 2024 provided coverage of PB events in Solo. The articles emphasised the participatory nature of the PB process, the priority themes and focus for the year, as well as examples of funding approved – including infrastructure, child health, and cultural initiatives (Suikarno, 2024, Wicaksono, 2024, d-one news, 2021). Such coverage indicates that there is a degree of penetration of PB into the wider public discourse, beyond the specific PB events themselves, and that PB is framed as relevant to a range of issues.

Infrastructure is one of the core themes of Solo's PB process (Mayor of Surakarta, 2018), and I will demonstrate in a proceeding section that interviewees noted infrastructure improvements had occurred in the municipality because of PB (see section 5.4.1). However, evidence of inaccessible infrastructure in Solo has been found previously (Setiawan et al., 2017). Moreover, as far back as 2010, activists had advocated publicly about the exclusionary effect that infrastructure conditions have for the ability of people with disabilities to participate in Solo, including in PB (Solopos, 2010). As previously noted, Solo's PB process is insufficiently inclusive of people with disabilities (see

5.2.1). In addition to shedding light on possible gaps in infrastructure spending from PB, the following comments are illustrative of how people with disabilities have found alternative ways to participate despite the exclusions they face.

> *"... there is a community for the inclusive – so it's not only the people with disabilities but other....inclusive... and [we] share and sometimes...go to some...public places and ... usually make pictures and then... give information... about... the [accessibility] problems or issues...in such places. And [we] post that in social media so people can also see..."* ***Solo Participant 6_Citizen***

In the absence of an authentic voice in the Solo PB process, people with disabilities are utilising social media and showing solidarity with one another to advocate for more accessible infrastructure in the municipality.

In addition to infrastructure, PB in Solo is also focused on funding socio-cultural priorities (Mayor of Surakarta, 2018). However, despite relevance to this theme, funding for the Paralympics was sought directly from the mayor, as the following comments from a PB participant with a disability highlight.

> *"[We] needed budget for the [paralympic] games and ... sent a proposal to the Mayor and it was granted."* ***Solo Participant 9_Mixed***

A special grant from the mayor was utilised to help resource local efforts at the Paralympics, despite the demand being relevant to the socio-cultural theme of PB. Given what has been illustrated about the exclusionary nature of PB to the wishes of people with disabilities (see section 5.2.1), it is plausible to infer that the participant decided to pursue support from the mayor on the expectation that chances were limited via PB. As these two examples illustrate, people with disabilities in Solo are pursuing alternative means of furthering their interests, whether they are participants in PB or not.

Each of the policy issues addressed by PB in Solo are relevant to people with disabilities, but the responsiveness of PB to this group appears to be limited. I believe that exploring how PB connects to people with disabilities in civil society can provide instructive insights into the strengths and weaknesses of how PB is connecting to the broader public sphere in the city. As the above two quotes help show, the theme of disabilities and their limited influence within PB was consistently surfacing throughout interviews for this thesis. Due to the importance my research methodology placed on marginalised groups, I became more attuned to this issue during my time in Solo, which led me to become more observant of signs of exclusion or disability activism.

For example, during my walks around the city as part of the field research I was struck by the vivid and widespread examples of street art. Previous research has underlined the importance of visual mediums such as street art for political participation in Indonesia (Strassler, 2020). One piece that I witnessed during my travels around Solo (Figure 16) depicts a girl in a wheelchair and includes the initials "SLB" which stands for *Sekolah Luar Biasa* (translated as extraordinary or special needs school) (Bentara Campus, 2024). While the word "BISA" means simply "Can". While it is not possible to understand the artists full intent, my interpretation of this message is that people with disabilities can also achieve great things. While the piece has no discernible link to PB specifically, it is an example of solidarity for/among people with disabilities that is present in the wider city despite - or perhaps in response to - their insufficient inclusion in other areas of public life, including in PB.

Figure 16 Photograph of street art, Solo

Source: Private Photograph, 2022.

Taken together, these three examples exemplify ways in which a segment of the public (people with disabilities) in Solo is finding alternative spaces and mediums through which to participate and raise its voice. The existence of these alternative spaces suggests an insufficient connection of PB to the concerns of people with disabilities. While the issue of disabilities is but one small segment of the public sphere in Solo, given what is understood about the closed and exclusive nature of PB in Solo (see section 5.2.1), it is plausible to expect similar dynamics occurring amongst other excluded groups and issues across the city, which has negative implications for the spatial embeddedness prospects of PB in Solo, if it persists.

In Semarang, multiple online news articles published during 2024 drew attention to the existence of PB in the city. The content of these articles focused on the priorities of the PB process and specific actions that had been funded. These included flood reduction and entrepreneurship promotion activities (Maarif, 2024, Utomo, 2024). One article noted the importance of increasing the percentage of PB proposals that are funded, as a marker of process quality (Maarif, 2024), which has already been emphasised previously as important in Indonesia (see section 5.2.3). In addition, video footage of a PB process held in Semarang was published on YouTube by a media company in 2024 and has thus far garnered over 1000 views (Kompas TV, 2024). This media coverage suggests that PB has some connection to the broader public sphere beyond the individuals participating in the process directly, albeit with a narrower band of issues that it is framed as relevant to than in Solo.

As was noted in section 5.2.1, the advent of the women and children forum has been welcomed by participants of PB in Semarang, but it has not yet led to largescale improvements in levels of inclusion or in policies and outcomes that improve the lives of women. Nevertheless, the new forum has strengthened the connection of PB to issues that more directly affect women and children, as the below comments from two members of the local authority show.

> *"So issues on the family quality and then eliminating domestic violence and then stunting – those are the issues [are now mentioned more since the women and children forum] to be balanced outside the infrastructure issues in the Musrenbang [PB]."* ***Semarang Participant 3_LocalAuthority***

> *"...domestic violence prevention, and [other issues] all go [from the women and children forum through] to the Musrenbang [PB]."* ***Semarang Participant 7_LocalAuthority***

While infrastructure has typically been the predominant focus of PB in Semarang (see 5.2.1), the women and children forum has begun to shift this dynamic. However, this change in focus has not yet led to meaningful change on the issue of violence against women (VAW), as the below comments from a civil society representative underline

> *"...the implementation of the programmes of the unit for the women care [is impacted by political factors]. For the assistance of domestic violence, so the service given through the system then are not success[ful]."* ***Semarang Participant 1_CSO***

> *"We can see that the domestic violence still [exists]... It means that the regional budget [budget that funds PB] is not used to overcome the problem."* ***Semarang Participant 1_CSO***

Despite PB taking place and the women and children forum enabling a wider focus of issues to be discussed during the process, VAW has not been sufficiently tackled in the city yet. Moreover, the implication is that this failure has been in part due to local political considerations. Such a situation may indicate a lack of commitment from the local government to take the issue of VAW seriously, as the following comments from a civil society representative also suggest.

> *"...and then [I am dissatisfied with]... the policy in case handling for gender-based violence also.... And... the policy [code of conduct] that forbids the government ... to do sexual violence or ... to do violence against women that is still [not in place] because there is no integrity [in the government] ..."* ***Semarang Participant 14_CSO***

There is a sense that the local government is not firmly committed to tackling VAW, which is posing challenges for how effective PB can be in addressing the issue. These perceived failings are

coinciding with examples of genuine protest on the VAW issue, as the following comments from the same civil society representative as the previous example show.

> *"...there is like a changing [of] organisation, especially for handling the case of violence against women....it [the changes] destroyed collaboration ... [in services] ... so we made action, we made press conference – like a protest.... many organisations that joined this protest."* ***Semarang Participant 14_CSO***

Civil society groups took the unusual steps of organising a media protest in response to local government actions on VAW that they deemed inappropriate. According to news reports, the above action has not been an isolated incident, with a silent protest outside the House of Representatives occurring in 2023 in response to a new draft regulation concerning the protection and empowerment of women. Activists say that minimal consultation was undertaken on the regulation and is not implementable in its current form in Semarang (Fadilah, 2023). In addition to these examples of activism, media representatives have also been actively engaging in ways to strengthen the role of journalism in combating VAW (Dani, 2024). While such actions help further explain the context in which the women and children forum within PB came to be, it could also be argued that if PB was more responsive and successful in addressing the issue of VAW, there would be less clamour for alternative modes of participation.

Overall, these findings suggest that in both cities there is an active and passionate civil society that are raising their voices on PB issues but where there appears to be a lack of confidence in the ability of the mechanism to deliver. While such strategies could be understood as being a form of vital pressure on PB to become more responsive to the public sphere, they also can be seen to strengthen the significance other modes of participation in the local system (protest, artistic expression, other sources of resourcing, etc). to the possible detriment of PB in the minds of local people. Those working to address issues of some of the most marginalised appear to deem engaging outside of PB to hold higher potential for having their voices heard or affecting change than within the PB process. Therefore, there is a risk that without a stronger connection between PB and civil society writ large, dis-embeddedness dynamics could grow, as people see PB as less worthy of engaging with (Bussu et al., 2022).

5.3.3. Practices of Embeddedness: generally supportive formal rules, more nuanced evidence on informal attitudes

The final dimension of embeddedness to consider is PB practices, which include both the formal rules and informal behaviours that influence the sustained presence and relevance of PB.

PB has been nationally legislated in Indonesia since 2004 (See section 4.2.1). This longstanding institutionalisation is an example of positive formal practices of embedding in the two case studies. In Solo, the regulations for PB are another positive example of formal practices of embeddedness, as they are helpful in ensuring quality implementation according to one local authority member.

> *"...in the guidelines everything is stated very well like the how many the percentage of the female, and the percentage of the others and then...RW [neighbourhood forum] also help through the facilitator in Kelurahan [urban village forum] before they get the representation is not really good – like they have less number than used to...then they have that they need to attend but after we push then the quota is fulfilled."* ***Solo Participant 5_LocalAuthority***

This statement highlights not only how detailed and specific the guidelines are, but also that they are used to ensure compliance with good practice in inclusion quotas. Several other interviewees made similar points, particularly regarding inclusion quotas (see section 5.2.1).

However, in Semarang, a challenge in compliance with regulations was noted by multiple local authority interviewees, see below.

> *"In the regulations or in the guidelines of Musrenbang we have stated that Musrenbang needs to include all communities – the poverty, disabilities, women, NGO, political parties, but we realise not all Kelurahan [urban villages] have implemented that. So there are still lots of not good practice in the Kelurahan ...."* ***Semarang Participant 13_LocalAuthority***

> *"The regulations [are] good already, especially about the invite, but the lowest government – in this case Kelurahan [urban village]– needs to be refreshed and re-educated on the regulations and guidelines."* ***Semarang Participant 10_LocalAuthority***

While the regulations in Semarang appear to be quite clear on what is expected from local level implementers of PB, this does not seem to translate to reality as readily on the ground as seems to be the case in Solo. From a review of secondary data, the last time that Solo updated its regulations was in 2018 (Mayor of Surakarta, 2018), and as the below comments note it has been decided that this no longer needs to be every year.

> *"Okay, so the guidelines usually used to be annual but now every 3 years because people are more stable."* ***Solo Participant 15*_Citizen**

The phrase "*people are more stable*" is instructive, as it suggests that PB in Solo has reached a satisfactory equilibrium, in which more frequent regulation updates are not deemed necessary. This stability suggests there is a sufficient understanding of what the process requires, as well as a

degree of compliance that authorities are comfortable with. In contrast, from a look at secondary data in Semarang we can see that new regulations are still being issued every year (Semarang City Government, 2021). Furthermore, as was already noted compliance with regulations that ensure meaningful community participation is also less consistently apparent (see section 5.2.1).

While it is important not to overinterpret differences of PB in Solo and Semarang, the issuing of multiple rounds of regulations in Semarang could suggest that PB in the city is less settled within its institutional surroundings and still working through teething problems. This could indicate less solidified practices of embeddedness. The peaks and troughs in attendance outlined in section 5.2.1, would appear to support this view also.

PB design differences are also notable for practices of embeddedness, as they exemplify changes to formal rules that are in place. As described previously (see sections 5.1.1 and 5.1.3), the most notable changes to the rules concerning local delivery of PB in Solo concern the inclusion of a focus group discussion (FGD) channel to engage participants on specific issues, the incorporation of a firm link between PB and local strategic planning documents at the local level, and the utilisation of a synchronisation forum that attempts to align bottom-up and top-down priorities. The effects of these changes have been to open participation to a wider diversity of issues, strengthen the evidence base for prioritisation and decision making, and move towards greater compromise between local and regional priorities in funding decisions.

In Semarang, the most notable change that has happened to the PB rules is the relatively recent development of the women and children forum – an urban village level forum which prioritises the participation and needs of women and children in the city. The forum – while still in its early phase of bedding in – has had some initial successes in promoting inclusion and improved deliberative quality of the PB process in Semarang (see section 5.2.1 and 5.2.3). As noted previously, the forum has contributed to modest widening of the PB policy focus beyond a traditional predominance for infrastructure, which has aided spatial embeddedness potential to a degree (see section 5.3.2).

In both Solo and Semarang, formal rules have been put in place and adapted to improve the effectiveness of PB. However, the evidence suggests that these rules had a more positive impact in Solo than in Semarang. Opening participation through the focus group channel has aided spatial embeddedness (see section 5.3.2). It is also plausible that that the synchronisation process can benefit embeddedness if undertaken in a way that aligns both local and national actors (also section 5.3.2). Strengthening the link between PB and local strategic planning has also improved temporal embeddedness (see section 5.3.1). These findings support the position that Solo has wider

examples of formal rules that can enable embeddedness, which is indicative of more positive formal practices of embedding than in Semarang.

Beyond the rules and regulations, embeddedness practices also include the informal attitudes and behaviours of key stakeholders. Given their key role in PB, local authorities are the most important stakeholder in this regard. The culture of Central Java is highly hierarchical in nature – where deference to more senior or high-status individuals is commonplace (section 4.2.2.1). This regard for leadership permeates deliberations in the PB process in both case study locations (see section 5.2.3), with repercussions for embeddedness practices. Despite deference to local officials, multiple interviewees in Semarang noted that politicians did not attend and engage with PB as much as people would prefer them to. The evidence of a sustained reduction in municipal PB invites since the pandemic (5.1.1), also suggests a degree of de-prioritisation by the authorities.

The influence of elites also extends to other stakeholders, such as NGOs, participating in the process, as the following quotation highlights. PB has a closed, invite-only set-up (see section 5.2.1). However, even if groups are among the prioritised few to be invited this does not necessarily assure a level playing field during proceedings, as the below comments from a civil society representative in Solo illustrate

> *"I can say that [other CSO] and where I'm working now is different because [other CSO] was different they are close – very close to the government and they help monitoring the budget and they solved a corruption case so the perpetrators are charged. So they see [other CSO] differently, and also see [me] differently, so it seems in NGOs it depends what kind of NGO – some are very heard very much but some still need to be stronger in the advocacy."* ***Solo Participant 9_CSO***

These comments suggest an element of favouritism in PB in Solo, in which certain CSOs are treated more favourably than others depending on pre-existing relationships with the local authority. Meanwhile, when asked about preferred participants in PB in Semarang, one civil servant noted a preference for organisations that they have a pre-existing close relationship with.

> *"…the NGOs that work closely with us especially with the orientation of women and children protection, or who are in line with the Mayor's mission on the women and children protection [are who we particularly like to have attend PB]."* ***Semarang Participant 8_LocalAuthority***

While the above comments do not explicitly state that the results of PB will favour entities that work closely with the government, there remains an implied sense that these organisations are more welcome than those who may have different agendas. In both cases, there are signs that the

dominance of elites may be giving rise to less than positive practices in relation to embeddedness, which appear to run counter to the more positive formal rules that have been established and further developed at the local level.

As noted earlier in this section, rule changes have arisen in both cases with the potential to support embeddedness. In Solo, incremental improvements have been made to diversity of participation and issue focus (see section 5.2.1) and provided the possibility of greater alignment between local and national priorities (see section 5.2.3), both of which have assisted spatial embeddedness. In addition, rule changes have strengthened alignment between PB and the local participatory system in furthering temporal embeddedness (see section 5.2.3). These can be seen as instances of embedding dynamics (Bussu et al., 2022). In Semarang, rule changes to encourage diversity have also improved prospects for a widening of policy focus in support of spatial embeddedness, although these changes are early in their stage of institutionalisation (see section 5.2.1).

However, it is not just the formal aspect of the above rules that is notable. The informal processes through which the rules emerged is revealing of the attitudes and behaviours of civil society actors in each case location. In Semarang, civil society played a critical role in driving the development of the Women and Children Forum, according to an interviewee involved in the initiative

> *"...so starting 2019 where there were pilot projects in three different Kelurahans [urban villages] for this Sangpuan [women and children forum] at that time still rembug warga perampuan [women's discussion forum]– we started this because we felt that Musrenbang [PB] is masculine, it was not represented by the women so we urged ... the women and children department to do the rembug perampuan [women's discussion forum] to get the issues forwarded to the Musrenbang Kota [municipal PB]."* ***Semarang Participant 11_CSO***

Participants and other stakeholders were unsatisfied with the previous PB format, believing that it was dominated by male participation and interests, and thereby not fulfilling the democratic commitment to representativeness and pluralism. Civil society actors (with support from an international donor, the Danish government, according to one interviewee) lobbied the municipal government to change PB rules to be more inclusive of women and children. In Solo, a CSO played a key role in initiating the local strategic plans, which have improved information quality in PB decisions (see section 5.2.3) and exemplify a degree of alignment in the participatory system in Solo (section 5.3.1). As highlighted by a Solo participant:

> *"So the...strategic plan was initiated by [organisation name]."* ***Solo Participant 9_CSO***

The proactive role that civil society organisations have each played in furthering changes to formal rules in each of the locations suggests constructive attitudes of civil society actors, in which they are striving to improve the PB process. Although it is also worth noting that the local authorities have been relatively open to the supportive actions of these stakeholders, evidenced by the fact that the changes to the regulations have been enacted.

PB holds a strong formal role in the local participatory systems in Solo and Semarang, however, an embeddedness perspective requires us to think beyond institutionalisation to assess other informal features of the way PB fits (or does not) within its local system (Bussu et al., 2022, Goodin, 1996a). Beyond considerations of the attitudes of local elites and civil society actors, assessing the extent to which PB is a favoured channel for participation by local people can further illuminate understandings of embeddedness practices, as it can shed light on the long-term viability of the mechanism (Goodin, 1996a). One key indicator of local support and buy-in for PB is attendance trends over time. In Solo, attendance has shown a gradual upward trend over the last three years, despite the disruptions caused by the global pandemic (see section 5.2.1). The trend in Semarang is more mixed. The pandemic coincided with a significant reduction in attendance, with this rate recovering in 2022 albeit with a significantly reduced overall attendee rate due to a decline in the overall number of invitations to the process (see section 5.2.1).

As noted (see section 5.3.2), deficits in connectivity to civil society in both locations are compromising the perceived value of PB, particularly among groups not sufficiently included in the process, such as women and people with disabilities. Evidence of engagement with other modes of participation supports this claim (see section 5.3.2). If PB is not seen to be serving people's needs, it is to be expected that alternatives will be sought out. When asked about the relative merits of PB vs. other modes of engagement, interviewees in Semarang were more likely to note deficiencies of PB compared to other channels than interviewees in Solo. Commonly perceived deficiencies of PB compared to other routes in Semarang included poor responsiveness to needs and overly laborious process, as the following comments from two civil society representatives illustrate. The first describes how participants from a specific urban village do not receive equal treatment compared to participants from other urban villages, the second highlights how PB is a more drawn-out process than seeking support directly from the Mayor or House of Representatives.

> *"So in Musrenbang [PB] we are lost because we are not really supported there. But we can still find another way like through DPRD [House of Representatives]... but even DPRD [House of Representatives] sometimes we are not really heard because our Kelurahan [urban village] is still seen as less than other Kelurahans [urban villages] in the same Kecamatan [district]...*

when we meet the Mayor – directly then he can make the decision directly from his own consideration. But when it's Musrenbang [PB] it will go through the regional secretariat and then go to the Mayor, so there may be something in between…when it's the Mayor then the Mayor will be really aware of the situation and then he can decide." ***Semarang Participant 9_CSO***

"If people want to access the public budget immediately usually get by submitting proposal [to the mayor or House of Representatives] but they… don't usually send or suggest to Musrenbang [PB] because it's a long process." ***Semarang Participant 5_CSO***

For some in Semarang, PB can be less appealing as a means of furthering their priorities due to perceptions of favouritism to other stakeholders or issues, or due to the perception that PB cannot respond quickly enough to their needs. Here, seeking a special grant from the mayor or support from DPRD are seen as more expedient, which is suggestive of attitudes that are less positive for PB embeddedness in Semarang.

In Solo, those that did see other channels as more appealing emphasised the effectiveness, ability to be forthright with policymakers, or relative financial advantages of the special grant from the mayor in comparison to PB, as the following comments from two interviewees with diverse experiences with PB show.

"…when the people…give their aspiration there to the mayor [through his social media account], for example, it is linked and will be recorded by the communication agency. And … this is actually more effective and it is more honest than Musrenbang [PB] because individually or in representing groups they can just speak up [to the mayor directly]." ***Solo Participant 3_Mixed***

"…through the special grant from the Mayor it can be a lot bigger [than other routes]. Quite often [people will utilise the special grant] … usually for art and religious buildings." ***Solo Participant 15_Mixed***

The appeal of the special grant from the Mayor in Solo is its relative directness and larger available budget in comparison to PB. Nevertheless, despite the perceived deficiencies of PB in the above examples, views that preferred PB over other participation channels among interviewees were more widespread in Solo than Semarang. Reasons for this preference included the belief that PB was more representative of community needs, and that other channels were only useful in very specific circumstances, as the following comments from two civil society representatives note.

"Ohh, still [prefer] Musrenbang [PB to other participation channels] ...Because it's real opinion." ***Solo Participant 9_CSO***

"[other participation channels are] limited actually ... because it is [only used] in certain conditions." ***Solo Participant 8_CSO***

Despite its imperfections, PB in Solo is still regarded by participants as the primary forum for participating in Solo, more so than in Semarang. This position is further underlined by previous findings, where interviewees in Solo were more satisfied with PB than those in Semarang (see section 5.4.2). Taken together the above findings are suggestive of more positive informal practices of embeddedness in Solo.

A nuanced picture of the practices of embeddedness emerges in both case studies. Formal rules are in place that support the ongoing implementation and development of PB – with evidence suggesting that procedures in Solo have been more effective at promoting inclusion (see section 5.2.1) and ensuring more informed decision-making than Semarang up until now (see 5.2.3).

When it comes to informal aspects such as behaviour and attitudes, local elites display practices that are – on balance - less supportive of embeddedness, such as exerting their power over proceedings and decisions. This appears in tension to the practices of civil society that appear more conducive to promoting embeddedness. Indeed, these practices have visibly contributed to the effectiveness of PB in both locations, suggesting an important interplay between formal and informal dimensions of embeddedness practices.

Finally, despite noted imperfections in the designs of PB in both cities (see sections 5.2.1, 5.2.2, and 5.2.3), the attitudes of interviewees in Solo reflected a greater level of buy-in and support for PB in the city compared to Semarang. This finding could indicate that PB in Solo has more long-term viability than in Semarang due to more positive informal practices of embeddedness. The final area for assessment concerns PB outcomes, which is explored below.

5.4. Exploring PB Outcomes in Solo and Semarang

This section explores two key aspects of PB outcomes. First, the community-level changes attributed to PB in each city are explored, highlighting the contributions of PB to infrastructure, social development, and governance. Second, the key PB drivers or sources that influence participants' trust in local government are presented, including participation, transparency, and responsiveness. These findings provide further insights into the potential of PB to promote improvements in local democracy. Trust is a central challenge in governance, and PB has been identified as a tool to

enhance citizens confidence in the ability and motivations of elected representatives (see sections 1.4 and 2.7). Moreover, In Indonesia PB was brought in among a wave of decentralisation reforms aiming to bridge a perceived gap between government and the people, promote accountability and reduce corruption (see section 4.2.1). The following section outlines community-level changes from PB followed by key drivers of whether and how PB has shifted participants' perceptions towards the government.

5.4.1. Changes in the community – diverse examples in Solo, more narrowly observed in Semarang

Participants and organisers of PB often have unique insights on how PB has led to changes in the community. Interviewees in Solo were more readily able to identify specific changes that they attributed to PB than those in Semarang. In addition, the types of changes noted in Solo were diverse, encompassing changes in infrastructure, health and wellbeing, poverty reduction and social development, social capital, and governance. While often modest in scale, changes seen in Solo addressed wider issues, as the following well-being benefits from a health clinic exemplify.

> *"...the monthly clinic for children is through Musrenbang [PB] – the money from the Kota [municipality] to Kelurahan [urban village], so it's built now and it's good....There are lots of changes – healthier, cleaner, lifestyle better..."* ***Solo Participant 13_Mixed***

In contrast, the improvements noted by interviewees in Semarang were narrower in scope, largely focused on governance and infrastructure. Specific examples include road and waterway improvements, as the following from a civil society representative underline.

> *"Infrastructure... Because it's observable and usable....Roads...Waterways... if you live in a hilly area and then to prevent the landslides we build like a wall..."* ***Semarang Participant 6_CSO***

While there were more responses one could categorise as governance (e.g. administrative effectiveness or improved ways of working between community and government) related in Semarang, such responses were typically quite vague including how PB had improved the efficiency of budget allocations. Conversely, comments such as the above about infrastructure were very clear and specific. The use of the terms "observable and usable" also speak to a trend observed in both locations – albeit more so in Semarang – whereby local authorities have appeared to prioritise funding projects with very tangible outputs associated with them. As some interviewees stated, this may reflect gaps in infrastructure. However, it also may suggest a bias against other projects softer or social projects, which are harder to justify to residents seeking immediate and visible results.

Nevertheless, the advent of the women and children forum in Semarang was noted as beginning to play a role in a shift away from an infrastructure focus to other issues, as emphasised by remarks from a local level official.

> *"[Projects include]... parenting training and then drugs prevention training and domestic violence prevention, and the economic [issues] like aging, poor promotion, waste management, and microbusinesses. And health – stunting, nutrition, healthy lifestyle, transmitted diseases and birth control. So these all go to the Musrenbang [PB]...[from the women and children forum]."* ***Semarang Participant 7_LocalAuthority***

The women and children forum has begun to widen the types of projects that are being discussed and approved for funding in PB beyond infrastructure to other issues of social concern. However, this process of change is still in its infancy so is not yet leading to significant changes in the community.

5.4.2. PB drivers contributing to trust in local government

A first key PB mechanism contributing to trust in local government is **participation.** In Solo, there is the perception that the PB process is continuously improving - making PB more participative and efficient, as the following comment from a civil society representative illustrate.

> *"Yeah, it's good, Musrenbang [PB]– but why I trust them is because they try to improve year by year. As time goes on, they want to improve. Yeah, sometimes maybe it's too sophisticated, but it's okay – they just try to make it more efficient, more participative, that's why I trust Musrenbang [PB]."* ***Solo Participant 8_CSO***

PB is understood to be gradually improving and the local authorities are understood to be genuinely committed to making PB a better participation channel, which is valued by those engaging in PB in the city. Widening of participation and greater effectiveness of PB are helping to inculcate or augment a sense that the authorities are acting in good faith.

A similar view was expressed in Semarang, although less widely than in Solo. The importance of improvements to PB based on feedback and criticism from participants was one particularly important feature in Semarang, as noted by an individual who has engaged with PB widely in the city.

> *"Yeah, it makes me trust more because when we criticise them they improve or they fix it."*
> ***Semarang Participant 11_Mixed***

However, the limited scale of PB is seen as a barrier to broader participation and trust-building. Since only a small number of people participate in the process, the broader population remains

disengaged, which limits the overall influence of PB on political trust in Solo, as was noted by an individual who has played a variety of roles in PB in the city.

> *"I can say that, not directly influence... [people on trust] because...not directly influence the trust because people involved in Musrenbang [PB] are not too many."* ***Solo Participant 3_Mixed***

For PB to have a wider impact on the trust of citizens across Solo, the feeling is that more people would need to be included in the process. A similar sentiment of the need for wider participation was voiced in Semarang, from another individual who has engaged with PB in various capacities.

> *"I don't think my trust in government is supported by the Musrenbang [PB] experience but I understand that Musrenbang [PB] as a formal and structuarised [sic] meeting is a quite good option ...at the time. But you know it needs to create more...forums [for people to participate]."* ***Semarang Participant 2 _Mixed***

Given what has been illustrated about the closed nature of PB processes in the case studies (see section 5.2.1), there is the suggestion that the current PB design is limiting trust-building potential.

Another key PB driver of trust is **transparency and dialogue.** The PB process enhances transparency by offering community members the opportunity to directly engage with government officials, access information, and voice their concerns. This openness fosters a sense of trust, as described by a civil society representative:

> *"Okay, yeah so Musrenbang [PB] can help...to increase the public trust especially because they are involved in forums... they are engaged and involved and they can see the information and they are updated about issues there in the town so ...because of this engagement then they are...they trust more."* **Solo Participant 4_CSO**

PB participants in Solo are more able to trust in local government because of the opportunity it provides them to engage on issues and become more informed about the workings of government and local priorities. In contrast to Solo, transparency in Semarang PB appears to be lower. Some interviewees expressed concerns about secrecy and manipulation of information, which can erode trust. The lack of alignment between the data available to the public and what is disseminated by the government further undermines confidence in the process, which reduces satisfaction in both PB and local government performance according to the below interviewee.

"Too much secrecy – information manipulation….Because I know the budget, I know the data so I can say that what the data says and what the government disseminates is quite different." **Semarang Participant 5_Mixed**

The view that the government is not being open and honest with participants and the wider public about budgets – the central focus of PB – is detracting from the potential of the mechanism to promote government trust in Semarang.

Finally, trust can also be influenced by satisfaction with the PB outcomes, particularly whether it is seen to be **effectively solving local problems.** While changes in the community were noted in the previous section (5.3.2), there were also signs that this level of responsiveness to community needs was leading to additional outcomes beyond the positive effects of the specific projects.

The sense that PB was more reliably providing people with solutions and resources to affect positive change was apparent in Solo, leading to wider benefits, as the two following comments from individuals with diverse experiences with PB exemplify.

"I can say that I'm satisfied because people's…the community ideas are discussed and we can help the society overcome their problems …" **Solo Participant 2_Mixed**

"Quite [satisfied]…Because our aspirations can be realised up to Kota [municipal] level." **Solo Participant 14_Citizen**

By contrast, the scope and significance of PB in Semarang is seen as a major deficit hindering satisfaction with the process. Several interviewees expressed disappointment with how PB operates, particularly regarding a lack of tangible outcomes and inefficiencies in addressing key community issues such as poverty, unemployment and gender-based violence. This lack of effectiveness has led to dissatisfaction, reducing the likelihood that trust in government will be promoted.

"Not really satisfied because the government authorities and the agencies who attend the Kecamatan [district] level sometimes they do not input and do not give solutions for the proposals of the community in…to the Kota [municipal] level." **Semarang Participant 10_Mixed**

For participants to be more satisfied with PB in Semarang, a greater commitment to solving local problems would be required than is currently being seen.

In sum, evidence of community-level changes facilitated by PB is more apparent in Solo than in Semarang. In addition, the changes in Solo are evident across a broader range of social issues.

However, community-level change enabled by PB remains modest in both cases. Regarding the role of PB in promoting trust in local government, there is also stronger evidence of this occurring in Solo than in Semarang. Key drivers of PB improving participants' perceptions of local authorities in the two case studies include the importance of the mechanism being felt to be improving and becoming more participative over time, as well as the role PB plays in promoting transparency and dialogue. Additionally, PB is better placed to impact upon views towards government when it is being felt to be effectively solving local problems. Across each of these aspects, PB in Solo performs more strongly than in Semarang at the time of writing. Despite contrasts between cases, it is apparent from both locations that PB would need to be implemented at a larger magnitude than is currently the case for transformative impacts at community-level or in perceptions of citizens towards local government to occur.

5.5. Conclusion

The findings from the two Indonesian case studies Solo and Semarang, focusing on PB design, embeddedness and PB outcomes reveal a mixed picture, but with evidence suggesting that PB in Solo is performing more strongly across each of these aspects. The evidence shows that Solo exhibits PB design features more closely in line with good practices of deliberative theory. These include an issue-based focus group discussion (FGD) channel that widens inclusion within the invite-only model common to Indonesia, as well as an active incorporation of evidence-based priorities developed through a participatory strategic planning process at the urban village level, and a forum to reconcile community and government priorities.

In addition to comparative strength at the micro-level, the Solo case study also displays stronger embeddedness compared to Semarang. The city's PB demonstrates wider policy issue embeddedness and alignment with other participatory channels that, although nascent, are stronger than what has been found in Semarang.

Furthermore, the greater degree embeddedness dynamics in Solo have led to design improvements. Indeed, the greater level of temporal embeddedness in Solo has gone hand in hand with a more sophisticated PB design development and more consistent implementation. Both cases also show evidence of a reasonably strong connection between PB and civil society, which contributes to spatial embeddedness and has also shaped improvements in design. Furthermore, design changes in Solo have also coincided with a broader policy focus and impact – while Semarang's focus remains narrow in comparison. However, there are question marks over how responsive to the public sphere the mechanisms are, with examples found of marginalised groups (people with

disabilities in Solo, and women in Semarang) favouring other forms of participation to achieve their goals.

At the outcome level, Solo's PB process has also led to more notable – yet modest - changes in the community, as well as higher satisfaction with PB in Solo than its neighbouring municipality. Positive perceptions of the prospects for PB impacting on government trust were also more widespread in Solo than in Semarang. Overall, the chapter identified several drivers understood to be important for PB to strengthen trust in local government, including the process being genuinely participative and continuing to improve, as well as its role in promoting open and transparent dialogue between communities and government.

Nevertheless, neither case is a textbook example of PB aligned with deliberative theory or embeddedness. Both cases have major challenges in each of these domains. Indeed, despite the more positive design and embeddedness in Solo than Semarang, an exploration of both cases has revealed significant impediments at both the micro and macro levels. At the micro level, while Solo outperforms Semarang in its design features – neither are examples of truly open, deliberative forums. At the macro level, Solo demonstrates stronger embeddedness, but both locations struggle with issues such as minimal alignment between formal participation channels, and prevalent elite capture which distorts discussion and decision-making. These findings highlight the potential benefits that can arise from marginal improvements in PB at micro and macro levels. I argue that steps towards greater deliberation in design, and stronger embeddedness can result in greater PB effectiveness, with the potential for more significant changes in the community arising from funding decisions and potentially changes in perceptions towards local government over time.

6. Assessing PB in Northeast Scotland: The cases of Fife and Moray

6.1. Introduction

This assessment of the PB cases of Fife and Moray in Northeast Scotland, UK explores differences in PB designs and embeddedness between the two case studies as well the implications for PB performance and perceived outcomes, which each contribute to the prospects of PB to improve local democracy in the case studies.

The findings reveal that neither case consistently use PB designs that fully align with deliberative theory. However, Fife demonstrates stronger evidence of good practice in design and embeddedness due to its wider policy focus. The chapter highlights PB's potential to foster trust in local government by facilitating dialogue and interaction with authorities and demonstrating responsiveness to community needs. This potential is notably stronger in Fife than in Moray, primarily due to stronger evidence of community-level outcomes in addition to greater visibility of local government in PB processes. However, I argue that PB plays only a limited contributory role in promoting trust, operating alongside other tools, particularly considering the limited scale and narrow scope of PB in both locations.

6.2. PB Design in Fife and Moray

PB in Scotland is guided by the PB charter, which outlines 7 principles that good PB should aspire to in the country (see section 4.3.2.2). Within this guidance framing, PB organisers in Scotland have a large degree of flexibility in which to apply and experiment with PB approaches. The following sections assess PB design in the case studies of Fife and Moray, focusing on three key deliberative democracy principles: inclusion, quality of discussion and decision-making.

6.2.1. Inclusion: Fife strengths in issue diversity, Moray in representativeness

Inclusion in PB can be assessed through three key dimensions: geographical coverage, topic coverage, and the extent to which diverse groups are represented in decision-making processes. This allows for an evaluation of the breadth of PB implementation and its capacity to engage a wide range of participants and interested parties, particularly those from underrepresented or marginalised communities, and those affected by issues that are not always prioritised by mainstream policy. PB in Scotland is not yet at the stage where it is being consistently and regularly

delivered in every ward or area across the country (see section 4.3.1.2). Instead, PB exercises have so far been piecemeal and tied to specific funding pots or ad hoc opportunities rather than systematic rollout.

In Fife, PB spread organically, often driven by word-of-mouth among council departments, communities, and individuals. As one local authority representative in the Glenrothes area put it:

> *"...so when we're sort of reflected back to when we started in Glenrothes and kind of described as the kind of viral spread that sort of we seeded it with those, we infected those people who then took it to, you know, so you could trace that viral transmission of who we got to facilitate on that day and who kind of took that and thought how do we build that into [our] toolkit..."* ***Fife Participant 7_LocalAuthority***

PB roll-out in Fife has been influenced by which council departments have bought in to the philosophy of the mechanism, with it mostly spreading by word-of-mouth amongst bureaucrats and communities. Such an approach has advantages in terms of prospects for success, due to the greater likelihood that officials will commit time and effort. However, the word-of-mouth approach can pose risks of less inclusive selection of locations for PB events if those more willing or able to organise PB events are more affluent or less diverse locations. Deprived areas appear to have been the predominant hosts of PB processes in Fife, however (Democratic Society, 2020).

By contrast, a different approach has been used for playpark PB exercises in Moray involving the use of a scoring system to aid the selection of new PB locations. This was noted by an interviewee from the local authority:

> *"We have got to improve the worst ones [playparks] first. It doesn't matter where they are geographically, it's purely on condition score and then we will go to community and say "we have got an allocated budget of around about this. What would you like?""* ***Moray Participant 9_LocalAuthority***

The use of a criteria based on the condition of the playpark appears to be a more objective framework for determining where PB processes are undertaken. The use of criterion would not ensure that deprived areas would be prioritised, but it would at least ensure that they are considered on a level playing field and therefore not being unfairly overlooked in favour of more prosperous neighbourhoods. However, it is important to note the criteria approach is currently only limited to playpark PB. Moreover, the criteria may not be rigidly adhered to, as suggested by a citizen involved in facilitating a playpark PB in a small village within Moray:

"So when we approached Moray Council with "this is what our intention is", we weren't next in line to receive any funds. They have like a system with points based on the poorest equipped parks and Moray... We were near the bottom but not the bottom, so we weren't due to get funding for several more years. But when they saw us kick off the project and receive the support received, they pushed us forward so we could do a joint project together, so the Council granted £50,000 with their Participatory Budget..." ***Moray Participant 3_Mixed***

While Moray Council has a criterion for selecting PB locations for playpark refurbishment, on occasion more affluent areas can benefit from park renovations before areas in greater need, due to the prospects of securing further funds. Nevertheless, the initial work to consider and develop a criteria-based approach is a positive one which could be developed further in the future.

Table 9 Focus of PB Processes in Moray 2018-2022

PB Themes 2018-2022 - Moray	
Children	4
Youth	3
Health & Well-being*	2
Communities*	1
*CSO-led processes	

Sources: Moray Council, 2023b, Money for Moray, 2018, TSIMoray, n.d

Understandings of diversity and inclusion can be aided by examining issues tackled by PB processes in each case study location. PB events in Moray have tended to focus on children and youth in recent years (see Table 9). Targeting young people is not particularly surprising given how school PB is emphasised as an approach within PB Scotland's national strategy, with funding provided by the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) (PB Scotland, 2020). As young people have been identified as a local priority in Moray, the council's strategy for prioritising this issue for PB is further understood. Indeed, it could be argued that by orienting PB in this way, a vital constituency is being reached and one that is often overlooked in representative democracies due to those aged under 18 not being enfranchised in the parliamentary system. However, there are also trade-offs to this approach as other issues or topics have not been the focus of PB processes yet in Moray. This topic will be returned to during exploration PBs connectedness to the broader public sphere (see section 6.3.2).

By contrast, while Fife Council has also conducted school-based PB, with funding from the Pupil Equity Fund. However, the thematic range of PB events organised by Fife Council during the period of study is substantially more varied than Moray (see Table 10). In addition, several of the exercises had cross-cutting relevance to wider demographics. Moreover, many also targeted issues tied closely to inclusion such as anti-poverty and social isolation. This approach clearly differs from that of Moray with participants in Fife having the opportunity to discuss and raise a wider variety of issues.

Table 10 Focus of PB in Fife (2018-2022)

Themes of Fife Council[14] PB 2018-2022	
Community Improvements	5
Social Isolation	3
Education	2
Anti-Poverty	1
Community Safety	1
Transport Infrastructure	1

Source: Fife Council, 2023b

PB attendance data is limited in Scotland, with records shared by local authorities or civil society organisations often lacking gender or demographic breakdowns. Therefore, the attendance data referred to in this chapter should only be considered a snapshot, rather than truly representative picture of PB in each location during the 2018-2022 period. From an average of three exercises in Fife that were able to provide data, an estimated 16.1% of the relevant population participated. However, it is important to note that this average is skewed by one process organised by a local CSO with support from the local Council that attracted 27.6% of the local population to participate (4167 ballots cast across two towns with a total estimated population of 15,110) (Armstrong et al., 2019, City Population, 2022c, City Population, 2022a). Even considering the possibility of multiple ballots cast per person, this is undoubtedly a significant amount of engagement. Meanwhile, the two other processes (fully council-run) drew more modest engagement in the 3-4% of population range (Fife Council, n.d., Fife Council, 2020).

An evaluation of the largescale 'let's talk about transporting people' PB process noted the challenges in achieving the appropriate scale and diversity of participation (Fife Council, 2020). While the event may not have reached the highs of engagement that organisers had hoped for, a staff member of a CSO who hosted one of the discussion events presented a more positive outlook on the mix of individuals engaged.

> *"Yeah, I do remember it was a really busy event. I think it was an interesting programme and it was like... it wasn't just like, say, the Council, it was actually different or there was another*

[14] CSO-run processes not included, as not categorised by theme.

two organisations that it was Macmillan Cancer and someone else and it... mainly focused on disabilities...And health..... retired bus drivers..." ***Fife Participant 13_CSO***

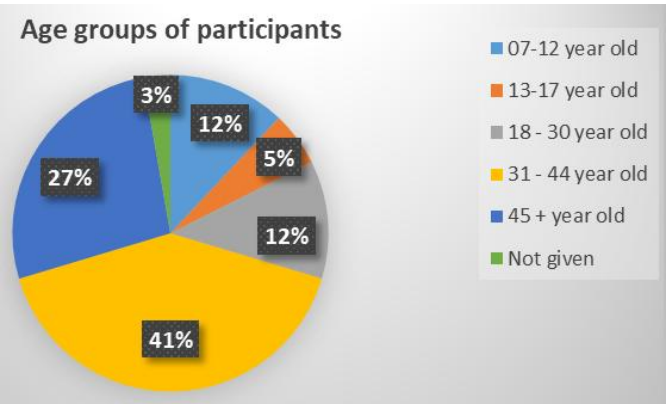
Different stakeholders representing core constituencies and vulnerable groups such as cancer sufferers and people with disabilities were in attendance. Moreover, the workshops for this event were notably busy. The implication is that these events drew more interest than some other events hosted by this CSO.

In Moray, analysis of records from three exercises indicates a conservative participation estimate of 11.4% of residents in playpark PB events, with one of these consultation exercises limited to schoolchildren only accounting for 4.3% of the village population (Moray Council, 2023a, City Population, 2022b). The figures from both Fife and Moray broadly align with other global examples. For example, while an estimated 19.8% of Porto Alegre's population had participated in a PB exercise by 2006 (World Bank, 2008), the average participation rate has been found to be approximately 1% (Calisto Friant, 2019). Meanwhile in Mexico, participation ranges from 3-10% (People Powered, 2022). These data suggest that playpark PB participation is towards the higher end of what one may expect to see in a specific process. Indeed, there is the perception that playpark PB's may have more success at engaging a diverse people, as the below comments from a local authority representative suggest.

"I think for me sometimes it's easier because some of the projects that I get, particularly parks, parks is like a really great one - is most people are really invested in their local park. So when we go out to a community and say there's money here is specifically for improving this asset we get really good engagement in that and we have done kind of detailed stats and things like that where we, you know, smaller villages, you're getting like almost 25-33 [%], you know, like a third of the population is coming out to engage with you on that." ***Moray Participant 11_LocalAuthority***

The comments highlight strong local enthusiasm for playpark PB in the villages across Moray where it has already taken place. Demographic data (Figure 17) from another playpark PB exercise also show a wide spread of ages participating in the process. While the data does not disaggregate at the level of elderly people, other available data collected as part of the same process shows that approximately 12% of those participating were grandparents (Moray Council, n.d.-b). There appears to be a wide inter-generational spread of citizens engaging in Moray playpark PB's. However, such processes may hold less appeal for individuals and families without young children.

Figure 17 Morven Playpark PB Age Demographics, Findochty



Source: Moray Council, n.d.-b

Addressing accessibility concerns for those with diverse needs can promote inclusion. This is a significant challenge given the broad spectrum of diverse needs that can be found in any given region (Moray Council, n.d.-b). Underrepresentation of non-native English speakers was noted as a specific gap in Fife, according to one interviewee who has organised PB events for the local council.

> *"So I think one of the failings from our PB activity in the community that I operated in was that we did not have folk where English wasn't their first language coming along in any great shape or form."* ***Fife Participant 8_LocalAuthority***

The importance of recognising and addressing the different needs of diverse groups is underscored by such observations. For PB to be more inclusive in Fife, a greater focus on the needs of foreign language speakers would be needed.

A similar awareness of accessibility issues is reflected in comments from a council representative in Moray, particularly regarding disability:

> *"So we've got a number of inclusive bits of kit, so inclusive is not just people [in] wheelchairs...but there is sometimes issues with the accessibility of them, so we've got bits of kit that they can use, but can they get to them? So there's a gap in that kind of sphere, and I suppose the missing link... because if we go to schools, do we really capture it? Possibly not..."* ***Moray Participant 9_LocalAuthority***

This highlights an important gap in inclusion. Accessibility challenges persist in access and engagement with people with disabilities. The lack of targeted participation from this group appears to be a significant omission, undermining the inclusive potential of the PB process.

A closer examination of the characteristics of those that are commonly engaging in PB in Moray and Fife shows that self-selection limits true inclusivity. In Fife, concerns around certain groups dominating were a common observation. While in Moray, a regularly shared concern regarding aspects they felt could be improved, was that processes were too often limited to certain types of people or identities.

In Fife, while participation may appear diverse on the surface, concerns persist about reliance on familiar groups, as comments from a council representative highlight.

> *"... groups are very self-selecting, so that isn't an inclusive or diverse bunch... although in saying that ... we've got a better range now than we've ever had of opportunities for inclusivity within groups... but it's about how do we make sure we're we are getting our tentacles to the right places, to yeah not just pick our friends and I think that be just as bad because you end up with, well if it's a disabled group – "well we always go to these people". Well, that that isn't any more inclusive."* ***Fife Participant 6_LocalAuthority***

Certain groups are more likely to put themselves forward to participate in PB, and familiarity between groups and the council leads to further opportunities to engage in the future – particularly when the council faces time and resource constraints.

A similar dynamic of self-selection is found in Moray, where people who regularly participate locally are more likely to engage with PB:

> *"I don't think they're that representative. Generally, it's a certain group of people that engage with stuff that they're not necessarily the harder to reach people and people that don't traditionally participate in these sorts of things. So it tends to be the same people..."* ***Moray Participant 12_CSO***

The persistence of self-selection in both cases suggests the need for targeted strategies to expand engagement beyond those people that regularly choose to participate in PB.

6.2.2. Quality of Discussion: pockets of good practice and innovation

A central feature of PB in Scotland is that delivery extends beyond local governments to CSOs, schools and community stakeholder groups playing active roles as either organisers or intermediaries (See Tables 5 and 6 in Chapter 4). The type of processes that each of these delivers

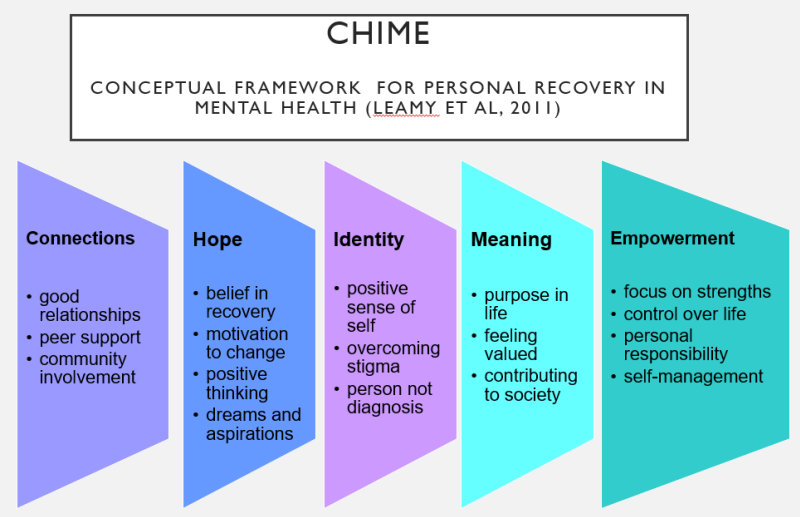
varies. In broad terms, small grants are largely left within the remit of CSOs in Moray, while Fife Council still undertakes small grant processes (Fife Council, 2023b). To illustrate the scale of CSO involvement in the two cases, one CSO in Fife carried out no less than 7 PB events with specific funding for identified priorities (Porter, n.d.). In Moray, non-Council PB's accounted for approximately 50% of PB processes carried out during the 2018-2022 period (Money for Moray, 2018, Moray Council, 2023b, Hendry and Brown, 2019, Scottish Government, 2023b).

A key finding is that CSO-run processes in Fife are more deliberative in nature and feature facilitated small group discussions, as exemplified by the following comments from a PB participant.

> *"... the way we did it, breaking it down into the smaller groups, people got the opportunity to talk ... so that works really well, and once the ones that were having the bit of friction started listening to eachother, you know, it was good. I quite like that - the idea of things being done that way instead of just the Council coming in and telling you here's what's going to happen."*
>
> ***Fife Participant 4_Citizen***

The facilitators and the set-up of the event were felt to foster constructive dialogue, creating a deliberative atmosphere in which participants are genuinely listening to each other and trying to find common ground. This contrasts with council-led formats which are described as more restrictive. In Moray, civil society actors have experimented with innovative approaches, such as the 'CHIME' conceptual framework (see Figure 18) from mental health to frame recent small grant PB events. The framework prioritises strengths, good relationships, feeling valued, and contributing to society, thereby positioning PB processes to be welcoming goal-oriented events. However, while the framework shows a consideration of deliberative values, the discussion stage of CSO-run processes in Moray are invariably limited to a panel of people. The vote stage where most participants attend is less deliberative, as the below comment from an interviewee illustrates.

Figure 18 CHIME Framework



Source: Hendry and Brown, 2019

> *"So the funding officer or people on the panel will spend a lot of time looking at each project and discussing the various merits and problems with applications. So that's... you get some quality*

time spent by the people who are deciding. In the votes not everybody's like that and you could be overwhelmed by people again…" ***Moray Participant 7_Mixed***

The panel engages in reasoned and detailed discussion about each application, yet the wider public do not get chance to participate in this aspect. Moreover, there is even doubt about the extent to which the panel discussions affect proceedings, as the below comments from a civil society representative suggest.

"And then it doesn't really feel like your opinion's listened to because projects that the general consensus was they don't meet the remit or they're not up to scratch, were still included. So you're not… you don't really feel that there's much point in being there if they're not going to take on board what you're discussing." ***Moray Participant 12_CSO***

Not all of those who participate in CSO-led processes in Moray feel that their views are listened to, resulting in projects being put forward to a final vote that do not represent their views. While CSOs in Moray support PB, the extent to which they promote high-quality discussions is less apparent than in Fife. CSO-run processes in Moray typically restrict discussions to small panels of people and there are doubts about the extent to which these panels are engaging in meaningful discussion and assessment of applications. The design of CSO-led processes in Moray contrasts to the more fully discursive and thoughtfully facilitated processes noted in Fife.

Turning to PB processes organised by local government, Fife Council's recent track record of delivering small-grant PB exercises stands out, given the common challenges associated with the potential for good quality discussion in this model. However, several of Fife's small-grant processes incorporated a multi-month "debate" stage into official timelines (Community Choices, 2020, Community Choices, 2022), ranging from two months up to six months in the case of the 'let's talk about transporting people' exercise, with signposting to forums set-up to facilitate online discussion (Community Choices, 2019). The below comments from a council staff member explain this further.

"When we took it [discussion on PB project applications] out into the wider community, we didn't really feel like we had the space to do that in the same way. But what we did do was encourage people to talk about it in the community. So in the newsletter there was a little bit about "here's. what the activities are, here's what's kind of going to be going on."" ***Fife Participant 8_LocalAuthority***

With an awareness of the challenge of facilitating discussions between large segments of people, Fife Council has tried to incorporate deliberation into its design through other means – such as online discussions and encouraging dialogue in the community. While it is difficult to know the

extent to which this happened in practice, it is a feature of small-grant PB designs in Fife that was not evident in Moray.

Evidence of effective design features promoting productive discussions in Fife was highlighted by a local authority interviewee, noting how the use of deliberative tools helped to guide discussions, ensuring they remain focused on key priority issues.

> *"... so we used the PLACE standard ... at that point in time we were being very much encouraged by Scottish Government because the PLACE standard was seen to be the one of the key tools that you would use in in terms of that more concise and more focused discussion on place and improvement of place. So...that allowed us to work through the 14 different quadrants around about safety, maintenance, green space."* ***Fife Participant 12_LocalAuthority***

Fife Council has been utilising formally recognised tools to support deliberations that are focused on the priority issues at hand. Moreover, Fife Council has also been participating in the DEMOTEC project, experimenting with deliberative models of PB (DEMOTEC, 2021). Taken together, these examples show an eagerness to innovate and try to encourage structured dialogue within the existing modes of PB delivery.

Moray Council PB processes during 2018-2022 have typically been school-based PB events and PB processes concerned with refurbishing local playparks (Moray Council, 2023b). These formats – broadly based around one budget for one discrete project – provided different set-ups within which to potentially have meaningful dialogue. As the below interviewee who was involved in a school PB process note, this was a positive experience for them.

> *"I think the quality [of] discussion was really good. It was very positive the discussion - everybody engaged in it, you know, even some other parents are very, quiet, quite reserved. Usually just come and sit in the back. They would, you know, they would have their say."* ***Moray Participant 4_Mixed***

The above comments present a situation in which discussion was open, good natured, and welcoming to those who are less forthright in their views. As such, the process seems to have been in a good place to generate varied suggestions and meaningful discussion about the merits of different courses of action. Similar views were expressed by the same interviewee about the engagement of children as well. Elsewhere, regarding playpark PB processes, engagement between communities and local government during these periods is valuable according to comments from an interviewee at the local authority:

> *"It's about communities learning about the processes that Council have to go through to make decisions…To procure goods, to make sure they're within safety limits and guidance… [in playpark PB example] they had gained a lot of understanding and I maybe wouldn't go as far as to say empathy, but they could see the challenges"*. ***Moray Participant 10_LocalAuthority***

The opportunity for communities to increase their knowledge about the workings of local government, the challenges, and the trade-offs of decisions is an added benefit of playpark PB in Moray.

Taken together, it can be said that there are pockets of good practice with regards to discussion quality occurring in both case study locations. With stakeholders in both locations experimenting with design innovation to strengthen this dynamic. On balance, however, Fife's combination of highly deliberative CSO-run PB processes, coupled with a structured approach to maximising discussion quality in its own diverse PB processes, gives it an edge over Moray. There is an appetite for more discussion-based processes in both locations. However, there are doubts about the extent to which deliberations are being utilised sufficiently to lead to more effective decision-making, which will be the focus of the following section.

6.2.3. Decision-making: issues with fairness and superficiality, attempts to mitigate

The most typical decision-making model in place in both case studies is ballot-based voting. However, this method has limitations, as highlighted by a local council interviewee, who candidly acknowledged weaknesses in fostering robust project assessment.

> *"…one of one of the issues you run into is are people, you know, taking decisions on the, on the basis of the, the quality of a presentation rather than the substance…"* ***Fife Participant 5_LocalAuthority***

This view suggests that decisions are often influenced by superficial reasons, such as presentation style, rather than an evaluation of the proposal. This poses questions about the extent to which final decisions give due consideration to community interests as is expected in deliberative theory (see section 2.4.3).

A similar dynamic was described in Moray – including from the below interviewee who has had experience organising CSO-led PB events in the locality.

"I think people kind of voted on the... limited the information ... and just with their hearts, I suppose." ***Moray Participant 5_Mixed***

The admission of "limited" information informing people's decisions would appear to undermine the process in terms of arriving at conclusions based on a careful assessment of what would be the best use of funding. While the view that people vote with their "hearts" leaves open the prospect that voters are not considering the pros and cons of options available to them. Such an analysis is underscored by evidence that shows one CSO's process provides only up to 2 minutes time for presentations on project proposals and only 2 minutes for questions and answers (Money for Moray, 2018).

Another notable aspect to explore is the local authority's role in shaping the decision stage of PB processes. On this aspect, there were again similarities observed between the two cases. One process in Fife diverged from the standard voting format, with eventual decision-making remaining with the local authority as opposed to participants, as the following comments help explain.

"...the other side I suppose is we never quite got to that point was effectively, we didn't do it as a "we're gonna let you choose". We did it as a very consultative "work with us to design the new service". So I think we would have had more control over the outcome at the end." ***Fife Participant 6_LocalAuthority***

The absence of a tangible link between participating and final decisions in the 'let's talk about transport' PB exercise (see table 5) could be understood by some as not descriptive of a true PB process. However, Fife Council's own records do consider the transport focused process to be PB (Fife Council, 2023b). Regardless of this definitional question, the noteworthy point is the admission of having "more control" over the final decisions, which runs counter to the idea of a true PB process and is more in line with consultation. This subject will be returned to in the proceeding section on embeddedness (see section 6.3.2).

Meanwhile, the below example from Moray from an interviewee tasked with organising a school PB process highlighted efforts to reduce choice for participants as one of the features of the decision stage.

"At one point we had lots of different options and [Moray Council] were saying, well, maybe getting it down to... like 3 choices would probably better than having like 5 or 6. So they certainly guided me." ***Moray Participant 2_Mixed***

There are practical considerations for why a specific number of final options to vote on would be recommended for organisers, and it is apparent that participants were involved in the process of

whittling down selections to three final options. However, the position also appears arbitrary and one that reduces choice for voters. As such, while at a smaller scale, it also indicates a desire to retain a level of control over outcomes. I believe further evidence of this mindset can be seen in the regularly utilised approach of setting specific themes for PB processes, rather than having a fully open process in which any ideas can be put forward (Moray Council, 2023b). While it is understandable that governments would want PB to contribute to wider priorities, there is a risk that if the themes selected do not align well with the priorities of local people, then it could reduce engagement, or lead to a sense that PB is not sufficiently rooted in the public sphere. This matter will be returned to later in this chapter (see section 6.3.2).

Nevertheless, while there are evident tensions in trying to ensure a fair and sensible process, this research has also uncovered some positive signs that organisers have been working diligently to fine-tune decision-making. For example, adaptations to voting options may have helped improve the fairness of PB processes in Fife, according to one interviewee at Fife Council.

> *"...what I liked about their process was they had the money available but they split it into small and large grants, so they had, you could apply it up to £999 for one category and then another one was 1000 to 5000. So you didn't necessarily have the small groups weren't necessarily in competition with the bigger groups so that kind of more levelled the playing field. So they kind of had two pots within that."* ***Fife Participant 7_LocalAuthority***

By dividing the available resources into small and large streams, organisers of the above PB process have positioned smaller entities to have a clearer chance of securing support through the process. Such an approach may mitigate some of the worst effects of a popular vote, which benefits those with greater visibility and constituent bases. This view was shared by several interviewees.

Another way of adapting the decision stage was to take steps to ensure all participants receive a proportion of the funding as a show of solidarity, as illustrated below by an interviewee with experience as both a PB organiser and participant.

> *"I remember us going to an event at some fancy distillery out in Speyside and that was a nice event, but what they did was they trickled the money down. So say the top amount was 1000 rather than the top five getting the thousand, we would get 800...And then 600, 4--... So everybody got something. which was really nice... rather than people not getting anything."* ***Moray Participant 13_Mixed***

This proportional allocation approach ensured that all contenders received some funding. It's plausible to posit that such an approach may have reduced some of the more competitive aspects

of the process and helped promote an atmosphere of solidarity and reciprocity. However, there are possible drawbacks for this approach for the ability to plan and deliver specific proposals, as noted by a civil society actor and previous PB applicant.

> *"...sometimes if you don't get that full amount, it's like, 'well, I can't really do what we want to do with it'. So then there's not really any benefit..."* ***Moray Participant 12_CSO***

Therefore, the need to balance efforts to promote solidarity with ensuring effective delivery of projects funded by PB is important to consider carefully when making adaptations to decision-making. Moreover, while there may be benefits for the atmosphere of PB processes to ensuring no proposals are outright rejected regardless of their merits, there is a risk that such an approach reduces the quality of decision-making and fails to appropriately endorse the strongest proposals.

Overall, neither case can be seen to be strongly reflecting deliberative values in decision-making, however, attempts to adapt to improve fairness and reduce competitiveness of processes are to be commended regardless. Beyond micro-level questions of PB design, however, it is important to consider macro-level factors – the way PB connects to the wider democratic system in which it is situated. The next section focuses on this topic.

6.3. PB Embeddedness in Fife and Moray

PB embeddedness concerns the degree to which PB is compatible with and working in balance with the wider democratic system in which it operates (see section 2.3.5). The concept goes beyond considerations of institutionalisation to consider informal aspects, such as the attitudes and roles of relationships with other stakeholders and fora. Scholars identify three dimensions for assessing embeddedness: temporal embeddedness, spatial embeddedness and embeddedness practices (Bussu et al., 2022).

6.3.1. Temporal Embeddedness: low frequency of PB with isolated examples of greater frequency; nebulous system alignment

Temporal embeddedness of PB considers temporal dynamics such as the frequency of PB and interaction with the wider policy and political system, e.g. the local government administration and other actors (ibid).

A key PB weakness in Fife and Moray has been its stop-start, piecemeal roll-out. Neither location has regular year-to-year PB processes, with events taking place around different localities in an ad hoc manner (Fife Council, 2023b, Moray Council, 2023b). Several interviewees noted that the COVID-19 pandemic has been a further obstacle in this respect. Nevertheless, there are isolated examples of more regular processes. In Fife, multiple processes have been held since 2018 in

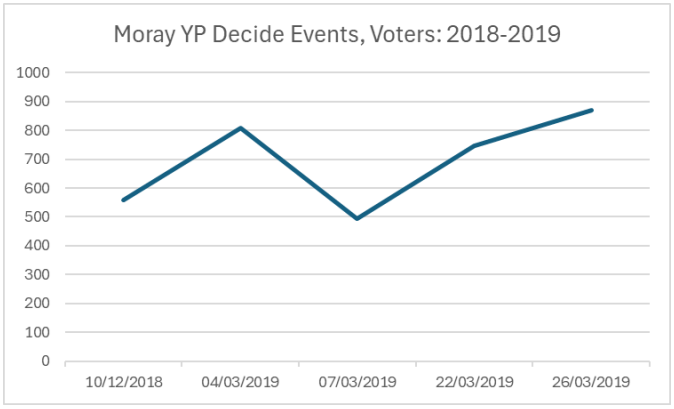
Glenrothes, Northeast (NE) Fife, and Levenmouth (Fife Council, 2023b). In addition, in years prior to 2018, multiple events have also been held across Kirkcaldy (ibid). Increased frequency in PB processes saw benefits including increased engagement and growing faith in the potential of the process to deliver, as the following comments from a local authority staff member illustrate.

> *"We'd see how [attendance] would grow cause year one was very different for year two, very different from year three…The Gallatown [Kirkcaldy] community were very much about social activities, things that would bring people together and enhance their lives, and…the castle community [Kirkcaldy], where the trust wasn't quite there in the same way were about …speed bumps and buses to school for the kids…it was very much about aesthetics… almost like a tester. 'We'll see how you deal with this, and then we'll see if we'll let you into our community and into our lives', and it does pay dividends."* ***Fife Participant 8_LocalAuthority***

Not only did repeat processes during the period of analysis result in increased participation, but also a shift in the types of requests being made via PB. According to the above comments, the social focus of Gallatown's PB projects reflected a greater level of trust in authorities that had built up over time and multiple PB processes. While in the Castle area (within Kirkcaldy), where PB was new to the community, more basic projects were requested with the prospect that support requests could become more advanced during future processes if familiarity and trust grew.

In Moray, a series of five PB events for young people in 2018-2019 showed positive trends in terms of growing participation (see Figure 19). While the official data of Moray Council also evidences that frequent PB processes to refurbish playparks have taken during the period of review (Moray Council, 2023b). The benefits of greater frequency for increasing awareness are exemplified by the following comments - first from a civil society representative involved in organising the youth series, second from a council staff member involved with playpark PB.

Figure 19 Attendance of Moray YP Events (2018-2019)



Source: Moray School Bank, 2019

> *"And so we delivered participatory budgeting right across Moray for young people, which… was commended and was used as an example at the participatory budgeting conference the Scottish Government and because it was…a massive success."* **Moray Participant 2_CSO**

> *"We've been to quite a few different geographical areas [to conduct playpark PB processes] now…and so the more area that we go over, the more awareness that is."* **Moray Participant 9_LocalAuthority**

On the occasions where PB has been more widespread and frequent in Moray, it has been successful, and interest and engagement has grown over time. As will be further explored in section 6.3.2, repeat processes have also contributed to a more efficient and streamlined process of delivering playpark PB by the local administration in Moray.

Alignment between PB and the local bureaucracy in the two case studies presents mixed findings, with this dynamic having implications for how regularly held PB has been up to now in Fife. Government structures and capacity are an impediment to consistent and regular PB events in Fife, as the below comments from a Fife Council staff member note, echoing those made by other interviewees.

> *"Whereas as you know the corporate body just grind a lot more slowly - stuff has to appear in different areas at different times because of resource and all the rest of it."* ***Fife Participant 12_Local Authority***

Currently, there is a misalignment between the functions and purpose of PB and the existing structures of, and resources available to, the local administration. As a result, roll-out has been uneven and inconsistent, with the bureaucracy invariably getting in the way rather than assisting progress.

In Moray, the Council's procurement policy placed timing pressures on a playpark PB process, as the below comments from a community member involved in organising the event explains.

> *"They were in the process of changing their procurement at Moray Council, which gave us a really set deadline. So we had to fundraise by the end of June. So that was about the March, February, the grant of the 50,000 we had to meet our funding target by the June because they had to put in a tender before a certain date based on their procurement system… So we had a really tight deadline."* ***Moray Participant 3_Mixed***

PB in Moray faces similar challenges in the way it fits into the local bureaucracy as in Fife. In this instance, procurement practices placed significant pressures on the timeline for delivering the PB exercise. However, there have also been positive changes in annual budget cycles that have played more of an enabling role for PB's prospects, as the below comments from a local authority staff member explain.

> *"There's been a recognition that we can carry forward [budgets]. So as long as the project is awarded and it's arranged and it's scheduled and it's ordered, that the actual spend can carry forward a financial year. So that's really useful because normally the biggest barrier to PB that that would really need changing is your financial year constraints…. But perhaps when things ping backwards, we still have a capital programme, we're still doing PB, but that potentially could be the biggest barrier that you have to have things invoiced by the end of the financial year…then then it becomes almost unviable to do that…"* ***Moray Participant 9_LocalAuthority***

In this example, the bureaucracy – albeit temporarily – has adapted which has had benefits for the PB process. This flexibility has allowed for a smoother and more efficient delivery of playpark PB's in Moray, leading to more processes being able to take place each year. While this practice was an isolated example of such adaptations occurring in Moray, it is an important one to emphasise. Given the status of playpark PB's in Moray as being among the most regularly occurring of PB exercises in the area, with several processes taking place per year (Moray Council, 2023b), it is plausible that this higher frequency is leading to iterative learning and improvements to the process to further embed it (see section 1.6).

Beyond alignment with the workings of local government, alignment with the wider participatory system is also important for considerations of temporal embeddedness. PB is not the sole participation mechanism present in local democracy in Fife and Moray. The extent to which PB interacts with other participative channels, such as local development plans, can help to support a coherent participatory system (Bussu et al., 2022).

In Fife, local place plans and community action plans were frequently referred to by interviewees. The local place plans set out proposals for how local land could be used and developed (Scottish Government, 2022a), while community action plans set out local development priorities as well as a strategy for making them a reality (Scottish Community Alliance and Community Enterprise, 2020). In Moray, interviewees most regularly cited community asset transfers (CAT) as a policy tool providing space for local participation. CAT's give communities the right to make requests to become the new owners of any public asset that they believe they can make better use of (Scottish Government, 2020). This observed difference between local system dynamics aligns with recent data on CAT's which show a lot more activity in Moray on such transfers during 2021/22 than had occurred in Fife in the same period (Fife Council, 2024a, Moray Council, 2022b).

The different emphasis on local place plans and community asset transfers reflect the policy

context in each location. For example, it may indicate that Moray has more assets eligible for transfer. It may also reflect the (recent) preferences of the leadership in each local authority and the strategies being pursued. However, the focus of this section is to understand the dynamics of how PB and these diverse mechanisms *align*, and it is that which I will now examine.

Out of the two cases, Fife was the location in which synergy between different participation components was most widespread. As exemplified with the below statements, first from a council staff member and second from a CSO representative.

> *"I don't think we're miles away from correlation between the interest of the local community and some of the priorities that we're bringing forward [in PB]... As I say the local plan tends to chime with folk. We've tested the recent local [place] plan with the with the community, there was nothing jarring..."* ***Fife Participant 12_LocalAuthority***
>
> *"...following up the Community Action plan, the Community Choices Fund was available - we applied successfully....And we tried to base it around... a Community Action plan for Methil... previously led by [other CSO] ...And ..., we had gone in to get funding ... and we tried to tie it very closely to the action plan."* ***Fife Participant 11_CSO***

These examples show how PB events in this ward in Fife have been aligned with priorities previously identified through local place plans or community action plans, indicating alignment between the specific processes. Furthermore, there were approximately 10 CSO-led exercises in areas across Fife during 2018-2022 which combined PB and community action planning, with 7 of these having specific budget attached, and at least 1 including additional funding provided by the local council (Porter, n.d.). These action planning PB processes have been detailed previously in the thesis (see table 5 in chapter 4; also section 6.2.2).

By contrast, the alignment between PB and other participatory mechanisms in Moray is less consistent, although there are still examples of alignment to be identified. From a review of available documents in Moray, it was found that a small-grants PB in the burgh of Buckie in early 2018 called for projects focused on place and the economy (Moray Council, 2017), which were 2 of the 3 priorities set out in Buckie's 2019-2020 local place plan (Community Planning Partnership, 2022). Furthermore, processes focused on youth (PB Scotland, 2019c) and active travel (Moray Council, 2022a) in 2019 and 2022/3, respectively, also in Buckie, tackled issues identified in the aforementioned plan. Elsewhere, the issue of infrastructure for youth was raised in the Lossiemouth community action plan 2015-2020 (Lossiemouth Community Trust, n.d.), with the area subsequently included in a series of youth-focused PB events in 2018/2019 (PB Scotland, 2019c).

Given the preponderance of CATs in Moray it may be that reduced system alignment is linked to a difference between CATs and PB that means they are not as well suited to work in tandem than other participatory channels.

Regardless of the degree of alignment, what is true of both case studies is that CSOs have been integral to advancing this systemic coherence thus far. The role of CSOs will be returned to and expanded upon in the following two sections.

6.3.2. Spatial Embeddedness: unsettled multi-level PB, wider policy issue focus in Fife

Spatial embeddedness of PB concerns the location of the mechanism within the democratic system, including at what level of governance PB is typically undertaken and managed (e.g. area or ward), which policy issues the PB processes are concerned with reaching decisions on, and the extent to which PB processes lead to policy impact (Bussu et al., 2022, Edelenbos et al., 2008). More spatially embedded processes are situated closer to decision-making power and therefore hold more influence within a democratic system. Strong connections of a governance mechanism such as PB to civil society can also be a sign of spatial embeddedness, as such a status can provide an alternative power source for influencing decision-makers, holding them to account, and/or ensuring relevancy of policymaking (Bussu et al., 2022, Henderson et al., 2021).

When considering the spaces in which a participatory mechanism is embedded, its specific location within the governance structure is important to examine. The administrative structure of Scotland is a diverse one owing to various reforms that have taken place over several decades (see sub-section 4.3.2.1). The administrative set-up in Fife gives power to area committees to deliver PB, as the following comments from a local authority staff member note.

> *"...we've got a decentralised structure with 7 area committees....And...they have certain powers and whatever. And that's where a lot of the kind of local examples of PB, you know, happen and there have been some good ones that probably go beyond the grant giving. But with, I mean we're currently trying to push more stuff down to that that level...*
>
> *So, some have been better than others at doing that. But I think it's up you know it's up to them if you're going to devolve it then you need to devolve it."* ***Fife Participant 5_LocalAuthority***

The roll-out of PB in Fife appears to be going hand in hand with a gradual increase in powers for area committees. Official council records show that PB processes have been focused on area, town, sub-

regional (e.g. Northeast Fife and Southwest Fife), and authority-wide (across Fife) levels (Fife Council, 2023b). As the above comments highlight, this shift in governance has opened opportunities for PB to take place at more localised levels. However, the above comments also highlight the challenges that come with the decentralisation process, that it is harder for the central authority to control the quality of processes when responsibility rests more locally.

In Moray, the utilisation of decentralised structures for delivering PB is currently being considered, as the following comments note.

> *"It might be worth using our networks like our area forums or our community councils to oversee the [PB] process, so it has that local dynamic and local group and local people and that again, if they are involved in something, it makes people say "Oh well, it's worth being a member of a Community council or a group" because you can make a difference in your community."* ***Moray Participant 10_LocalAuthority***

The empowerment of decentralised governance fora to deliver PB represents a potential change from current practice. The leveraging and support of these local administrative platforms to deliver PB is not currently standard practice in Moray, with centrally located council staff remaining dominant. The risk for spatial embeddedness is that PB processes delivered locally would be less closely tied to decision-making power.

Official records in Moray show that PB processes have been focused on village, area, town, multiple town, and local authority-wide (across Moray) levels, with the latter only occurring once in the 2018-2022 period (Moray Council, 2023b). Therefore, these findings show that PB in Fife has more presence at the local authority-wide level than Moray, and PB in Moray has more presence at the village level than Fife. It's possible that contextual factors linked to differences in size and structure of the local authorities have played a role in this difference. Regardless, despite a different approach to administering PB in Moray, it is apparent that that both locations implement PB at multiple levels at the time of writing, but that local governance structures are currently more clearly empowered to deliver PB in Fife.

The role of national policy, particularly the Community Empowerment Act, has influenced the embeddedness of PB in Fife. However, the act has also introduced challenges, as noted by a Fife council representative:

> *"...my other personal beef is the government's Community Empowerment Act, which from my point of view I think was just designed to disempower local government and go around them as they have done with a number of other things, particularly schools, and using the*

excuse of empowering communities to actually take money away from local government and direct it themselves…" ***Fife Participant 5_LocalAuthority***

In the mind of this interviewee, there have been adverse effects of the Community Empowerment Act, which gave rise to PB, that have led to local authorities being bypassed on certain issues.

In Moray, the national direction of PB has caused difficulties for the local authority, according to the following comment.

"…we got the news…there's going to be millions coming to the northeast to do like just transition and we're like, very excited about that as local authority officers… then we were cut out and it went to…third sector community organisations - [the Scottish government] just felt like it would be a better fit." ***Moray 11 Participant 11_LocalAuthority***

The Just Transition PB (see Table 6) has been the largest funded PB exercise in Moray to date (ibid). The Just Transition initiative's overall focus is to provide £500m of resources over a ten-year period to assist communities in the Northeast of Scotland transition towards more environmentally friendly practices in a way that is socially just and fair (Scottish Government, 2023b). However, Moray Council has been overlooked by the Scottish government in implementing the Just Transition's PB process in favour of CSOs whom it felt were more suitable to undertake the work. Nevertheless, from a procedural standpoint there are risks from the council not having a seat at the table. When coupled with the understanding that CSOs are playing a particularly prominent role in the delivery of PB, this creates a risk where the primary government authority at the local level is being disempowered with regards to PB.

As was already detailed (see section 6.2.1), there is a notable difference between the two case studies when it comes to the breadth of issues that each location has focused on thus far with PB processes. While the implications for this have been explored at the micro (design) level, there are also implications for macro dynamics (embeddedness). According to embeddedness theory, spatial embeddedness is greater among institutions that encompass a wide policy space in their decision-making role, as opposed to more narrowly focused initiatives (Bussu et al., 2022). From this perspective, the broader policy issue focus in Fife PB compared to what is found in Moray, suggests a greater extent of spatial embeddedness when it comes to policy issues in Fife. The greater breadth of focus of PB in Fife thus far indicates that the mechanism has permeated more decision spaces in this region than in Moray, improving its prospects for relevance, impact, and continued implementation.

Another aspect of spatial embeddedness of PB is the degree to which the mechanism is connected to civil society and the broader public sphere (see section 2.5). The literature views civil society actors as a critical piece of a participatory system, as these stakeholders can ensure PB has (or retains) an ability to transform existing governance approaches and challenge traditional power (Bussu et al., 2022). As has already been detailed, PB in each case study is a mechanism that has been developed in significant proximity to and with involvement of civil society actors in Fife and Moray, with roles in trialling design innovations and assisting in community outreach being notable in helping to shape PB in each location, in addition to roles organising PB processes independently from the local authorities (see sections 6.2.1, 6.2.2 and 6.2.3). Another noteworthy aspect of the relationship between PB and civil society is the benefits that participating provided for organisations to widen their local networks, strengthening ties with other organisations and groups, as the following comments highlight.

> *"Another bit, of course, was that local groups met other local groups, that they wouldn't have met... [if they hadn't participated in PB]."* ***Fife Participant 3_Mixed***

PB in Fife has created a new avenue for CSOs to forge connections that they would not have had if they did not participate in the PB process. Within a spatial embeddedness frame, the strengthening of civil society can be seen as augmenting the system of participation, catalysing civil society to grow and/or influence the development of PB from the outside. A similar contribution in bringing civil society closer together has been noted in Moray, as these reflections from a civil society representative indicate.

> *"...the exercise we did in social isolation. There were quite a few groups out there doing stuff helping us to help alleviate social isolation that don't know about one another...and a lot of them are doing similar stuff so we're trying to kind of link these groups together."* ***Moray Participant 5_CSO***

In this PB example, groups with similar priorities were linked together because of participating in a PB exercise at the same time. Thus, bringing potential benefits for furthering outcomes to alleviate social isolation in the region that seemingly would not have occurred otherwise, due to the groups not previously being aware of each other's work.

PB spatial embeddedness also concerns whether and how the mechanism relates to the wider public sphere, including the extent to which PB is reflective of and responsive to locally salient issues. One such issue is transport which is an ongoing concern for local people, as the below comments from a civil society representative in Fife detail.

"I think it's [transport] always something that's in the background because. I mean, even when I'm standing at a bus stop, if a bus is late... I think there's issues with a lot of the buses....one bus I get from Rosyth it's actually a lot of school [kids] get on it instead of the school buses. And I've noticed this even on Facebook pages ... because people it's late because there's so many children getting on the bus to the high schools... that kicks people off just by putting something out." ***Fife Participant 13_CSO***

Transport challenges are a persistent issue discussed throughout the region due to poor service that is not meeting the needs of the community. These challenges have been regularly cited in the local press in recent years, with anti-social behaviour on the transport network attracting demands from a local MSP for greater action (Goodall, 2024). The withdrawal of cheaper travel for children on school buses also attracted coverage in the local press (Stark, 2020). The change in fare policies may go some way to explaining the increasing numbers of children relying on standard buses, as described above.

Figure 20 Photo from Fife

Source: Private Photograph, 2023

Through my own travel around Fife during the research, I observed a degree of anger that appeared to be targeting transport infrastructure in the area. As the below quotation from my field journal explains, as well as the indicative photograph (see Figure 20).

Passing through Fife on the bus you can see the incredible diversity of life experiences people must have here. The areas of deprivation are eye catching though in their stark differences to other places. Vandalised bus stops are commonplace. ***Fife Field Journal, 22/06/2023***

It cannot be said with any certainty that vandals were focused on bus stops for any specific reason linked to concerns around transport. However, it is plausible that at least in some instances the vandalism may be a direct result of frustrations coming to the surface – particularly given the issue of school children resorting to using standard buses instead of school buses. Interviewees at the local authority noted that the decision to undertake a Transport PB was a strategic decision to move Fife closer to its 1% target for funding allocated via PB. However, the decision also had the advantage of strengthening the connection of PB to the concerns of the public, which was conceivably also contributing factor behind the selection. Indeed, the council undertook a sustained effort to mobilise the community around the process (Fife Council, 2020), which included coverage in the

local press (TransportXtra, 2019). Additionally, another, smaller PB process focused on improving transport infrastructure in Southwest Fife was launched in 2019. Nevertheless, despite these positive examples of working to connect PB to the public sphere, the large transport exercise did not grant decision-making power to citizens, with the design being more consultative in format with the local authority making final decisions (see section 6.2.3). A reduction of the decision-making power of PB risks undermining the extent to which the process was connected to the public sphere and challenging existing power.

Beyond transport, the issues of deprivation and inequality were also visible and significant in Fife, as the below excerpt from my field notes reflected upon.

> *Driving through Lochgelly today on the bus was a vivid picture of the gulf between the haves and the have nots in Fife. Not that there has been a lot of wealth on show, but the deprived areas look like a different place entirely from the more affluent town centres and leafy suburbs.* ***Fife Field Journal, 20/6/23***

Fife is a diverse location with areas of the region having challenging economic circumstances (see sub-section 4.3.2.1). The issue of poverty was raised as a priority in interviews by residents and council members alike. As noted previously, Fife Council held PB events focusing on social isolation, community improvements, and anti-poverty during the 2018-2022 period (see 6.2.1). Moreover, work to commission employability services were also prioritised for PB beginning in 2020 (Fife Council, 2023b). These examples show an attempt to connect PB to local concerns linked to economic circumstances, which could be further built upon in future.

In Moray, my visit coincided with a local campaign against the closure of a local GP surgery, which also attracted coverage in the local news (Lawson, 2023). The photograph (Figure 21) was taken outside the council building on 29/06/23. It depicts placards expressing frustration at the decision to shutter the practice (as best exemplified by the dismay expressed through "two buses to see your GP or a nurse? Ridiculous!!!") Meanwhile the slogans "Talk to us!" and "No Compromise" suggest a belief that there is a lack of dialogue on the issue with the Council. The emphasis of accessing doctors' appointments in the protest, also highlights transport as a challenge in Moray, as it is in Fife. Indeed, I experienced this issue first hand during the time I spent in Moray, as the below notes from my field journal reveal.

Figure 21 Photo from Moray

Source: Private Photograph, 2023

> *On the way back from Elgin today the buses engine wouldn't start. The driver mentioned that this was two days running and that he had also broken down earlier in the day.* ***Moray Field Journal 29/6/23***

Unreliability of buses surely further compounds the issue of accessing GPs in Moray, which is illustrative of a relationship between the two issues. Meanwhile, transport was also noted as a concern of a planned protest described in a press article from 2022, with energy prices and the cost of living also cited as mobilising issues for local dissenters (Whitfield, 2022).

A review of recent PB events in Moray in recent years provides insights into whether and how PB has addressed the above issues as well as relationship with the broader public sphere. As was detailed in section 6.2.2, health has been a focus of some of the PB events, with those organised by a local CSO having a particular focus on health and well-being, with the support of the drug and alcohol partnership (PB Scotland, 2019b). There is also evidence that health was a focus earlier on in the history of PB, around 2014-2016 (TSIMoray, n.d). Similarly, economic development and social isolation were also topics of CSO-led processes prior to the beginning of the unit of analysis period (2018-2022) (Money for Moray, 2018). Notably, the Just Transition PB with its focus on the energy transition is also being delivered by CSOs. Therefore, there is a degree of salience of the issues focused on through CSO-led PB processes and those energising local people to protest. The fact that CSOs are so actively involved in delivering PB in Moray is a sign of their significance to the participatory system in the region. However, I argue that the dynamic is a complicated one for spatial embeddedness. Indeed, while CSOs have power to promote PB that is connected to local concerns and challenge existing modes of governance, there is a risk that the influence is narrow in scope and loosely embedded because of the PB processes being discrete, ad hoc programmes that are held mostly separate from the governance structure of the local authority.

In contrast to the CSO-led processes, the PB processes that Moray Council itself has run have been predominantly focused on schools and play parks over the last five years. The only examples tangentially relevant to either transport or health were two PB processes focused on active travel in 2023 (Moray Council, 2023b). Notably, transport was raised in interviews with the local authority as an area where there was interest to undertake PB exercises in the future, however this was not yet the case at the time of the research being conducted. In addition, the Council has not yet focused on economic concerns such as the cost of living in its PB processes. While the performance of schools and condition of playparks are surely also very important to local communities, the narrow focus on these issues thus far has had the effect of limiting the extent of connection of PB to the broader public sphere. In contrast, in Fife, a wider degree of policy focus appears to have positioned

PB to be better connected to the concerns of the public.

6.3.3. Practices of Embeddedness: mixed benefits of legislative framework; collaborative attitudes of stakeholders in Moray less prevalent

Practices of embeddedness concern the formal rules in place to support and sustain PB in a specific locality, such as legislative frameworks or policy instruments, as well as guidelines or regulations for implementing PB (see section 2.5). In addition to the formal realm, practices of embeddedness also refer to informal aspects such as the behaviours and attitudes of key stakeholders that are engaging with PB. Both formal and informal practices need to play enabling roles for overall practices of embeddedness to be considered effective.

Various policies and commitments provide a formal framework for embedding PB practices in Scotland. PB is officially recognised as being central to Scotland's national commitment to citizen participation, which was legislated on with the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act (see section 4.3.1). This legislation was the precursor to the development of a PB Charter and the realisation of a national steering group, which features an important supporting role for COSLA, the umbrella association that brings together all 32 local authorities in the country (see section 4.3.2.1). A key headline commitment was for local authorities to be allocating at least1% of their budgets via PB by the end of 2021, a target that remained in place at the time of writing this thesis (COSLA, 2021). However, in Fife there are mixed views about the value and success of the 1% rule. For example, a local authority representative suggests that the target is challenging to meet, particularly as undertaking large PB processes can be challenging for bureaucracies.

> *"In some ways, we're trading on things like the passenger transport [PB], things we've done before, where as a sort of mainstream process that's deciding how budget will be spent in subsequent years. So we're not going to do a review of passenger transport every year... we're not doing things on the kind of scale to meet the... I think it's 7.9 million is the 1% for Fife."*
> ***Fife Participant 7_LocalAuthority***

While the 1% target encourages ambition and delivery of the largescale Transport PB exercise, it has not been possible to sustain such ambitions to reach the target. In Moray, there are diverse views on the minimum 1% target in terms of its helpfulness to local authorities, with the target not currently being met, according to the following comments from a civil society representative.

> *"...that 1% that is agreed between councils and COSLA - that target isn't being met and there are people definitely making an effort to try and get it met, but I think there are many more*

who are not interested in that target and don't need another thing to worry about and don't see how that can work for them." ***Moray Participant 6_CSO***

It is apparent that the primary rule to promote financing and expansion of PB has had limited success thus far.

Elsewhere, the formal framework to promote quality processes, the PB charter (see section 4.3.1.2), is also worthy of a closer examination. The charter is a valuable initiative to promote shared values in delivery, according to an interviewee who has engaged with PB as both an organiser and a participant.

"I was there in Glasgow when we when we began to write bits of the charters, so I'll have sort of inputted. So yes... I think it is a better way of looking at things, it is about access and equality and parity and all that." ***Fife Participant 3_Mixed***

Whilst this individual was involved in developing this charter, and as such may have some biases about its value, there were similarly positive sentiments expressed by other interviewees. The comments suggest support for the contents of the charter, particularly in the values that it seeks to promote in PB across Scotland. There was a similar sentiment expressed in Moray also, where the charter was considered useful by this civil society representative:

"I think the principles and values are really good. I think that's helpful for everybody." ***Moray Participant 6_CSO***

The charter is a useful document outlining principles and values that seem appropriate for PB in Scotland. However, the extent to which the existing practice of PB in Scotland embodies the principles outlined in the PB charter is mixed thus far. As illustrated by the modest performance in including diverse groups of people in the process, limited detailed discussion on proposals, and voting that is invariably gives advantage to more well-known groups or causes (see sections 6.2.1, 6.2.2, and 6.2.3), it is evident that there is still progress to be made in meeting principles of inclusion, deliberation, and fairness, respectively (see section 4.3.1.2). Deliberation over decision-making is not yet taking place at the level that the charter has envisioned. This is true in both Fife and Moray. While the process may be very much a work in progress in Scotland, the loose nature of the PB charter itself provides a flexible framework that can be tailored to local contexts. The above flexibility has undoubtedly assisted PB organisers in their ability to iterate as and when required. As was already detailed in the section 6.2.3 with the way processes in Fife and Moray have sought to promote greater fairness in final decisions.

The long-term sustainability of PB requires public appreciation and participation. As noted (section 6.2.1), there are positive signs from interview responses and the available attendance data in both cases suggesting that PB events have been popular. In instances where repeat processes have been delivered, engagement has grown further. This evidence is indicative of a demand for participation in both locations.

At the level of local authorities, there is a mixed picture with regards to how widespread support is for PB in each council body. In Fife, multiple participants spoke of the fact that while there was cross-party support for PB in Fife, the changing party-political configuration in the council in recent years had led to support for its roll-out being hindered. The below excerpt from a Fife Council staff member illustrates this point.

> *"I think that probably things [with PB] have slowed down.... I think we've kind of run out of momentum ...it's that kind of leadership and direction around that as well... I feel we're actually starting to fall behind other things are, you know, they've [other locations] got much more of a corporate approach to things [than Fife does]... so I kind of feel Fife is treading water a wee bit in terms of where we are and how it could be and that's partly because the political upheaval [at Council level] has been the last year."* ***Fife Participant Number 7_LocalAuthority***

Political changes at the local level have halted the momentum of PB in Fife, with councils in other locations being seen to be more fully committed to the growth of the mechanism. By contrast, in Moray a different dynamic has been present whereby PB has not been seen as a priority by the party that holds the council leadership.

> *"I think you can see quite clearly in terms of our own local politicians. Those who are members of the SNP and Scottish Greens are absolutely right behind [PB]. Very, very committed, very, very positive, very keen, keen to promote it...The admin group...a conservative group - are concerned that we're not being properly resourced to do the job of the Council and because they're having to make enormous savings...They don't see PB as a priority."* ***Moray Participant Number 8_LocalAuthority***

The lack of financial resources is a concern in both cases. Indeed, there was a shared view amongst senior local authority interviewees in both Fife and Moray that the Scottish government's failure to commit specific financial resources to councils for PB expansion was a major deficit in its strategy. This topic is explored further below.

The Scottish government has displayed a demonstrable commitment to PB (section 4.3.2.2). This commitment has been valuable for the growth of PB, according to one interviewee who has been closely associated with PB for several years.

> *"I think it became easier to talk to politicians about it. When it became Scotland wide... So that was great. So you had national leadership, you had Fife leadership signing up to it..."* ***Fife Participant 3_Mixed***

The comments suggest that the leadership of the Scottish government facilitated wider discussion about and buy-in of the initiative including within Fife. The view that national authorities have been enthusiastic was echoed by an interviewee with experience organising CSO-led PB events in Moray.

> "[we've organised] PB exercises where we've had ministers along...*A lot [of Ministers] are [more into PB than local councillors] yeah. Definitely."* ***Moray Participant 5_CSO***

The visible engagement of MSPs is a strong show of support for PB, and the comments overall reflect well on the support of national authorities – if to the detriment of local figures. However, while this is no doubt appreciated locally, the following comments raised by a member of the local authority in Moray suggest that there is a feeling that efforts to embed PB have been hampered by a lack of financial support from the Scottish government.

> *"I find it ironic that it's a Scottish Government priority that had no funding attached at all. I appreciate that limited funding went to COSLA, but to local authorities....nothing. And I do think that's probably been a bit of a barrier to developing things because if budgets are tight, it's difficult to get a new initiative off the ground."* ***Moray Participant 8_LocalAuthority***

Insufficient additional funding to support effective PB implementation has hampered progress in Moray. Similar sentiments were found at the local authority in Fife, such as the below, which emphasises the challenging financial circumstances that councils are facing in general.

> *"...what I would say is it is much easier to do these sort of things at time when there is additional funding going around rather than you're have many cuts..."* ***Fife Participant 5_LocalAuthority***

While the comments are less pointed than those in Moray, the implication is that additional funding from the Scottish government could aid efforts to implement PB more effectively.

A final set of stakeholders whose behaviours and attitudes are central to the delivery of PB are the

bureaucrats and CSOs active at grassroots level. In Fife, a collegiate approach between these stakeholders is evident, as the following comments from a council staff member in one ward of the region indicate.

> *"...we are looking at re-entering into a PB exercise... along with our colleagues in [CSO Number 1] ...which is imminent, and discussions were ongoing yesterday actually to try and tee that one up."* ***Fife Participant 12_LocalAuthority***

> *"...we've looked to try and resource our area more with our interaction with the likes of [CSO1] with the likes of [CSO2] who have got good strong resource in the area as well....to work with our third sector partners like [Voluntary Group] ...for example, which you know they're able to draw in resource as well and they do that work. And it's not about me controlling that resource, it's about me just, you know, putting the framework around priorities. [Voluntary Group] have contributed to that as well and they'll run off and go and do their work on environmental improvement in the area and plant notches where they shouldn't be planting, but we'll just ignore that!...all these positive things have just happened because ... you've facilitated a process where these guys feel confident that they have got some buy-in into it..."* ***Fife Participant 12_LocalAuthority***

The strong capacity of CSOs in Fife has led to formal partnership arrangements between the Council and CSOs in the delivery of PB exercises using mutually complementary skillsets and abilities. The organisation that the local authority is planning to partner with (CSO1) has a strong reputation locally for supporting disadvantaged communities across the region, as well as possessing demonstrable skills in community organising and planning through initiatives such as participatory action planning. This link-up has high potential for increasing the technical quality of the planned PB process, as well as in ensuring socially just outcomes for disadvantaged communities in Fife. Overall, the dynamic described by the interviewee is one in which the council is playing a convening role, bringing together stakeholders with similar priorities and additional resources to provide – both financially and in terms of local connections. There is also a degree of give and take on display, which suggests constructive attitudes.

Similar efforts to work in partnership were evident in conversations I had with staff at Moray Council, particularly amongst staff with more community-facing responsibilities, such as below.

> *"We're working with [CSO] as well, we meet [them] twice a year and also colleagues in economic development, the health improvement team...Just trying to build up these*

partnerships within our own work because we're not bumping into people the same as we used to and I'm a firm believer in partnership working and I think we have to get better at partnership working if we're to make the savings we we've been tasked to make." ***Moray Participant 10_LocalAuthority***

Whether borne of necessity through financial imperatives or a genuine desire to work in tandem with the third sector, the interviewee from the council stated that they were keen to partner with civil society actors in furtherance of PB and other community empowerment objectives.

Nevertheless, commitment to partnership does not necessarily result in harmonious and mutually beneficial relations, as the following comments from a council staff member demonstrate.

"I got in touch with [CSO member of staff] and just said I'm aware there's a lot of PB going on and I would like to … I know the Council's not always got money. But I would like to be [involved]… you guys are obviously with two groups are obviously meeting cause they're having to work with and maybe it's not ideal when they're working so intensely, like on delivering a project, but maybe just in the future that I could be involved in discussions. [CSO member of staff]'s really busy so he's kind of like "yeah!" … like never heard from him ever again!" ***Moray Participant 11_LocalAuthority.***

The local authority sought to strengthen ways of working with local CSOs on PB yet were unsuccessful. Meanwhile, the following comments from the same individual recall a time when the Council opted not to include another local CSO in a playpark PB process.

"When it did kind of come up, I guess they were a little bit miffed that they haven't been included." ***Moray Participant 11_LocalAuthority.***

Unfortunately, the decision taken by the council to exclude the CSO from the playpark PB process was not well received by the organisation. There was added layers of complexity in the relationship between Moray Council and this CSO as it was this same CSO that was involved with the Just Transition PB in which the Council were excluded (see section 6.3.2). Taken together, alongside several other comments from interviewees along the same lines. A more adversarial or fractious relationship between local authority and civil society actors is seen with PB at the centre of tensions. Such a dynamic poses challenges to the long-term stability and embeddedness of PB in Moray.

6.4. Exploring PB Outcomes in Fife and Moray

An evaluation of PB in Scotland must consider the outcomes it aims to achieve. One of the most anticipated benefits of PB is the extent to which it leads to greater trust in local governments among

citizens (see sections 1.4 and 2.7). An intended objective of PB in Scotland is to strengthen local democracy, with increasing trust in local councillors one of the expectations of successful PB roll-out according to a government briefing paper (2021). The following sections examine evidence of community-level changes attributed to PB decision making as well as the relationship between PB and trust in local governments in the Fife and Moray.

6.4.1. PB results in the community: modest but greater variety in Fife

Those participating in PB and/or organising PB in specific communities have a proximity to the processes which give them a unique insight in understanding how PB may have led to changes in the local area. Of the positive changes that interviewees in each location associated with PB, there was a broad range cited, with infrastructure and governance being the most frequent. Other changes included the development of social capital (e.g. the capacity and networks of community groups), health and wellbeing improvements, changes to public services, and other wider impacts.

However, it was notable that in Fife examples of community changes were more frequently observed by local authority staff than residents or civil society representatives. Positive reflections from interviews with members of the public and civil society were more focused on specific examples of projects that they deemed to have been successful, such as community bonfires, dog fowling campaigns or litter picking initiatives. While one could consider community changes and successful projects very similar in this context, the former implies a deeper level of change than the latter which is more focused on the results of a specific initiative. A difference in perceptions of the significance of what PB has achieved in Fife thus far may be explained by the authorities having a wider perspective of PB being implemented across the entire region, which provides them with a larger pool of examples to reflect upon. Moreover, the distance that a macro perspective provides could aid in an honest assessment of the progress of specific communities. Alternatively, given the local authority ownership of PB, these individuals may have been more motivated to reflect the achievements of the mechanism in a positive light. However, what is apparent is that outputs of PB in Fife thus far have not been overly significant. Nevertheless, for some at the local authority, modest investments were seen to have led to meaningful changes at the local level, such as the following comments from one PB organiser.

> *"So, thinking about the castle community [Kirkcaldy], one of the first things that they asked for and have been asking for years was speed bumps... the road is next to...the main thoroughfare to taking the children to school. So now folks have to slow down or the damage their car... that's made a big impact in that community."* **Fife Participant 8_LocalAuthority**

After several years of having requests ignored, PB has enabled a simple change of installing speed

bumps which has improved the safety and security for local school children as they walk to school. While it was not possible to recruit and interview any members of the castle community for the purpose of this research, it is worth considering that if they were spoken to, they may have different views about the significance of the speed bumps and whether it should take a PB process to provide basic infrastructure of this kind. Nevertheless, the result of slowing traffic near schools is undoubtedly a positive outcome that PB has contributed to in the area.

Changes in the community noted by interviewees in Moray were typically limited to improvements to social capital such as ensuring local groups could continue to function. Changes that could be considered governance improvements were noted otherwise. Similarly to Fife, while successful projects were recalled by interviewees, such as nutrition clubs, these had not yet been seen to contribute to wider changes in the community. One example of governance improvements was increased participation in the long-term ownership of playparks, which was relayed by a community member who led a playpark PB exercise.

> *"... because it's community [who have helped make it happen, the playpark is more loved]. Like it's been... that's a year in and ...it's spotless and you can't say that for everywhere...I think there's a lot more community interest and community support for it because it was community people running it."* ***Moray Participant 3_Mixed***

Having been more actively involved in making the playpark a reality, the community has more buy-in and pride for ensuring its long-term sustainability. It is plausible to expect that impacts such as these have the potential to be more cost effective in the long run, while also contributing to community togetherness around a shared achievement.

Nevertheless, despite examples such as the above changes, it is also apparent in both Scottish cases that interviewees expected more from PB than is currently being delivered. Indeed, the following comments from a local council staff who has engaged in other voluntary work were particularly critical of the benefits observed from PB thus far at community level.

> *"...in terms of bringing resources to local communities, I don't think there's been very much impact in Fife, not that I've seen."* ***Fife Participant 10_LocalAuthority***

PB in Fife is not yet understood to be bringing additional funding to the local area, with a limited impact being observed by the above interviewee. There is a widespread sense that more needs to be done to position PB to be impactful, as the following reflections from a civil society representative illustrate.

"...it should be moving at a much faster pace. Yeah, sorry. It's just not fast enough for me." ***Moray Participant 1_CSO***

There is a sense that the speed of the roll-out of PB in Moray has not met been with the urgency that is required to meet local needs.

6.4.2 The role of PB in building trust in local government

The first key driver for PB to contribute to trust in local government that emerged from interviews is **facilitating dialogue and interaction with authorities.** In Fife, the ability to see and speak to people from the Council was felt to be a gap that PB was helping to fill, as illustrated by the below comments from a civil society representative when asked directly whether PB contributes to trust in local government.

"Probably yes, because when I've seen them face to face. Yeah. And I'm talking to them. You believe somebody or not, and yeah, it does [promote trust]. It absolutely does. And maybe that's what's wrong. Maybe then there's no out and about in amongst us all often enough.... I've been on a few things where the head ones with Fife Council have been there and they've been approachable and, you know, and will speak to you about things and I think that's great and I thoroughly enjoy it." ***Fife Participant 4_CSO***

The opportunity to directly interact with the local authorities provides an opportunity to know and understand them and their views more fully. Face-to-face interaction with the authorities was presented by interviewees as being limited otherwise currently, which suggests that PB is one of a variety of approaches that could yield similar benefits for trust. Another related factor is repeated interactions, as the following from a participant of PB processes notes.

"I think it made all the right noises at this [PB event]. Maybe not the first day. But by the third session, they were making the right noises. Yeah, and I felt I trusted them more at the end of the process then I did at the start." **Fife Participant 2_Citizen**

The opportunity to engage with the local authority over several days during a PB process helped build trust in the local authority staff, whose actions and communication over several sessions reassured the above PB participant.

In Moray, responses that suggested PB was facilitating interaction with authorities were less prevalent. However, the dynamic of communities leading on delivering playpark PB processes under

the guidance of the council was supportive of trust being able to grow according to the below individual.

> *"I think it [PB] kind of will [promote trust in government]. I think the fact they've worked along with us and … it was definitely partnership… And if they can do that, that works perfectly."* ***Moray Participant 3_Mixed***

A partnership dynamic between the local authority and the community was appreciated during a playpark PB, and this dynamic is seen as a vital condition for the possibility of trust to increase in the future.

Another key factor in building trust in local government through PB that was regarded as important by interviewees is the enhanced **visibility of the local authority**, which highlights the importance of local authorities being seen and understood to be responsible for PB in a locality. While the local authority was widely understood as being a primary actor in the prospects of PB in Fife, this was not the case in Moray as the below comments illustrate in response to a question regarding whether PB can promote trust in government.

> *"No… [PB can't promote trust in government because] Moray Council haven't really been involved in PB that I've been part of. It hasn't been used to look at Council services or where Council money should be spent. It's always been funding from elsewhere that's been managed by [organisation name]."* ***Moray Participant 12_CSO***

There is little prospect to shift perceptions towards government via PB if the mechanism is not understood as being the responsibility of authorities. Moreover, opportunities to interact with the local authorities in processes organised by other stakeholders (such as school PB, playpark PB or CSO-led small grants; table 6) are more limited, as there is no formal expectation that officials should or will attend. Such a finding suggests a relationship between embeddedness and the potential for PB to promote trust, given the importance of active and involvement of authorities in participatory processes for embeddedness (Edelenbos et al., 2008).

Responsiveness to community views is a third key factor that was apparent in both case studies. There was an appetite for the local authority to more actively engage with the concerns of local people. There was also a sense that if or when the local authority takes the expressed wishes of communities seriously – including via PB – it can contribute to greater levels of trust in government, as the following comments from a resident in Moray note.

> *"I think if they listen to what was being said and what is wanted and needed, I think if they can do that, everything will work better."* ***Moray Participant 3_Mixed***

The benefits of the local authority being more open to citizens' concerns are understood as being a critical aspect that is not present to a sufficient level currently. PB has been one tool that has facilitated more consultation, which could position it to make progress on political trust.

In Fife, there was also a feeling that the local authority should do much more local engagement, as shown by the below comment from a civil society representative.

> *"I think [the council] could consult the communities a lot more, whether it be through online surveys or paper surveys or whatever on different things. Obviously, people have huge concerns at the moment... I think they should reach out to people a lot more than they actually do."* **Fife Participant 4_CSO**

While PB is not specifically mentioned, it is implicit that a range of tools should be employed to engage more with local people's concerns.

Finally, for PB to impact on trust in local government, **a greater level of commitment to widespread usage** would be needed. In Fife, PB is not yet utilised to a large extent in the delivery of public services, which suggests that the local authority needs to put more faith in local people by expanding the usage of PB, according to the below comments.

> *"I think if PB level started to get to significant events where they were really trust in the community to have a more, I mean, it's at these little small pots of money for groups, whatever. But when it comes to actual full service delivery budget allocation for health, you know, infrastructure services... I think if they can trust the people to be better, you know to be doing PB on that then I think I would maybe say differently, but yeah, but I don't think we're anywhere close to that."* ***Fife Participant 1_Mixed***

Expanding the use of PB beyond small grants to widespread use for a variety of services would show that the local authority believed in the potential of PB to promote change as well as local people participating in the process to help shape change effectively. However, this is not yet the case.

A similar feeling was noted in Moray, where PB was viewed as a process that the local authority has not yet shown that it fully believes in. A lack of validation by the government is reducing the possibility that PB can promote trust in the authorities, according to the following from a civil society representative.

> *"I don't know. No, not really. I don't think [PB has] made much difference…if the Council is not kind of full-throated endorsing PB then it's hard to see the kind of link between how it would affect your trust, right?"* ***Moray Participant 5_CSO***

As was already noted, the lower level of visible association of PB with the local government in Moray reduces possibilities for important government-community dialogue, however the above comments also reveal that such reduced association can also be seen as a lack of belief in PB process. If there is a perception that the local government do not believe in the potential of PB, then it is difficult to see that communities would do so themselves. This finding has similarities with earlier assessments regarding embeddedness practices in Moray (see section 6.3.3).

Overall, there is stronger evidence of community-level changes facilitated by PB in Fife than in Moray, with these changes also having been perceived across a broader range of local priorities. In addition, the potential for PB to impact upon trust appears to be greater currently in Fife than in Moray. In both locations, interviewees stressed the benefits of PB promoting dialogue and interaction with the local government, but this benefit was more regularly cited by interviewees in Fife. Moreover, the importance of visibility of the local authority in delivering PB was noted as an important factor in the mechanism being able to promote trust in local government, with this feature more prominent in Fife than in Moray. Regardless of differences between cases, it was felt in both locations that for PB to have a greater prospect of impacting on citizens perceptions of government then the mechanism would need to be adopted at a greater scale and level of commitment than is currently being done.

6.5. Conclusion

The role of PB design and embeddedness in shaping PB performance in the Scottish cases of Fife and Moray has been assessed here with reference to the conceptual lenses of deliberative democratic theory and embeddedness. Findings concerning community-level results that PB has contributed to thus far as well as key drivers for PB to impact on participants' perceptions of local government have also been detailed.

Overall, it is apparent that there is little to separate the case studies of Fife and Moray when it comes to the extent of deliberative practice in PB designs, and the levels of embeddedness of PB in the local democratic system that can currently be observed. Across each of these aspects both cases perform modestly – with positive and less positive signs prevalent in both. However, a clear commitment to promoting discussion during PB was found in Fife (see section 6.2.2). While a greater degree of constructive partnership between authorities and civil society in Fife and a wider focus on

policy issues also indicates marginally better embeddedness status (see section 6.3.3). There was also stronger evidence of community-level changes facilitated by PB in Fife as well as a more widespread view that PB had the potential to impact upon trust in local government. Key drivers for PB impacting on trust in government were the role of PB in promoting dialogue with authorities, and its capacity to ensure decision-makers take community views on board. A greater association of PB with the work of local authorities in Fife than in Moray has also contributed to differences in perspective on the question of trust. However, a similar theme in both locations was that for PB to impact upon views towards the local government it would need to be more widely implemented and done in a way that informs the delivery of frontline services.

Taken together and considering the similar contexts of the two case studies, these findings suggest that the role of PB design and embeddedness have contributed to the diversity of outcomes observed in each location's PB process. Subsequently, it is plausible to expect that these outcomes have also shaped interviewees perspectives over the prospects for PB to contribute to trust in local government. Overall, there is ample scope for PB designs to better reflect the principles of deliberative theory, while there is similar scope for embeddedness to occur in greater depth in both locations. Neither case can be considered strong examples of either factor.

7. Discussion

7.1. Introduction

I will now revisit the main themes of PB design, embeddedness and PB outcomes, reflecting on how they compare across the cases within and across countries. In doing so, I will also draw connections to the relevant literature, outlining where my findings align with previous studies and contribute new insights. The conclusion summarises the discussion and broader implications for PB theory and practice.

7.2. PB Design in Indonesia

The design of PB processes in Solo and Semarang reveals both shared characteristics and notable differences. Table 11 summarises the key findings from the Indonesian case studies of Solo and Semarang, structured around the deliberative democracy dimensions of: inclusion, quality of discussion and informed decision-making. Beginning with inclusion, while both cases have closed PB processes and feature power imbalances and exclusions, Solo's PB is comparatively more open and has greater attendance in recent years. Regarding quality of discussion, there is little to separate the two cases, with them both being overly rigid in format, while also having designs that facilitate the most vibrant discussions at local level. In decision-making, both cases are overly driven by top-down priorities and lack transparency and clarity over exactly how final decisions are reached by bureaucrats. However, Solo has made specific efforts to mitigate some of these risks via a forum to align bottom-up requests with top-down priorities, and improvements to the use of evidence in project development and eventual selection. This section unpacks these themes, with reference to the extant literature.

Table 11 Summary of findings: Indonesian Cases: PB Design

Deliberative Theory Element	Solo	Semarang
Inclusion – involvement of diverse groups and perspectives.	Closed-broad; power imbalances and exclusions. Attendance trending up.	Closed-narrow; power imbalances and exclusions – nebulous efforts to counter. Attendance trending down.

Quality of Discussion – sufficient time, space and atmosphere to have wide-ranging and open discussions.	Highly rigid format; most vibrant discussion at local level.	Highly rigid format; most vibrant discussion at local level
Decision-making – decisions based on informed, justified considerations.	Top-down priorities have precedence (cherry-picking), efforts to reconcile (Synchronisation Forum); good use of evidence to inform proposals (Local Strategic Plan link); 'black box' final decisions of bureaucrats; elite dominance.	Top-down priorities have precedence (cherry-picking); 'black box' final decisions of bureaucrats; elite dominance or token engagement; poor use of evidence to inform proposals.

The key differences I have observed regarding PB design in Solo and Semarang are in inclusion and decision-making, with quality of discussion being broadly comparable in both cases.

- **Inclusion:** both cases are similar regarding their invite-only models, that are over-subscribed with longstanding insider figures. However, the data that I have presented shows that Solo's process includes a wider diversity of stakeholders and issues, as infrastructure has been the predominant focus of PB in Semarang meaning that it has been mostly individuals interested in and focused on infrastructure that have been involved with PB in Semarang. As a result, other parties and issues are largely excluded from the process. In contrast PB in Solo has taken a more active inclusion of other issues such as economic development and health and therefore included a wider range of interested participants (see section 5.2.1). Moreover, Solo also has an additional issue-focused channel that also serves to widen participation and topics of focus. In turn, this wider focus has contributed to more diverse projects eventually being funded, positioning PB to have an impact across a range of local concerns (see section 5.4.1).
- **Decision-making:** both locations are beset with procedural deficiencies that restrict the effectiveness of their PB processes. These restrictions are the primacy given to government priorities in the allocation of funding, through "cherry-picking" (Font et al., 2018), and the way these decisions are carried out in a closed and non-transparent fashion, leaving communities with unmet needs despite several requests through PB. However, evidence suggests that the combination of a more prominent role of the local strategic plans and the presence of the Synchronisation forum in Solo have led to marginal improvements in procedure. Specifically, priorities being proposed in PB are positioned to be more evidence

based and grounded in the priorities of the communities, due to the clearer alignment with these participatory plans. Moreover, there is now a greater prospect of reconciliation of bottom-up priorities of communities with top-down priorities of government (see section 5.2.3).

As a result of these changes to design in Solo, PB is more able to contribute to community-level change than Semarang (see section 5.4.1).

The findings reinforce key aspects of deliberative theory for effective democratic innovations (Fishkin, 2011), particularly the importance of democratic goods such as inclusion, considered judgment, and popular control (Smith, 2009). The findings align with existing scholarship demonstrating how different PB designs can lead to diverse outcomes (Wampler et al., 2021), such as greater and wider changes in the community. However, this thesis has expanded understandings around this prospect due to an explicit focus on deliberative democratic design features, beyond the focus on scale, social justice requirements, participation rules and oversight authority in previous research (ibid).

In addition, I argue that the quality of information plays a crucial role in effective deliberation, as evidenced by the strong link between the locally developed strategic plans and PB in Solo. Scholars have observed that information quality can be a specific challenge with PB processes (Shah, 2007), and can determine the impact of democratic innovations (Goodin, 2008). However, the Solo findings have provided further and concrete examples of how improved leveraging of evidence and information, e.g. through establishing a strong link with rigorous participatory strategic planning exercises, can yield deliberative benefits for PB processes (see section 5.2.3). This contrasts with Semarang that has not pursued such a strategy.

Furthermore, this thesis deepens understandings of variations in the effectiveness and results of different PB designs within the umbrella framework of "mandated PB" (Wampler et al., 2021). While mandated PB may impose uniform pressures on PB design, this thesis has shown substantial scope to innovate and make modest changes within these constraints. Changes such as introducing new participatory channels (e.g. FGD and women and children forum) or adding requirements of explicit links to other participatory mechanisms to aid alignment (e.g. strategic plans), can improve the overall effectiveness of PB by widening inclusion, expanding the use of evidence as well as the responsiveness to community needs (see section 5.2).

Finally, there is also evidence in both cases that processes are dominated by specific interest groups such as government elites or other insiders, a key risk in the implementation of participatory

processes (Bherer et al., 2016). Such power imbalances are understood to be harmful to the deliberative nature of democratic innovations more broadly (Saguin, 2018, Curato et al., 2019, Hendriks, 2009). However, the contribution of my research is in providing further specific insights into how design can play a role in mitigating some of these dynamics. Design modifications can mitigate elite dominance through widening the circle of participation and make incremental improvements to decision-making set-ups that improve the use of evidence and the extent of responsiveness to community needs (see sections 5.2.1 and 5.2.3).

7.3. PB Embeddedness in Indonesia

The most significant themes from the Indonesian case studies of Solo and Semarang relating to embeddedness are summarised below in table 12. It reveals similarities and differences on each of these areas which I will expand upon in the proceeding section.

Table 12 Summary of PB Embeddedness findings: Indonesian Cases

Embeddedness Dimension	**Solo**	**Semarang**
Temporal – regularity, alignment with policy cycle.	High temporality. Modest alignment in participatory system.	High (formal) temporality, but weak compliance at local level. Minimal alignment in participatory system.
Spatial – location & focus	Multi-level, including local level; Various policy spaces; limited impact. Observable yet imperfect connection to civil society.	Multi-level, including local level; Limited policy focus and impact. Observable yet imperfect connection to civil society.
Practices – rules, behaviour and attitudes	Nationally legislated. Focus Group Discussion, Strategic Plan and Synchronisation process locally institutionalised to promote wider participation, use of evidence & responsiveness to citizens/civil society. Constructive role of CSOs; mixed commitment from bureaucrats.	Nationally legislated. Women & Children forum locally institutionalised to promote inclusiveness (still nebulous). Constructive role of CSOs; mixed commitment from bureaucrats.

While both cases share similar characteristics due to Indonesia's highly structured governance framework and the socio-cultural context of Central Java, there are important differences in their respective levels of embeddedness. On temporal aspects, Solo's PB process is more consistently delivered in line with the formal regulations. While both cases are formally committed to annual multi-tier PB processes, local level PB in Semarang is often limited or absent due to inactive community empowerment institutions which are responsible for ensuring these processes take place as required by the regulations. The case of Solo also demonstrates greater levels of alignment with the wider policy and political cycle than the Semarang case, particularly through a greater working link with the local Strategic Planning process (see section 5.3.1). While both cases recommend that the strategic plans should be reviewed during urban village level PB, the Solo PB design requires participants to include priorities from the plan in project proposals and selections, while still giving space for additional suggestions outside of the plan. The annual PB is therefore explicitly leveraged to put into action the 5-year strategic plans, potentially strengthening the relevance and usefulness of both mechanisms.

Consequently, I found a productive relationship in which PB and local strategic plans are reinforcing one another, as scholars have noted the value of in the literature (Bussu et al., 2022, Dean et al., 2019). It is also important to emphasise that this is indicative of micro-level (PB Design) features having ramifications for embeddedness at the macro-level. However, competing mechanisms such as the mayoral special grant and the complaints mechanism (see section 5.3.1), occasionally undermine this alignment, pointing to modest embeddedness dynamics overall. Indeed, as scholars have noted previously, participatory mechanisms undermining each other could suggest system dysfunctionality or dis-embeddedness (Dean et al., 2019, Bussu et al., 2022). Importantly, my findings have also contributed further understandings to the literature of how design and context can specifically affect embeddedness dimensions. There is also evidence of how temporal embeddedness of PB can be strengthened through deliberate efforts to strengthen links between PB and other elements of the participatory system, such as the local Strategic Plan in Solo, a five-year plan for each district that is developed through participatory methods and the utilisation of available data (see sections 5.2.3 and 5.3.1).

Regarding spatial embeddedness, both cases operate PB at multiple tiers of governance (see section 5.3.2). This structure positions participants at each level to be close to decision-making, even if decision-making transparency is often criticised by participants (see section 5.2.3). In addition, the wider issue focus of Solo's PB process strengthens its spatial embeddedness, particularly in comparison to Semarang (see section 5.3.2). Indeed, the shift to include a women and children's forum to the PB process in Semarang in recent years (see section 5.2.1) has begun a

process of connecting the mechanism to other policy issues, however this is still in its early stages and does not appear to have yet made much (if any) discernible impact on policy outcomes for communities.

The importance of these findings is that they have provided an empirical example of how spatial embeddedness can be progressed by widening out the thematic focus of PB processes to address more policy concerns of citizens. Furthermore, the benefits of increased spatial embeddedness have been illustrated, as the wider focus of PB in Solo has also led to wider policy impacts. Indeed, such outcomes are a plausible explanation for greater levels of satisfaction with the PB process in this case study. Nevertheless, the data indicates modest levels of impact as a direct result of PB in both cities, as well as low rates of project approvals of participant requests. This indicates a low rate of 'absorption' – and therefore policy impact overall - that has previously been highlighted as a dysfunction of insufficiently embedded participatory institutions in the Netherlands (Edelenbos et al., 2008).

In examining the PB connections to civil society and the broader public sphere, both cases show mixed performance. Active civil society organisations play a key role in shaping PB design (see sections 5.2.1 and 5.2.3), supporting the understanding that proximity to civil society can exert pressure on local authorities to further local priorities and promote greater inclusion in PB (Henderson et al., 2021). However, outside of PB, there are active stakeholders voicing their concerns in diverse ways e.g. street art and social media campaigns on disability issues in Solo, and creative protests on violence against women in Semarang (see section 5.3.2). I argue that such examples are signs of interaction between different dimensions of embeddedness (spatial and practices), understood to be integral to shaping embeddedness prospects (Bussu et al., 2022). While these actions suggest the presence of extra-governmental pressure in both cases, they are also indicative of gaps in current PB processes that risk dis-embedding PB if there is a failure to evolve to meet expectations of the public. Finally on this dimension, spatial embeddedness prospects are also weakened by a national political context which has not always been conducive to local effectiveness in either case, echoing observations in participatory governance in Barcelona (Bussu et al., 2022).

Turning to embeddedness practices, national legislation has provided PB in both locations with a strong formal foundation, with legal requirements for PB to take place (see section 5.3.3). This formalisation is vital to support PB's longevity (Bussu et al., 2022). However, both locations feature PB processes that are dominated by local elites, in terms of the way participation is managed (see section 5.2.1), discussion is facilitated (see section 5.2.2), and how eventual decisions are reached

(see section 5.2.3). Moreover, while mostly constructive, the relationship between civil society and PB in both cities risks being too close, which may limit the capacity of non-government actors from challenging the government. Notably, Solo has thus far made stronger use of design innovations such as the local strategic plan (as detailed above), the synchronisation forum, and the focus group discussion (FGD). These adaptations, reflected in the formal PB regulations of the municipality, have helped to better mitigate some of the more harmful behaviours and attitudes that are prevalent in both cases, such as elite capture (see section 5.3.3).

In addition, these shifts in formal practices have increased inclusion, strengthened the use of evidence in decision-making, and contributed to a widening of policy focus of PB in Solo. In Semarang, formal practices have also been changed to include the women and children's forum (see section 5.3.3). However, due to the nebulous stage of these changes, only modest effects on the inclusion of women and a breadth of policy issues discussed in PB have been found.

However, beyond formal similarities in formal practices between the two locations, important differences emerged regarding informal attitudes and behaviours. In Semarang, despite the mechanism's legislative advantages, PB is not consistently understood and framed as being important within local democracy vis a vis other forums and channels for engaging with government and politics more broadly (Ganuza and Baiocchi, 2019). In addition, local authorities and other elites also do not seem to place great importance on the forum, a key marker of embeddedness (Edelenbos et al., 2008). In contrast, there is no evidence of de-prioritisation of PB by authorities in Solo, while citizens mirrored this position with broad preference for PB over other participatory channels. I argue that there is a risk of PB being rendered redundant in Semarang if it cannot fulfil more democratic functions than it currently does, as has been identified as a sign of poor suitability for contextual surroundings by some scholars (Goodin, 1996b, Owen and Smith, 2015).

The differences in PB embeddedness status in Solo and Semarang contribute insights to the literature on PB and embeddedness. By providing real-world evidence of how these differences influence the prospects of PB processes, this thesis provides the first empirical analysis of PB embeddedness in Indonesia or in Asia more generally.

7.4. PB Outcomes in Indonesia

The key themes from Solo and Semarang regarding PB outcomes are outlined below in Table 13. Several differences and similarities were found across the two cases, which are discussed in more detail in the proceeding sections.

Table 13 Summary of findings: Indonesian Cases: PB Outcomes & Trust

PB Outcomes	Solo	Semarang
Positive changes at community level	Mostly noted at urban village level – across a range of areas including in infrastructure, health & wellbeing, poverty reduction & social development, growing social capital, and governance.	Mostly noted at urban village level, across limited areas of governance and infrastructure. Nascent shift to focus on other social issues spurred by advent of women & children forum, but little impact thus far.
Satisfaction with PB	Moderate levels of satisfaction across interviewees. Examples of happiness with outcomes, but also a sense that it could and should achieve more.	Low levels of satisfaction across cohort of interviewees. Feeling that it is not responsive to citizens demands nor sufficiently participatory.
PB impact on trust in local government	Comparatively more interviewees felt PB could increase trust in local government. Key drivers are improvements in level of participation and effectiveness, openness and dialogue, and the ability of PB to resolve local problems. Widely held view that PB was currently too limited for significant influence.	Comparatively fewer interviewees felt PB could increase trust in local government. PB not seen to be addressing local problems effectively. Lack of transparency also a limiting factor on potential. Widely held view that PB was currently too limited for significant influence.

There are more positive outcomes from PB Solo in comparison to its neighbouring city of Semarang. Examples of diverse positive changes in the community (e.g. health and social development) that could be attributed to PB processes were more apparent in Solo (see 5.4.2). Given what has been outlined previously regarding improvements in inclusivity and decision-making (see sections 5.2.1 and 5.2.3), and greater degree of embeddedness (see section 5.3.1, 5.3.2 and 5.3.3) it is plausible to suggest that design and embeddedness factors have contributed to these better outcomes. In contrast, community-level changes attributed to PB by interviewees in Semarang were more limited and typically confined to infrastructure or administrative effectiveness (see section 5.4.1).

Despite Solo's relative strength in comparison to Semarang, many interviewees felt that PB has the potential to achieve more (see section 5.4.2), with its effectiveness hindered by procedural deficiencies, such as its invite-only, elite dominated participation model (see sections 5.2.1 & 5.2.3), and non-transparent decision-making process (see section 5.2.3). Efforts to reform the Semarang PB process in recent years through the addition of a women and children forum have showed initial promise in widening discourse (see section 5.2.1) and advancing more social priorities than previously (see section 5.2.3). Indeed, the women and children forum was widely cited by

interviewees when considering improvements that had been made to PB in recent years. Nevertheless, the forum's impact on communities has been modest so far. Moreover, the Semarang PB process continues to face the same challenges as Solo with regards to its exclusionary design (see section 5.2.1), power imbalances, and unsatisfactory decision-making model (see section 5.2.3).

Interviewees in Solo were also more positive about the potential of PB to increase trust in local government than in Semarang. Key factors in Solo were improvements in levels of PB participation and effectiveness, PBs role in promoting open dialogue between communities and government, and the ability of PB to resolve local problems. However, the limited scale and scope of PB in both cities restricts its capacity to significantly influence trust. In Semarang, while some positive sentiment was found that commended the local authority's willingness to take criticisms of the PB process on board, key drivers detracting from the potential of PB to promote trust in local government were a lack of transparency, as well as a perceived failure for the process to solve problems that are important to communities, such as violence against women (see section 5.4.2).

The findings from Solo contribute the literature on the relationship between PB and political trust, which has shown that PB can increase engagement between communities and government, increases transparency (Bherer et al., 2016) and reduce gaps in understandings between the two groups (Swaner, 2017). Previous research has shown how greater satisfaction in PB is to be found through various factors that include appropriate design, the successful delivery of chosen projects, and stronger institutionalisation (Fernández-Martínez et al., 2020). This thesis provides further evidence supporting these conclusions.

7.5. PB Design in Scotland, UK

The main themes from the Scottish case studies of Fife and Moray according to the three specific elements of deliberative democracy that the thesis has focused on: inclusion, quality of discussion and decision-making, are summarised below (Table 14, next page) followed by analysis with reference to the literature.

Table 14 Summary of findings: Scottish Cases: PB Design

Deliberative Theory Element	Fife	Moray
Inclusion – involvement of diverse groups and perspectives.	Moderate inclusion; mixed thematic focus	Moderate inclusion; narrow thematic focus
Quality of Discussion – sufficient time, space, evidence to have wide-ranging and open discussions.	CSO-supported exercises more deliberative; council-led efforts to experiment and encourage deliberative approach.	Inconsistent commitment to deliberation across diverse organisers; isolated examples of more deliberative practices.
Decision-making – decisions based on justified considerations.	Popularity contest vote – various efforts to improve fairness.	Popularity contest vote – various efforts to improve fairness.

The PB efforts in Fife and Moray have both been guided by the same Scottish approach to PB (see Tables 5 & 6 in Chapter 4; sections 4.3.1.2 and 6.3.3). The Scottish approach provides local authorities with significant flexibility to tailor PB to their needs. The evidence I presented in the findings chapter has shown many similarities between the two cases on PB design, albeit with notable differences that have been afforded to organisers due to the flexible approach to PB in Scotland.

PB in Fife and Moray demonstrated moderate levels of inclusion, albeit with significant differences in thematic focus of PB processes, with Fife more varied on this aspect (see section 6.2.1). This diverse thematic focus has helped Fife to be more inclusive of different people and different discussion topics. Conversely, PB in Moray, particularly those organised by the local authority during 2018-2022, has had a more limited thematic scope (see section 6.2.1). The predominant focus has been on playparks refurbishment and school improvements, in addition to a small number of CSO processes on youth issues and health and wellbeing. Single theme PB has been observed as a growing trend in recent years (Falanga, 2023, Cabannes and Lipietz, 2018). However, concerns have been raised about the effect of such a design for coherent policymaking as well as the limitations it places on participants ability to engage with complex cross-government issues,

thereby limiting the role these processes can play in educating them about government workings (Falanga, 2023).

Quality of Discussion also varies in the two Scottish cases, with the role of different organisers standing out. In Fife, CSOs have been responsible for delivering some of the most discussion-focused PB processes. CSOs are also at the forefront of furthering deliberative principles here, albeit less consistently positive in their role. This finding supports previous work which highlights the critical role of civil society in the success of PB (Ryan, 2021, Wampler, 2012), including through provision of technical skills that governments lack (Shah, 2007). A contribution of this thesis is the additional evidence contained herein emphasising how these actors can and do play outsized roles in the advancing of PB designs that are more deliberative in nature. This contribution has been enabled through the utilisation of a deliberative democratic lens to assess PB designs in the cases. I argue that besides the work of CSOs, the greater commitment by Fife Council to experimenting with diverse deliberative resources is evident – such as discussion frameworks, online forums, and expert deliberation bodies.

Finally, on decision-making, both cases have broadly favoured designs that utilise a ballot-based popularity vote to decide winners of PB processes. While voting has been noted as the preferred method for making decisions in democratic innovations in the literature, it has been done so on the understanding that reasoned discussion takes place first (Goodin, 2008). As has already been outlined, the quality of discussion observed in the cases is limited (see section 6.2.2), in line with previous work on Scottish PB (O'Hagan et al., 2019). Views of decision-making are mixed in both Scottish cases, with support for PB participants being able to have a say, but with concerns about unintended or unfair consequences such as results favouring more fashionable causes or more well-known stakeholders (see 6.2.3). Design adaptations to mitigate some of these risks have been attempted. For example, the 50/50 model widely found in Moray shares funds proportionately to votes received across all applicants. In Fife, a split pot approach is often used where small and larger entities are provided separate opportunities to apply for funding. While there are some benefits to these modalities in terms of promoting solidarity and fairness, the 50/50 approach drew criticism due to its effect on the ability of PB applicants to plan and deliver projects as intended. There are also potential drawbacks of this modality for deliberative quality.

I argue that while neither case study can be understood to have been consistently utilising designs that are strongly deliberative in nature, it is Fife that on balance has utilised designs that most closely reflect the tenets of deliberative theory.

The thesis contributes to the understanding of vote-based approaches to PB decision-making, highlighting disadvantages when detached from meaningful deliberation. There is a trend of dissatisfaction with the current decision-making model in both cases, owing to its perceived unfairness. However, there is also a cognisance among organisers of the imperfections of the current design, as well as attempts to iterate and improve the design to promote greater fairness.

The finding provide further support for the value of deliberative theory in designing effective democratic innovations (Fishkin, 2011), and more specifically the importance of democratic goods such as inclusion, considered judgment, and popular control for the success of such initiatives (Smith, 2009). Moreover, the research has illustrated the benefits of focusing on a wide range of issues in PB processes, as opposed to a narrower focus, for ensuring a wide variety of people can engage in PB processes. Previous research has identified the risks to effective governance posed by narrow PB focus (Falanga, 2023), but has not focused on any effect on deliberative quality or participation.

7.6. PB Embeddedness in Scotland, UK

The key themes found in the Scottish case studies of Fife and Moray regarding the three dimensions of embeddedness: temporal, spatial, and practices, are summarised below in Table 15. There is a low level of embeddedness of PB in Fife and Moray (see sections 6.2.1, 6.2.2, and 6.2.3) with Fife demonstrating comparatively greater embeddedness overall. These themes are further elaborated upon in the proceeding section.

Table 15 Summary of findings: Scottish Cases: PB Embeddedness

Embeddedness Dimension	**Fife**	**Moray**
Temporal - regularity	Low temporality, isolated examples of higher temporality (geographic). Nebulous alignment within policy cycle.	Low temporality; isolated examples of higher temporality (policy focus). Nebulous alignment within policy cycle.
Spatial – location & focus	Multi-level but unsettled. Various policy spaces, limited impact.	Multi-level but unsettled. Limited policy focus and impact.

Practices – rules, behaviour and attitudes	Nationally legislated. Large + small funding pot to promote fairer decisions. Signs of coalition building; mixed commitment from bureaucrats.	Nationally legislated. 50/50 vote model to promote fairer decisions. More limited examples of coalition building (CSO-Gov relationship less strong); mixed commitment from bureaucrats.

It is apparent that neither case has been consistently holding regular PB processes across the region, understood as being an impediment to temporal embeddedness (Bussu et al., 2022). Insufficient regularity and scope of PB has detracted from its impact in the Scottish cases thus far, as PB processes held regularly are understood to be more likely to be impactful than one-off events (Sintomer et al., 2008). The stop-start, piecemeal nature of PB has meant a reduced ability to iterate as well as to build interest and engagement in PB. However, there is isolated evidence of temporal embeddedness – in individual wards of Fife, and in a specific focus on playpark PB in Moray – which have led to improvements in design, engagement, as well as bureaucratic capacity to implement PB effectively (in the case of Moray). These findings echo previous studies demonstrating the importance of repeat processes for increasing interest and experimenting with new ways of mobilising participation (O'Hagan et al., 2019).

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act has been an important policy backdrop for PB in Scotland, and perceptions of local government may have begun to shift as a combined result of the various participation channels that the Scottish government has promoted (see section 6.4.2). There is evidence in both Fife and Moray of alignment between PB and these other channels such as local plans, with local priorities from planning shaping allocations of funding pots in PB votes. This alignment indicates a constructive relationship that is beneficial for embeddedness (Bussu et al., 2022, Dean et al., 2019). However, Fife has achieved greater alignment, potentially due to a greater emphasis on local community planning processes that may be more suited to alignment with PB than other mechanisms.

With respect to spatial embeddedness, PB has an unsettled and inconsistent status, with PB occurring at multiple governance tiers but not yet bedded down into a fixed or consistent governance modus operandi. Local level PB – such as at village or ward levels – is the most typical form of PB in both cases, suggesting a closeness to everyday people's concerns that has been emphasised in the participatory governance literature (Fung and Wright, 2001, p. 17). However, local governments in both locations expressed frustration at being sidestepped by the Scottish national government on

local responsibilities, as in Moray's largest PB exercise to date where the Just Transition PB was organised by the Scottish government and excluded the local Council. On another spatial aspect, PB in Fife has been focused on a diverse array of issues, which differs to a mostly narrow approach in Moray. Fife is performing more strongly here, given the importance of focusing on a broad-spectrum of policy issues (Bussu et al., 2022). Notably, this design feature was also a contributor to the wider inclusion found in Fife (see section 6.2.1), suggesting a link between the extent of inclusion in PB processes and spatial embeddedness.

The advent of PB has also enabled CSOs to build and grow, which is another positive example of a connection between the mechanism and civil society (McNulty, 2012, Touchton and Wampler, 2014). This is a notable feature, that I argue is also a contextual factor that has been enabled through an active civil society presence in both locations. However, there is a more mixed picture with regards to connections to the broader public sphere, with evidence showing that PB processes in Fife may be more reflective of local concerns and priorities than PB processes in Moray, due in part to a wider issue focus, and therefore better positioned to have local priorities reflected in policy decisions (Edelenbos et al., 2008).

On the role of formal practices of embeddedness, national legislation provides a firm foundation for PB, as a formal policy instrument in support of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act. The policy provides legal and institutional security, which is important for the for future prospects of participatory governance innovations like PB (Bussu et al., 2022). Interviewees were broadly positive about the role of the PB charter, which has been supportive of design experimentation efforts in both locations, understood to be advantageous to effectiveness (Baiocchi et al., 2011). There were mixed views about the minimum 1% budgetary target that is in place in Scotland and there has been a difficulty for both cases in reaching the requisite level of funding to allocate to PB. Failure to meet this target can be interpreted as limiting to embeddedness prospects (Bussu et al., 2022), as it means a low level of resources are being allocated via PB, thereby limiting its role in government. Moreover, a dearth of resources can be limiting of the potential of PB reforms more generally (Wampler et al., 2021).

The inconsistent support of local leadership is a less positive example of embeddedness practices, which has hampered the potential for more widespread roll-out of the mechanism. The low visibility of Moray Council in driving forward PB is a further drawback, according to the literature (Edelenbos et al., 2008). Further, evidence shows that while street level bureaucrats in both locations have actively sought the kind of constructive partnerships (including with civil society) in support of PB that is understood as being important (Shah, 2007, Ryan, 2021), the dynamics observed in Moray are

more fractious than those found in Fife, as local government and CSO stakeholders have repeatedly clashed over PB direction and approach. I argue that the more collaborative dynamic found in Fife, in which local government and CSOs are regularly joining forces to advance PB has been a major contributor to the increasing alignment observed in the participatory system in Fife. These in turn have strengthened PB design at the micro level. Finally, at the national level - despite structural issues highlighted on the spatial dimension, the findings indicate supportive attitudes among national stakeholders towards PB in Fife and Moray. This is positive given existing understandings about the importance of leadership for PB performance (Shah, 2007, Wampler et al., 2021).

In addition to evidence that provides further support to existing literature, as one of the few studies to focus on PB embeddedness in Scotland, this comparative case study has contributed further understandings to the literature regarding how these dynamics occur in real life settings.

7.7. PB Outcomes in Scotland, UK

The main findings regarding results and impact of PB in Fife and Moray are illustrated in Table 16 below. The table highlights that Fife evidences a wider range of positive changes across multiple themes, in comparison to the Moray. Nevertheless, neither case has yet seen significant transformations due to PB. Both cases indicate limited evidence of PB impacting on trust in government, though Fife shows comparatively stronger evidence of the potential for this to occur. Key factors contributing to trust in local government are the benefits PB brings for promoting dialogue and interaction with local authorities, and its role in ensuring community views are taken on board. A widespread belief shared by interviewees in both locations is that PB needs to go further and faster if it is to have transformational impact, including on questions of trust in local government. Notably, the limited visibility of Moray Council in delivering PB has been found to be a limiting factor behind its prospects for promoting trust in local government. The significance of these findings is further explored following the below table.

Table 16 Summary of findings: Scottish Cases: PB Outcomes

Outcomes	Fife	Moray
Positive changes at community level	Wide range of modest results noted across different themes: infrastructure and Governance changes most cited, but others mentioned also.	Limited range of modest results noted – growing social capital most cited.

Satisfaction with PB	Moderate levels of satisfaction with appetite for more PB.	Moderate levels of satisfaction with appetite for more PB.
Impact trust in local government	Limited belief in this prospect, with sense that more boldness is required. PB appears better placed to promote trust when facilitating dialogue and interaction with authorities, and ensuring authorities take community views on board.	Little belief in this prospect, little visible association of PB with local government, and greater scale and scope needed. Among more positive views, potential for ensuring community views taken on board, and benefits of community-government interaction was noted.

The empirical analysis of this thesis has shown that a diverse array of projects have received funding from PB, particularly in Fife where there has thus far been a more diverse topic focus (see section 6.2.1). However, in both cases PB projects have not been perceived to have made tangible changes to the lives of residents. These findings reinforce previous conclusions (O'Hagan et al., 2019), while also extending them to include Moray.

Among interviewees who voiced belief in the potential of PB to increase trust in local government, many highlighted the positive role of working more closely with the council. In this sense, PB can provide greater access to these duty bearers among participants (Swaner, 2017), which aids in promoting mutual understanding, as well as in having concerns responded to. However, and I believe crucially, such interactions with the council via PB are currently less likely to occur in Moray than in Fife due to the limited extent to which PB processes are visibly organised and run by the Council in the former location. Moray Council no longer runs small-grant PB processes – still the most widespread in Scotland. Moreover, even the processes that it is responsible for (school PB and playpark PB) typically operate through intermediate community-based organisers such as teachers or community volunteers (Table 6; section 6.2.2), thereby limiting opportunities for participants to interact with government. This low visibility strategy also reduces the prospect for communities to associate positive changes with the Council in the region. This finding serves to further clarify understandings of factors that can better position PB to shift perceptions towards government, as previous studies did not include a focus on cases with contrasting levels of PB procedural ownership by local authorities (Swaner, 2017, Theuwis, 2024)

What follows from this point on is a cross-national analysis, synthesising the key themes from across the two sets of subnational case studies.

7.8. PB Design Factors: Cross-national analysis

The notable cross-national findings regarding PB design factors are illustrated in Table 17. In terms of similarities, each of the four cases demonstrated a reliance on habitual or regular participants and kin networks with regards to who is typically included in or invited to PB processes. In addition, the use of themes to focus PB processes has been utilised across cases, with signs that this is often a means for authorities and other organisers to exert control over participation and eventual decisions. Despite such areas of commonality, a clear area of difference between countries is the rigid and highly structured PB set-up in Indonesia which contrasts with a more ad hoc and loose approach in Scotland up to this point. These findings are further unpacked below, with reference to the extant literature.

Table 17 Cross-national analysis: PB design factors

Similarities	Differences
PB Design	
Reliance on habitual participants and kin networks	Rigid and routinised in Indonesia, ad hoc and loose in Scotland
Strategic use of themes – a means to retain control	

As shown above, a notable theme observed across the four case studies with regards to design elements was a widely acknowledged aspect of the PB participants – that **those attending PB events were participants that regularly take part in similar processes.** Such stakeholders have been referred to in the literature as "the usual suspects" (Pape and Lim, 2019) . The thesis has also demonstrated how a reliance on repeat participants in PB design can arise. Across each of the four case studies, the first port of call for PB organisers to ensure a minimum level of participation is the people or groups that they already have some form of connection to. Typically, these stakeholders have been those that have engaged with previous exercises, those who have some other form of pre-existing working relationship with the organisers, or those within the circles of influence of local administrations (e.g. next of kin, friends and acquaintances, friends of friends, or followers on social media). While the label "usual suspects" can have negative connotations, it is important to keep in mind that without such committed individuals, processes such as PB may struggle to take place at all. Nevertheless, the findings align with previous that have shown, participatory mechanisms such as PB often end up broadly recreating or sustaining pre-existing ways of interacting within specific locales, which can limit their transformative potential (Bherer et al., 2016). Similarly, this thesis has

provided further evidence that demonstrates how PB organisers' approach to participant recruitment is insufficient to the task of arriving at highly inclusive processes (Fernández-Martínez et al., 2020, Pape and Lim, 2019).

The added value of this thesis is in demonstrating these trends across multiple case studies in the highly diverse contexts of Indonesia and Scotland. Previous research has generated this finding in either single case studies or in multiple sub-national cases within a single country (Pape and Lim, 2019, Ganuza and Frances, 2012, Fernández-Martínez et al., 2020, Bherer et al., 2016). In generating evidence across diverse settings, this thesis has elaborated additional evidence of the transferability of this finding.

In a variety of ways, local authorities in each of the four case studies display a wariness of letting go of control when it comes to the form and focus that final decisions in PB will take. This observation conforms with a previous observation that PB does not always mean high levels of citizen control in decision-making (Ryan, 2019). The degree to which citizens are able to influence a decision process is considered a key element of democracy by leading scholars (Smith, 2009). Perhaps the most noteworthy method among the case studies that is used by organisers to limit citizen control in PB processes is with **themes to guide and ringfence PB processes**. The use of thematic priorities removes certain proposals or decisions from contention. This was a common feature of all case study locations across both contexts, and has been observed elsewhere in the literature (Pape and Lim, 2019).

In the Scottish cases, PB organisers acknowledged that the use of themes was a way to reduce surprises or less appealing outcomes (see section 6.3.3). While in the Indonesian cases, views about themes were more expressed as dissatisfaction among critics of PB that the mechanism only served to put in place the pre-existing wishes of the government (see section 5.2.3). Notably, however, this thesis has also shown differences within each set of cases on the topic of themes. My assessment of inclusion (see sections 5.1.1 and 6.1.1) and spatial embeddedness (see sections 5.3.2 and 6.3.2) across the cases has shown a diversity of topics being addressed through PB in Solo and Fife, with specific efforts to reconcile bottom-up requests with top-down priorities in Solo (see section 5.2.3). The same assessment showed themes of a more limited breadth in Semarang and Moray, as well as comparatively poorer connections to the broader public sphere, a marker of spatial embeddedness. As I have already argued, this difference in focus may have contributed to differences in levels of satisfaction in PB processes, as well as in the extent to which changes in the community have been observed by interviewees (see sections 5.4 and 6.4).

While themes can be understood as a desire to ensure strategic coherence by decision-makers, their use have also raised concerns that the PB process are means of furthering existing priorities of elites, rather than true bottom-up processes for change (Shah, 2007). If the terms of discussion are narrowed in such a way that themes do not align with the expectations or priorities of local people, this would be particularly concerning as it would accentuate the possibility that PB processes were not sufficiently responsive to local needs. Moreover, previous studies have shown how a focus on narrow themes in PB can exclude more vulnerable groups (Pape and Lim, 2019). The use of themes is also understood to pose challenges for coherent policymaking, as well as the prospects for participants to develop understandings about governance and policy (Falanga, 2023) .

The specific contribution of this research has added further new insights regarding the role of themes in PB processes, particularly in nationally legislated settings, by illustrating the advantages that focusing on a variety of themes instead of a narrower selection of topics can have for widening inclusion in PB design, as well as for strengthening prospects for spatial embeddedness, and the prospects of contributing to changes in community. This contribution has been strengthened by the multi-country comparative design model, which has not been the approach of previous studies looking at this issue (Pape and Lim, 2019, Falanga, 2023)

Perhaps the starkest difference in design between the Indonesian cases and the Scottish cases is in **contrasting levels of rigidity that the PB processes have in each country**. PB in the two Indonesian case studies is highly regulated and structured – with precise and rigid regulations which give little room for the discretion of implementing agents (see section 5.2.1).

Conversely, PB in the two Scottish cases is guided by a loose framework – the PB Charter – which sets out 7 values that PB in Scotland is expected to aspire to (see section 4.3.1.2). While there are similarities in design observed between the two cases, these have arisen from a diffusion of ideas and practice, or in response to specific funding opportunities, rather than an over-arching framework with a top-down roll-out. Scholars have argued previously that more loosely regulated PB processes have greater space to iterate, which can facilitate greater levels of participation (Baiocchi et al., 2011). Nevertheless, despite this clear difference in design, neither sets of cases can be understood to be exemplars of best PB practice, or deliberative democratic theory (see sections 5.2.1, 5.2.2 and 5.2.3).

In some ways, each set of cases could benefit from being more like the other. The Indonesian cases could benefit from a looser and more open design as well as a clearer place for participant voting in decision-making. While the Scottish cases could benefit from greater levels of institutionalisation

and a clarity of governance structure that could support prospects for embeddedness, and greater promotion of discussion prior to decision-making.

Therefore, another contribution of this thesis is to draw greater attention to the role of legislative frameworks for facilitating contrasting design choices through a research design that has compared multiple case studies with highly contrasting frameworks.

7.9. PB Embeddedness: Cross-national analysis

The key cross-national findings regarding the embeddedness of PB in the democratic system are illustrated in Table 18. In terms of similarities, there is limited coherence between PB and the wider participatory system across each of the case studies. In addition, PB being implemented at multiple tiers of governance is typical in all the case studies, which is posing challenges for spatial embeddedness. Compounding matters, the prospects for local embeddedness of PB are being undermined to varying degrees in each of the case studies due to the roles and actions of national governments. On a more positive note, civil society actors are performing vital roles in improving PB. Regarding differences across the countries, PB in the Indonesian case studies is currently more temporally embedded. Following the below table, the section will elaborate further on these points.

Table 18 Cross-national analysis: PB embeddedness

Similarities	Differences
Embeddedness	
Limited coherence between PB and wider participatory system.	Stronger evidence of temporal embeddedness in Indonesia
Multi-level PB and challenges for spatial embeddedness	
National governments risk undermining local embeddedness	
Civil society actors performing vital roles in improving PB	

In both Indonesia and Scotland cases there are aspects of alignment between different participation channels which are indicative of harmonious relationships that have been theorised as being important to embeddedness by scholars (Bussu et al., 2022). In Fife and Moray, alignment is

typically between community action plans and PB (see section 6.3.1). While in Solo, this takes the form of alignment between the local Strategic Plan and PB (see section 5.3.1).

The potential benefits of leveraging two participatory mechanisms in tandem have been documented previously (Shah, 2007). Furthermore, such interplay between institutions can be understood as a sign of increased embeddedness of PB, as PB and local plans appear to be positively contributing to the work of each other as has been described by scholars as a key ingredient of this phenomenon (Bussu et al., 2022).

However, this **alignment between PB and the wider participatory system is modest across all cases**. In the Indonesian cases, the local Strategic Plan is less strongly linked to PB in Semarang than in Solo, while there is no evidence in either case study of constructive links between PB and other mechanisms such as the Online Complaints Mechanism (see section 5.2.1). In the Scottish cases, links between action plans and PB are ad hoc and mostly driven by the work of CSOs, rather than being actively promoted by the local council (see section 6.2.1). Moreover, this thesis identified no evidence of other instruments associated with the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act working in conjunction with PB in either Scottish case study. Thus, across all four cases suggests there is ample room for policymakers and practitioners to strengthen coherence between PB and other channels of participation. Doing so, could further strengthen all three dimensions of embeddedness – temporal, spatial and practices (Bussu et al., 2022).

The contribution of this thesis has been to demonstrate further examples of how coherence in democratic systems is promoted in diverse settings. This has been enabled through a comparative design across multiple case studies in highly contrasting contexts.

In all four cases examined, **PB is being implemented at multiple tiers of government, posing challenges for spatial embeddedness.** PB is undertaken at the very local level (communities, wards or urban villages) up to the authority-wide level (municipal or regional). PB in the Indonesian cases demonstrates a stronger claim to spatial embeddedness due in part to a highly structured design and alignment with the political cycle that has arisen from its longstanding institutionalisation in comparison to Scotland (see sections 5.2.2 and 6.2.2). Nevertheless, despite evident differences in overall spatial embeddedness between the Indonesian and Scottish cases, findings across all cases show that PBs most notable impacts occur at a very local level according to most interviewees (both participants and local authorities) (see sections 5.2.2 and 6.2.2).

Several challenges have been highlighted in each case study with PB processes focused on larger geographical units, such as fairness between neighbouring populations (Fife and Moray, see

sections 5.2.2 and 6.2.2), and perceptions of low responsiveness to community requests at municipal level among participants (Solo and Semarang, 5.2.2). These findings support the notion that multi-level governance can be problematic where competing interests and policy priorities at different tiers can hinder participatory processes that are best embedded at the local level (Bussu et al., 2022).

This thesis has further developed understandings in how very local PB manifests in diverse contexts, which has been enabled by the paired comparative design. As scholars have observed previously, one possible deficit with local participatory or deliberative mechanisms is that they are overly local in their focus and disconnected from the bigger picture (Parkinson, 2006, Sintomer et al., 2021). In addition to providing further evidence of the challenge of parochialism or short-termism in local PB, this thesis has also provided examples of how it can be somewhat mitigated through design choices (such as methods to promote greater fairness in decision-making in the Scottish cases, section 6.2.3) or work that facilitates greater embeddedness (strengthening the link between local planning and PB in Solo, see section 5.2.1). A focus on diverse cases in multiple countries has provided leverage in addressing this question.

Next, **national governments have a strong influence in all four case studies of this research.** In each case, there are examples of governments pursuing strategies – however well meaning – that have muddied the waters of accountability or disempowered local authorities, undermining their roles as lead agents for implementing PB (see sections 5.3.2 and 6.3.2). This dynamic appears to be linked to the status of PB as a nationally legislated initiative in both countries.

In Fife and Moray, there is a strongly held view amongst local authority interviewees that the push to undertake PB has not come with adequate resources to make a success of the initiative. Moreover, the largest PB exercise that Moray has had to date has cut-out the local council from the process, with the Scottish government instead funding local CSOs to deliver the work (see section 6.3.2). In Solo and Semarang, the national government – perhaps justifiably – has placed new restrictions on local authorities when it comes to approving local spending (see section 5.3.2).

These findings are consistent with those of previous scholars who have noted challenges faced by sub-national governments in delivering PB when they are reliant on budgetary transfers from national governments (Wampler et al., 2021), and particularly when these budgets are insufficient (Wampler, 2012). If national governments do not genuinely empower sub-national governments to take the lead on PB then it is more challenging for the benefits of the mechanism to be realised. However, a further contribution of the thesis is in illustrating how embeddedness prospects of PB

can be shaped and hindered by national legislation, which has not been explored in the literature until now.

A notable similarity across the case studies in both countries is the role that civil society has had and continues to have in shaping PB and attempting to maximise the effectiveness of the mechanism. The fact that CSOs have an active and visible role across all cases was not surprising, given that the cases were prioritised on this basis (see section 3.3.1.2) and that CSOs have previously been found to be key actors in PB successes (see section 1.6). What is more notable, however, is how **across all cases CSOs have been at the forefront of innovating design adaptations** or in advancing more effective approaches. For example, in Solo CSOs have played key roles in strengthening the link between the local Strategic Plan and PB (see section 5.3.1), while CSOs have done similar in Fife through action planning PB processes (see section 6.3.1). Findings in both Solo and Semarang revealed organisations innovating new design features that open up PB to broader participation (the FGD in Solo and Sangpuan in Semarang) (see section 5.2.1). While in Fife and Moray, CSOs have been at the forefront of experimentations with split pot and 50/50 modalities aimed at making processes fairer (see section 6.2.3).

While previous studies have found similar evidence in support of the contributions of civil society to PB processes (Ryan, 2021), the findings of this thesis go further in providing specific evidence in highly diverse contexts of how CSOs contribute to PB processes more aligned with deliberative democratic theory and that are more embedded in their local systems.

The benefits of frequent PB processes (Sintomer et al., 2021) have been noted across all four case studies. However, **the two Indonesian cases demonstrate stronger temporal embeddedness than the Scottish cases.** In line with the national legislation (see section 4.2.2.1), the Indonesian cases are obliged to hold annual PB processes, while this level of formal regularity is not required in Scotland. As has been noted, Solo is more consistent in delivering on this expectation at every governance tier (see section 5.2.1). Nevertheless, it is evident that both cities have held PB processes more frequently than the Scottish case studies. This is important because positive impacts of PB are much more likely when processes are sustained over a long period and therefore have the advantage of aggregated benefits for a locale (Sintomer et al., 2008, Boulding and Wampler, 2009). The cumulative benefits of repetition is also found in the trust building literature (Vangen and Huxham, 2003).

PB in the two Indonesian case studies is also more aligned with the policy and political cycle in the two municipalities, than in the two Scottish local authorities. The PB process is a requirement that both municipal governments must adhere to receive approval for their overall annual spending

plans. Moreover, day-to-day spending to cover local administrative costs at the urban village level is also covered from the same pot of monies as the funding that is allocated via the PB process (see section 5.2.1). Currently in Solo and Semarang, if PB was not carried out on an annual basis, local government activity would be severely hindered. This differs strongly with the dynamic found in the Scottish cases, in which PB is an add-on to existing ways of working, rather than a feature of it. In the Scottish cases, less than 1% of the local government budget is being allocated via PB currently (see 6.2.3).

While PB in both countries has been implemented for over 10 years (see chapter 4), Indonesia has the longer track record with the mechanism, with approximately 20 years of experience. This difference is likely to be a significant factor in the differences found regarding temporal embeddedness. However, another contributing factor is the different legislative frameworks that have given rise to PB in each country, the national planning and development law in Indonesia and the citizen participation law in Scotland (McNulty and No, 2021). A strict mandate to implement is found in Indonesia, while a looser system of targets is found in Scotland (see chapter 4).

The findings contribute novel insights into how different legislative frameworks influence temporal embeddedness prospects in two highly diverse country settings.

7.10. PB Outcomes: Cross-national analysis

The most prominent cross-national findings relating to the outcomes of PB are illustrated in Table 19 below. To varying degrees across all cases, PB is helping to bring communities and local governments closer together. Likewise, PB has also brought modest results in each of the cases, but a greater scale and ambition is needed to impact on citizens perceptions towards local governments. Notably, a relationship has been identified between PB design, embeddedness and PB outcomes, which suggests that improvements in design and embeddedness can better position PB to achieve more transformational outcomes. While there are minor differences across national contexts regarding PB outcomes, none were felt significant enough to emphasise here. A further exploration of these themes is explored following the below table.

Table 19 Cross-national analysis: PB Outcomes & Trust

Similarities	Differences
PB Outcomes	
PB is helping to bring communities and local governments closer together	

PB brings modest results, greater scale and ambition needed to impact on trust	
Evidence suggests relationship between PB design, embeddedness and PB outcomes	

Despite evident imperfections in PB processes in each of the four cases (see sections 5.2, 5.3, 6.2 and 6.3), this thesis has further illustrated that PB has the potential to enhance local democracy by better connecting communities and local governments. In each of the case studies, PB has provided a new avenue for citizens and civil society groups to engage with the local government, increasing opportunities to interact with the local government and increase the visibility of public officials to citizens and/or local activists (Bherer et al., 2016).

PB has altered governance dynamics in all cases **providing participants with increased opportunities to share expectations and demands with those in authority**, which aligns with previous studies (Touchton and Wampler, 2014, Bherer et al., 2016). While the extent to which greater interaction between community and government has occurred is less in places in which local government representatives have lower visibility in the PB process (see Semarang and Moray), each case study shows that PB has helped to bring government closer to the people.

However, the paired subnational comparative design of this research, has served to deepen understandings of the importance of local government visibility in PB processes, demonstrating the importance of this condition for bringing communities and governments closer together in highly diverse settings. The effects of this alteration to governance dynamics include providing opportunities for participants to learn more about the activities and priorities of local government, as well as the challenges and constraints that authorities are faced with in trying to deliver quality services for local communities.

Another notable identified aspect of the role that PB plays in community and local government relations was of the importance of PB being seen to be improving over time. Among interviewees with more positive views on the prospects of PB to increase trust in government, this improvement in PB was often appreciated and considered as a reason to give the authorities the benefit of the doubt. For example, while the PB process in Semarang was comparatively weaker to Solo's process (see sections 5.2.1 and 5.2.3), the advent of the women and child forum innovation was widely understood as a positive change, which gave interviewees hope that relations between community and government could continue to improve. The contribution of this thesis is in demonstrating this

finding in highly diverse contexts because of its subnational paired comparative design. As a result, I have further extended the transferability of these findings.

PB has been heralded as having significant potential to produce social justice (Shah, 2007, Wampler et al., 2021). However, **none of the four cases examined for this thesis have strong evidence in favour of transformative changes** that have occurred because of PB (see sections 5.3.2 and 6.3.2). Instead, the results point to modest changes, beyond the benefits for community-government relations already outlined above. Small scale results at the community level have been the most typical such as through small-grant PB in the Scottish cases or urban village-level budget allocations in the Indonesian PB cases. These findings add further evidence to understandings of the role PB has had thus far in facilitating modest improvements to well-being (Wampler et al., 2021). Moreover, with the focus of this thesis on unexceptional case studies in two countries not (yet) renowned for best practice, its findings have helped to further extend understandings around the performance of PB interventions beyond archetypal processes that have been the predominant focus of the academic literature (Ryan, 2019).

Nevertheless, this thesis suggests that for PB to have meaningful impact on trust in local government, it must be implemented on a large scale with greater scope. This conclusion aligns with previous research (Wampler et al., 2021). Across all cases, interviewees expressed a desire for a greater level of trust to be placed in communities by local authorities during PB processes. In Indonesia, this trend was mainly observed as a call for the PB process to be more participatory and more in tune with and responsive to the needs and wishes of the communities (see sections 5.2.1, 5.3.2, and 5.4.2). While in Scotland, the trend was expressed most typically as a call for PB to be more widely used across the community, moving beyond piecemeal exercises utilising small grants to the use of PB to commission local services and allocating mainstream local government budgets (see section 6.3.1).

The findings underscore the necessity for local governments to expand the scale and scope of PB to meet community expectations and foster greater trust. While PB has demonstrated some capacity to bridge gaps between communities and governments, its transformative potential will remain constrained without a more ambitious approach. Scaling up PB processes and embedding them more deeply within local governance structures is essential for realising its democratic potential. By documenting these insights across diverse contexts, this thesis contributes to a deeper understanding of PB's limitations and promise.

In both sets of case studies, this thesis provides **evidence of a relationship between PB design, embeddedness, and PB outcomes**. Firstly, and where the evidence has been most convincing, the

findings in this thesis have revealed that changes to PB design can enable improved prospects for embeddedness of PB within the local participatory system. Such a finding echoes the interaction that occurs between institutional design and embeddedness which has been identified previously (Goodin, 1996b). However, where this research goes further than previous studies is in illustrating the means in which design strengthening embeddedness can occur within the specific context of PB interventions.

Key findings suggest that embeddedness can facilitate iterative improvements in design (e.g. greater inclusiveness, deliberation, and fairness or evidence utilisation in decision-making), as well as greater familiarity and engagement with PB amongst citizens and civil society. These iterative improvements can subsequently further strengthen embeddedness of PB, such as through improved embeddedness *practices* as key stakeholders continue to engage with processes that they find satisfying or worthwhile (Offe, 1996).

The advantages of PB designs that are more aligned with deliberative democratic theory and are more embedded in the local participatory system are evident across the cases. Within each case study pairing, the cases assessed as possessing design features most aligned with deliberative democratic theory, and dimensions of embeddedness in each country – Solo and Fife – were also places in which interviewees could more readily cite changes that had occurred in the community because of PB. In addition, in each case a wider breadth of results was noted by interviewees than in comparator cases. Moreover, Solo and Fife showed stronger evidence of PB contributing to trust in local government. While the drivers behind this varied among cases, the role of PB in promoting interaction and dialogue between communities and government were particularly important to interviewees. PB is better positioned to impact upon trust when it is seen to be solving the problems of local people or meaningfully taking their views on board in policymaking. It is plausible to argue that Solo and Fife can at this stage of implementation evidence more notable outcomes from their respective PB experiences, with PB design and embeddedness playing enabling roles in these modest achievements.

Thus, this thesis advances previous studies by showing how design and embeddedness can shape engagement with PB processes and the prospect for positive outcomes. The comparative design has enabled the examination of these dynamics, as well as addressing gaps in previous research specifically concerning PB and trust in government (Swaner, 2017). Similarly, this thesis also goes into greater depth than previous research on the precise role of design and institutionalisation in PB processes that are better received by participants (Fernández-Martínez et al., 2020), through the application of deliberative democratic theory and embeddedness lenses to unpack these aspects.

In generating evidence across multiple case studies in two contrasting country settings, this thesis has developed a deeper understanding of how design and institutional (i.e. embeddedness) factors interact and contribute to PB results, as well as showing that such a dynamic can be found outside of Europe.

To date, little (if any) academic research has explored relationships between PB design, embeddedness and PB outcomes. Most embeddedness research in the participatory democracy sphere has focused on understanding how embeddedness is defined, embeddedness dynamics, and what characteristics embeddedness may have (Bussu et al., 2022). Therefore, this thesis contributes to the field by examining these questions in two distinct sets of case studies and illustrating how changes in PB design or in the extent of its embeddedness can influence outcomes and lead to iterative improvements.

7.11. Conclusion

This comparative analysis and discussion of the empirical findings from the Indonesia and Scottish case studies has highlighted the interplay between PB design, PB embeddedness, and PB outcomes, offering valuable insights from the diverse contexts of Indonesia and Scotland.

The key findings suggest that improvements in PB design aligned with deliberative democratic values can positively influence the level of embeddedness of PB within local governance systems and vice versa. These improvements position PB to be more effective in contributing to changes at the community level. While the findings show several areas of linkage between the micro and macro-level factors of design and embeddedness, the frequency of implementation – a core facet of temporal embeddedness – plays a critical role in enabling iterative improvements to PB design. The strongest performing cases in each country – Solo in Indonesia and Fife in Scotland – each feature PB designs that align closer to deliberative democratic ideals and greater levels of embeddedness, while also having greater evidence of community-level changes compared to their comparator cases. These findings serve to underline that the effectiveness of PB can be strengthened through improvements to design and embeddedness of PB.

Across all cases, PB has demonstrated its ability to strengthen community-government relationships to varying degrees by promoting open dialogue and interaction with the local authorities. Cases where local authorities are more visible as part of this process are better placed to accrue benefits of perception towards the local government. In addition, it must be noted that the contribution of PB has occurred alongside other new methods of engaging with the government

in each location, such as local planning, highlighting that PB is one of several tools that can have similar benefits.

Finally, beyond the noted benefits for community-government connectedness that PB has contributed to in the case studies, evidence of other community-level changes is modest and most typically found at the very local level. For PB to have a greater impact – both in terms of community-level changes and in the extent to which it impacts on citizens' levels of trust in government, PB would need to be undertaken at a greater level of scale and ambition. PB would also need to more directly resolve problems and respond to concerns of local people, and ultimately contribute to a better quality of services for residents.

8. Conclusion

8.1. Introduction

PB has grown rapidly as part of a range of democratic innovations with the aim of reinvigorating participatory democracy during a time of declining trust in institutions (Sintomer et al., 2012). However, questions remain about the potential of these instruments to contribute to transformative change (Sintomer et al., 2021, De Vries et al., 2021, Wampler et al., 2021). Factors that have been deemed important to the prospects of PB to be effective are often grouped into issues of a procedural nature at the micro level, and issues of a structural nature at the macro level. The extent to which PB processes are open, inclusive, and featuring quality participation of citizens is understood to be highly important for the prospects for the mechanism to result in changes that communities are satisfied with (Shah, 2007). In addition, wider factors including local leadership support, the capacity of CSOs and local government, the role of partnerships, the existence of iterative learning and adaptation, and the influence of external factors are also understood to play important roles in the prospects of PB (ibid). In recent years, scholarship concerning democratic innovations has emphasised the value of deliberative democratic principles for improving democratic innovations (Fishkin, 2018, Parkinson, 2006). This has included a systemic turn to focus on how deliberation can be leveraged for democracies writ large (Parkinson and Mansbridge, 2012). More recently and along similar lines, scholars have been paying closer attention to how democratic innovations are situated within the institutional frameworks and contexts in which they have been developed, through considerations of embeddedness (Bussu et al., 2022, Dean et al., 2020).

Against this background, this thesis has examined how and why PB improves local democracy. To address this question, I have applied deliberative democratic theory (Fishkin, 2011) and embeddedness perspectives (Bussu et al., 2022) to explore two key and inter-related dimensions of PB: 1) PB Design features; and 2) The embeddedness of PB in the democratic system. The research utilised a subnational paired comparison design centred around four specific case studies: two in Indonesia (the cities of Solo and Semarang) and two in Scotland, United Kingdom (the local authorities of Fife & Moray). Field research was carried out between February 2022 and August 2023. In 8 chapters, the thesis has introduced the topic as well as a review of relevant literature, and outlined a theoretical framework that was used to inform and analyse findings – namely, concepts of deliberative theory, embeddedness and cyclical trust-building (Vangen and Huxham, 2003). The thesis proceeded to outline the methodology that was utilised for the research – including the ontological and epistemological perspectives that informed the study. The thesis then elaborated

on the key findings of the research – beginning with an elaboration of findings in the Indonesian cases, structured by key aspects: PB design, embeddedness, and PB outcomes, and following with the same structure for the Scottish case studies. A discussion chapter summarised key observations according to the literature, first with a discussion of each pair of cases, followed by a cross-national analysis. The key findings are detailed below.

8.2. Key Findings

PB design: In Indonesia, the PB process in Solo has a design that is more consistent with deliberative democratic principles than the comparator process in Semarang. An additional sectoral participation channel and a more committed focus on tackling diverse subjects through PB have contributed to greater levels of inclusion. While changes to the decision-making modality have promoted greater use of evidence, and greater responsiveness to the needs of communities in Solo. In Scotland, PB processes in Fife were found to more consistently make use of deliberative democratic principles than Moray, albeit only marginally. While evidence shows levels of inclusion and the extent of justified decision-making to be broadly comparable in each case, Fife was understood to be more consistently committed to promoting and experimenting with structured discussion during its PB processes. Notably, none of the four cases were found to be leveraging highly deliberative PB designs, thereby showing the importance of incremental improvements towards deliberative principles, given the comparably stronger outcomes observed in the cases performing better on this aspect.

Embeddedness: In Indonesia, the thesis found that Solo demonstrated stronger evidence of the three dimensions of embeddedness than Semarang. Temporal embeddedness was stronger in Solo as demonstrated by a more consistent, regular delivery of PB in line with regulations and a clear working link with another key participatory mechanism, local strategic plans. A wider issue focus of PB in Solo suggests that there is also a greater degree of spatial embeddedness as compared to Semarang. On many other aspects, the two cases shared broad similarities, including the challenges posed by elite dominance and national politics, and the multi-tier design of PB, as well as the constructive roles of civil society organisations, and evidence that there is work to do in strengthening the connection of PB to the broader public sphere. However, the thesis also showed that commitment to PB by local elites appears to be weaker in Semarang than in Solo.

In Scotland, signs of PB embeddedness were also mixed, with evidence marginally stronger for signs of embeddedness in Fife. The low frequency and regularity of PB in both Scottish case studies is hampering them on the temporal dimension, however recent progress in aligning PB with other elements of the participatory system have been positive – particularly in Fife. On spatial

embeddedness, the focus of PB in Fife on a wider range of policy issues compared to the narrow focus on pursued in Moray position it more strongly on this dimension. While there is also evidence that suggests a stronger connection to the broader public sphere in Fife, as well as a more considered strategy for delivery of multi-tier PB than in Moray. Finally, on practices both cases exhibit a combination of positive and less positive practices, with formal rules largely supportive of PB embeddedness, but with challenges posed by national governments. On balance, practices of embeddedness were found to be more positive in Fife, due to a more collegiate approach than Moray among key stakeholders including street level bureaucrats and civil society organisations.

PB Outcomes: In Indonesia, Solo demonstrated stronger outcomes from PB than its neighbouring city of Semarang, both in terms of community-level changes attributable to the mechanism and in terms of evidence of trust in local government being positively impacted upon by PB. While community-level changes were modest in both cities, examples found in Solo were more diverse and widely felt among those interviewed. Meanwhile, identified drivers influencing PB participants perceptions towards local government included improvements made in PB processes, PB's role in promoting openness and dialogue with government, and the ability of PB to resolve local problems.

In Scotland, signs of community-level changes facilitated by PB were more prevalent in Fife than Moray, although evidence of notable results from PB was limited in both cases. In addition, while PB was not felt to be impacting significantly on levels of trust in local government in either case, the perception that this was a realistic prospect was more widespread among interviewees in Fife. PB drivers for trust in local government included the mechanism's ability to facilitate interaction with authorities, and ensuring governments take community views on board.

The thesis also presented a cross-national analysis considering key trends across the four cases. Several themes were identified regarding **PB design.** Firstly, I argued how each of the four cases demonstrated a reliance on habitual participants in PB processes, with organisers invariably depending on kin networks to recruit and mobilise participants. In addition, I noted a somewhat paradoxical element of this approaches – arguing that processes would struggle to continue without these stakeholders, and yet their dominance may also be limiting the emergence of more open and participatory mechanisms. Secondly, the analysis detailed how the use of themes set by organisers, bureaucrats and national governments has been a common tactic in each of the case studies in both Indonesia and Scotland. This is understandable, however there are risks that come with such a strategy if the themes that are being chosen to focus PB processes on are not understood as being sufficiently responsive to local priorities. In such instances, there is the possibility of being seen to be a means of elites retaining control of PB processes and for ensuring that results are not too out

of step with wider priorities. Finally, the analysis drew attention to a central difference between the cases in Indonesia and Scotland – PB process designs are comparatively rigid and routinised in Indonesia, while processes in Scotland are less entrenched and looser in the way that they are conducted. While this factor speaks to a difference in the level of institutionalisation that PB has in each setting, a different approach to regulations and guidelines is also a cause. The analysis finds that neither approach should be understood as the ideal, but PB in each country could learn from some of the advantages of the other's approach.

Next, the thesis outlined several similarities regarding the **embeddedness** contexts across the four cases. Uneasy co-existence with other participatory mechanisms was noted as a consistent theme across cases, whereby PB has not yet arrived at a harmonious relationship with other elements in the local democratic system. Meanwhile, the comparative analysis also identified the multi-level status of PB across the four cases as a challenge to spatial dimensions of embeddedness, with this complex locational dynamic posing difficulties for consistency of delivery as well as having links to challenges regarding quality of discussion. The role of national governments was an associated aspect of this trend, with analysis revealing a tendency to undermine local governments in PB direction and delivery. In addition, the critical role of civil society actors in promoting design adaptations more conducive of deliberative approaches and embeddedness was highlighted. Finally, stronger evidence of temporal embeddedness among the Indonesian case studies than in the Scottish cases was noted. This status appears to partly be the result of a period implementing PB which is much longer in Indonesia than Scotland, despite both countries having had policies in place that have been supportive of PB for several years. Moreover, the specifics of the legislation have played a role – with Indonesia's legislation being far more stringent on the need to conduct PB to approve local budgets overall.

When considering **PB outcomes,** several similarities were found across the four case studies. The comparative analysis revealed that – to varying degrees - PB is helping to bring communities and local governments closer together in each of the four case studies. PB has provided a new avenue for citizens and civil society groups to engage with the local government. In addition, PB – and perceptions of improvements in how it operates – has generated goodwill towards local governments and seen as a sign that authorities are trying to do better for their citizens despite challenging circumstances. The importance of local government visibility in PB processes has also been emphasised – with a risk that when PB processes are not associated with local government, or if bureaucrats are not seen to value the mechanism, then benefits to relations can be affected. The analysis also found across case studies that while PB does lead to changes in the communities in which the mechanism operates, these results are invariably modest and most typically found at very

localised levels. For PB to impact upon levels of trust in local government, a greater scale and ambition is needed. This would require a greater level of trust being placed in citizens by governments themselves.

Crucially, I have argued that while it cannot be stated that any of the case studies can be considered strongly embedded across each of the three dimensions, there is a relationship between PB design, PB embeddedness, and PB outcomes. Embeddedness supports improvements in PB design and the leveraging of other available resources (information, other mechanisms, etc) that lead to more effective processes, more suited to their contexts, with better results. The role of temporal embeddedness is particularly important here – with regularity of delivery having knock-on effects for design, participation, system/administrative alignment as well as community-level changes and prospects for government trust-building. I have argued that it is this relationship between micro-level and macro-level that contributes to improved potential of PB to produce transformational outcomes, when dynamics that are more supportive of embeddedness are present and cultivated. Conversely, when less constructive, dis-embedding dynamics are more prevalent, improvements in PB design are more difficult to generate – thereby further damaging prospects for embeddedness.

8.2. Contribution to Theory and Policy

The research makes three over-arching contributions to the academic literature. First, it is among the few comparative studies specifically aimed at comparing different PB designs, embeddedness and their respective outcomes. Unlike prior studies comparing PB against non-PB contexts (Baiocchi et al., 2011) or describing PB processes in different settings (Röcke, 2014), this research contrasts PB designs in local authorities in similar settings and also across countries. This approach is intended to provide leverage in identifying the impact of design and embeddedness on outcomes. Only one other study, to my knowledge, has taken a similar approach, shedding light on the importance of deep discussions and representative participation in PB for shifts in attitudes of participants to take place (Theuwis, 2024). However, the study in question focused on populist attitudes rather than PB outcomes of community-level changes and trust in local government more broadly (ibid). While the relationship between PB and political trust has received some focus in recent years, evidence is mixed and there is a need for a more nuanced level of understanding (Volodin, 2019, Franklin and Ebdon, 2020, Swaner, 2017), particularly in light of the increasing importance of generating trust in institutions. In addition, while deliberative democratic theory is commonly applied to more traditional deliberative innovations like deliberative polling or citizens'

juries, this research has bridged the gap between participatory practices and deliberative theory, using PB as a case study.

Second, this thesis has integrated concepts of embeddedness in local democratic systems. Concepts of embeddedness have recently become more sophisticated, and moved beyond narrower thinking of institutionalisation (Bussu et al., 2022). This in turn has opened up new opportunities for research in considering whether and how participatory mechanisms are working in harmony with the wider democratic system (ibid). Systems thinking in democratic theory has been predominantly the focus of influential deliberative systems theorists in recent years (Parkinson and Mansbridge, 2012), but has begun to extend to other considerations of participatory systems and democratic systems (Bussu et al., 2022, Dean et al., 2019, Owen and Smith, 2015). However, very little primary research has been conducted in these areas with PB as the focus. These include an ethnographic study of informal dynamics at play surrounding PB in Recife, Brazil (Montambeault and Goirand, 2016), and recent explorations of the roles of street level bureaucrats and governance capacity in efforts to embed other community empowerment initiatives in Scotland (Escobar, 2021a). Other examples have included assessments of participatory policymaking forums (Fernández-Martínez et al., 2020) or deliberative bodies (Chwalisz, 2020).

Lastly, my work transcends the conventional analytical boundaries and empirical applications that are often limited to either micro (the specific design features of a PB process) or macro-level (wider structural and systemic factors) aspects of PB. Instead, it has provided a more holistic understanding by exploring both levels as well as any interaction between the two. As scholars have argued, this approach helps move the field beyond dichotomous interpretations, thereby contributing a more nuanced and comprehensive analysis (Owen and Smith, 2015).

The novel approach described above has led to several other specific contributions to the literature. Firstly, the thesis has provided further evidence that PB can contribute to shifts in governance that have the potential to improve local democracy and promote trust in local government. While previous studies have shown that PB can bring governments and communities closer together (Bherer et al., 2016, Swaner, 2017), these studies were limited to one western country setting. In generating evidence across multiple case studies in two highly contrasting country settings in Asia and Europe, this thesis has developed a deeper understanding of how design and institutional (i.e. embeddedness) factors interact and contribute to the improvement of government-community relations, as well as how providing an example of how PB can be a driver of political trust outside of the western sphere. Moreover, in demonstrating the importance of government visibility in PB delivery, the findings serve to deepen understandings around conditions that can position PB to

contribute to trust building, not previously captured in similar studies (Bherer et al., 2016, Swaner, 2017).

In illustrating how design changes in Indonesia and Scotland contributed to greater effectiveness of PB and more apparent community-level changes, the thesis has provided further evidence to support the position of leading scholars that different PB designs result in different outcomes (Wampler et al, 2021). Importantly, however, this thesis has added further depth to previous research, by showing how marginal differences in PB designs that have broadly similar approaches and institutional frameworks, such as mandated PB (ibid), can facilitate greater effectiveness and results. These findings have served to emphasise the importance of incremental innovation in line with deliberative democratic theory within nationally legislated PB approaches.

Furthermore, the thesis has uncovered additional evidence to support the growing body of evidence outlining the importance of embedding dynamics for democratic innovations (Bussu et al., 2022). Moreover, while scholars have previously found that a combination of sound design and institutionalisation can improve the performance and perception of participatory mechanisms, this thesis has extended the transferability of this finding beyond a single European country (Fernández-Martínez et al., 2020). Notably, this thesis has developed a deeper understanding of how micro-level and macro-level factors interact to hinder or enable PB results. In addition, while previous research has underlined the importance of civil society organisations for the success of PB (Ryan, 2021), the findings of this thesis go further in providing specific evidence in highly diverse contexts of how CSOs contribute to PB processes more aligned with deliberative democratic theory and that are more embedded in their local systems.

Finally, an over-arching contribution of this thesis has been its focus on average examples of PB, rather than a focus on cases deemed particularly impressive – as has been identified previously as a gap in the literature (Ryan, 2019), which have helped to further extend understandings around the performance of PB interventions beyond archetypal processes.

The conclusions in this thesis underline the importance of several aspects that **policymakers** can take guidance from, particularly with regards to PB design. Firstly, a focus on maximising the extent of inclusion by opening participation to as wide a circle as is feasible is strongly advised. In conjunction with this point, delivering on inclusion requires a wariness of becoming over-reliant on long established participants and implementing partners. While these stakeholders can play important roles, organisers should be encouraged to build bridges between these groups and

would-be new participants and stakeholders, to avoid stagnant or processes that are unappealing to outsiders.

Secondly, the findings of this thesis have underlined the appeal and benefits of discussion-based PB designs, as well as further emphasising the diversity of models in existence. However, the research has not decisively settled on a specific, ideal model for how future PB processes pursue these ends. Therefore, policymakers should continue to test and trial new deliberative models and conduct rigorous evaluations of their performance to arrive at locally relevant models that are best suited to the specific context in which they are based. On a similar note, the thesis has presented convincing evidence that has revealed deficiencies in decision-making stages of PB designs. These findings suggest the importance of arriving at new decision-making modalities that give greater powers to participants while also promoting greater consideration of evidence in reaching final conclusions.

More widely and beyond considerations of design, the findings of this thesis underline the need for policymakers to find new ways to develop connections and strengthen existing links between democratic channels and arenas, including between local planning and strategy processes and PB exercises. Moreover, policymakers and PB organisers should give space to civil society actors to continue to innovate for further improvements in PB design as well as prospects for embeddedness. For their part, those responsible for the delivery of PB should strive for greater consistency and regularity in implementation, as the findings of this thesis underline such temporality is a fundamental precursor to iterative learning to improve design and wider embeddedness, in doing so leading to a growing familiarity and trust among target populations. Indeed, I believe the findings of this thesis are also valuable in assuring policymakers that it is not only best practice PB efforts that can perform effectively. What the thesis has shown is that even modest and incremental improvements in both design and embeddedness contexts can be significant and can lead to virtuous cycles of improvement over time.

While the thesis has emphasised the benefits of incremental improvements, the conclusions also call for boldness particularly at the strategic level in how PB is pursued. This can include being clearer that decisions made by participants will eventually be adopted by authorities, opening PB up to more issues and topics, as well as allocating higher percentage of budgets by PB. Granted, such steps are no simple task. Ensuring policy coherence can be difficult as more themes and issues are tackled by PB (Falanga, 2023), while government administrative systems are not always conducive to allocating large proportions of budgets via participatory modalities (Escobar and Katz, 2018). However, by placing a greater trust in PB participants, organisers can position PB to be more

transformative, moving towards decisions that can make a visible difference to people's lives as well as counteracting some of the belief among regular citizens that politicians do not trust or value the views of everyday people. Coupled with this recommendation is the need for organisers of PB to be more visible in implementing, supporting, and participating in PB processes. The findings of this thesis have demonstrated how PB processes benefit from having visible and engaged local authorities that are seen to be taking the process seriously, and that are also more clearly associated with the process. In doing so, local authorities can convey the importance of the mechanism – giving it further legitimacy. Moreover, authorities also stand to benefit from being more clearly linked with the positive sentiment that arises from such processes.

At a more practical level, the findings of this thesis have underline how nationwide governance dynamics can complicate the prospects for PB at the local level. These findings underscore the importance of clarifying roles and responsibilities between different tiers of government when it comes to PB delivery. Such a process should seek to emphasise importance for local governments as the lead administrative agent of PB, wherever possible managing finances and local PB strategy. Ideally, this process would be coupled with a commitment for specific and sustained funding by national governments for local governments of PB, a lack of which has consistently been observed across cases during this research.

8.3. Limitations

It is important to note that there are limitations to this research. Firstly, the unit of analysis, with its focus on a five-year period (2018-2022) across entire local authority areas, posed challenges. The first is that it complicated an assessment of the design aspects of PB, particularly in Scotland which has a high degree of flexibility at the local level regarding the way PB processes are implemented. This approach made it not possible to conduct a simple evaluation of the extent to which a PB process could be considered deliberative. A second challenge with the unit of analysis has been the need to identify participants of PB processes going back several years to ensure a wide enough mix of perspectives. This approach has also meant a need to ensure interviewees have been able to recall insights and experiences going back several years, which complicated interviews at times. However, the advantage of this approach has been that it has provided a larger pool of qualified individuals to speak to. Nevertheless, future research could opt for a different approach and yield further insights. Ultimately, it is my belief that by choosing a period of five years to analyse, I have worked to find a pragmatic balance between a significant window of time to consider the aggregative

impact of PB over time, while reducing the risk that individuals will be difficult to locate or have insufficient memories over their experiences several years previous.

There were also some limitations in the profiles of interviewees recruited for this research. Despite a proactive recruitment strategy (see Chapter 2, Methodology), variations in participant numbers across locations were observed, with slightly fewer interviewees in Scotland than in Indonesia. Achieving gender balance was also challenging, with more female participants in Scotland and more male participants in Indonesia, though gender was not a core focus of the thesis. Additionally, efforts to include interviewees solely engaged in PB processes were only partially successful. While these factors may be seen as limitations, they also reflect the inherent patterns of inclusion in PB processes (see 5.2.1 and 6.2.1).

The research faced limitations regarding data availability, particularly in Scotland. While the predominant data source for this thesis has been the data collected via semi-structured interviews, the analysis of attendance records, funding decisions, PB programmes, etc., has also been an important facet of the research. Unfortunately, the standard of data available in Fife and Moray was low – with very little in the way of gender disaggregated data for attendance available, and information regarding funding decisions mostly limited to very short descriptions of projects, rather than detailed outlines of what was being proposed. Meanwhile, in Indonesia – while more data was available, this was still a patchwork of materials limiting the extent of direct comparison that was possible on specific items (e.g. attendance records).

Finally, it must be emphasised that the case studies explored for the purpose of this thesis should be considered a snapshot, rather than fully representative of the entire PB experience in each location over the 2018-2022 period. While every effort was made to engage a wide variety of interviewees and examine the broadest possible range of evidence, there are natural limits placed on the thesis based on the research design opted for. By the same token, the observation portion of this research was also limited to approximately one week in each location due to budgetary constraints.

8.4. Further research suggestions

This thesis has shed further light on several areas that would benefit from additional research. Firstly, the subnational paired comparative approach to this thesis has enabled a greater understanding of the effects of design on PB outcomes, as well as the role of embeddedness. Future research could consider recreating the approach taken in this thesis but applied to new or additional

locations, to see if the findings could be further corroborated (or otherwise) and what else could be uncovered. Furthermore, this research has further elucidated the importance of PB design and the benefits of pursuing deliberative approaches. Newly developed research could further examine more closely which aspects of deliberative theory are most critical for improving PB outcomes.

In addition, this research has furthered understandings around the embeddedness dynamics of PB. Future research could also investigate the issue of embeddedness and PB and seek to answer questions such as how can embedding dynamics be better cultivated? And what other mechanisms work best in tandem with PB within a democratic system?

Finally, the research has also raised interesting dynamics about the local and national levels of government with regards to embeddedness of nationally legislated PB, shedding further light on how the extent to which local governments are empowered by national governments to implement PB can affect embeddedness prospects of the mechanism. New research could delve further into these aspects to better understand national and local dynamics that can help or hinder embeddedness of PB.

By pursuing these lines of academic inquiry, future studies can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of PB's design, embeddedness, and governance dynamics, ultimately informing more effective participatory practices.

8.5. Coda

Returning to the central question guiding this thesis -- whether PB improves local democracy -- the findings indicate that, in the broadest sense, PB can and does improve local democracy. This thesis provides evidence that PB contributes to widening participation in democratic decision-making, particularly when inclusive design features are employed. These include issue-based channels, special forums for marginalised groups, or ensuring that various issues or themes are covered as part of a PB strategy.

Moreover, PB has been shown to play a mutually supportive role with other elements of local democratic systems, such as through reinforcing the priorities of local planning exercises. Regarding outcomes, the thesis has found that PB has contributed to community-level changes across all case studies, thereby demonstrating improved responsiveness to community needs. In addition, while the results of PB are modest – particularly when compared to the expectations of participants, the thesis has found evidence that PB promotes greater ownership and buy-in for

projects at community level, with the potential to ensure greater relevance as well as efficient use of public funds.

Moreover, there is also evidence that PB has supported improvements in perceptions of participants towards local governments, including through bringing communities and governments closer together through greater interaction and dialogue.

Crucially, the extent to which PB can strengthen local democracy depends at least in part on the specific micro- and macro-level factors of PB – and their interaction - in each context. The two cases which demonstrate the strongest evidence of PB contributing to strengthening local democracy feature PB designs that are more aligned with deliberative democratic theory than their comparator cases in the same country context. In addition, these cases also demonstrate greater embeddedness of PB in the local democratic system, as well as stronger signs of positive outcomes in terms of community-level changes and impact on citizens perceptions of local governments. The relationship between design, embeddedness and outcomes that this thesis has found is integral to an understanding of whether and how PB can strengthen local democracy. It is plausible to argue that further cultivation of this relationship through design improvements and/or concerted efforts to enhance embeddedness can enhance PBs potential to strengthen local democracy.

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Annex 1 – Case Study Options

The following tables set out the various options that were considered as subnational case study locations in both Indonesia and Scotland. The tables note various aspects including PB design features, context, plus aspects of a more practical nature such as if individuals had been reached concerning the research in each location and whether interest in participating was confirmed.

Indonesian Case Study Options

Location	Notable design features	Context	Responsive Contact Identified	Interest Confirmed
Semarang, Central Java	Pre Forum for Women & Children Issues	Urban city	Yes	Yes
Solo, Central Java	Synchronisation forum; thematic/sectoral forum, quota for women participation	Urban city	Yes	Yes
Kebumen Regency, Central Java	Pre Forum for Women & Children Issues	Rural	No	N/A
Kubu Raya, West Kalimantan	Pre Forum for Women & Children Issues	Rural	Yes	Yes
Makassar, South Sulawesi	Pre Forum for Women & Children Issues	Urban city	No	No
Parepare, South Sulawesi	Inclusive Musrenbang	Rural	No	N/A
Pacitan, East Java	Musrenbang for Women	Rural	No	N/A
Trenggalek, East Java	Pre Forum for Women & Children Issues	Rural	Yes	No
Surabaya, East Java	e-Musrenbang	Urban city	No	N/A

Scottish Case Study Options

Location	Notable design features	Context	Responsive Contact Identified	Interest Confirmed

Fife	Experimentation with deliberative methods	Rural	Yes	Yes
Moray	PB with Schools, youth focused PB	Rural	Yes	Yes
Falkirk	Unknown	Rural	Yes	Yes
Aberdeenshire	Experimentation with deliberative methods	Rural	Yes	No
North Ayrshire	Unknown	Rural	Yes	Yes
Dundee	Online, city-wide PB	Urban	No	No response
Clackmannanshire	Unknown	Rural	No	No response

Annex 2 – Interview Guides

The following interview guides were used to guide interviews in the case studies. The first guide was used for interviews in Indonesia, and shows English wording followed by the Indonesian translations which were supported by an interpreter.

Indonesia Interview Guide.

Interview guide – Participatory Budgeting and Local Democracy (Indonesia cases)

Introduction:

- Briefly explain the research aims and the objectives of this research interview.
- Ensure the participant has read the participant information and consent form, had an opportunity to ask any questions about these, signed the consent form and agreed an anonymised identifier.
- Emphasise they are free to skip any questions they do not feel they can answer, and if they want to end the conversation at any time for any reason it is okay.

• Jelaskan secara singkat tujuan penelitian dan tujuan wawancara penelitian ini.
• Pastikan peserta telah membaca informasi peserta dan formulir persetujuan, memiliki kesempatan untuk mengajukan pertanyaan apa pun tentang ini, menandatangani formulir persetujuan dan menyetujui pengenal yang dianonimkan.
• Tekankan bahwa mereka bebas untuk melewatkan pertanyaan apa pun yang mereka rasa tidak dapat mereka jawab, dan jika mereka ingin mengakhiri percakapan kapan saja dengan alasan apa pun tidak apa-apa

Section 1 – Initial Questions

1. Can you tell me a little bit about yourself?
2. Have you had any experiences with participatory budgeting?
3. If **yes,** what experiences have you had or what roles have you played?

- *If **no/don't know,** what is your understanding of participatory budgeting?*
- *Why have you not attended a Participatory Budgeting event?*
- *What would make you more likely to attend something held in future?*

(Skip to section 2b Question 12)

1. Bisakah Anda ceritakan sedikit tentang diri Anda?
2. Apakah Anda pernah memiliki pengalaman dengan penganggaran partisipatif?
3. Jika ya, pengalaman apa yang Anda alami atau peran apa yang Anda mainkan?

• Jika tidak/tidak tahu, apa pemahaman Anda tentang penganggaran partisipatif?
• Mengapa Anda tidak menghadiri acara Penganggaran Partisipatif?
• Apa yang membuat Anda lebih mungkin menghadiri sesuatu yang diadakan di masa mendatang?
(Lewati ke bagian 2b Pertanyaan 12)

Section 2a - PB Process

I'm now going to ask you some questions about your views of the Participatory Budgeting process.

4. What are your overall views on the participatory budgeting process in your area/ward and in the municipality more widely?

Bagian 2a - Proses PB

Sekarang saya akan mengajukan beberapa pertanyaan tentang pandangan Anda tentang proses Musrenbang.

4. Bagaimana pandangan Anda secara keseluruhan tentang proses penganggaran partisipatif di daerah/kelurahan Anda dan di kotamadya secara lebih luas?

Inclusion

5. Do you have any thoughts about how representative of the local community the Musrenbang events typically are in terms of attendees? Has this changed at all over the past 5 years? How/why?

Probes:

- *How diverse do you think the backgrounds of those participating are? Do people from marginalized or disadvantaged groups typically attend?*
- *How diverse do you think the opinions and world views of those participating in the Musrenbang events typically are? Why do you think this?*
- ***For organisers:*** *how do you identify and invite participants, and what considerations do you have when trying to ensure a good level of participation for a successful process?*

6. How could Musrenbang be made more diverse or inclusive?

penyertaan

5. Apakah Anda memiliki pemikiran tentang seberapa representatif masyarakat lokal dalam Musrenbang dari sudut pandang peserta? Apakah ini berubah sama sekali dalam 5 tahun terakhir? Bagaimana kenapa?

Probe:
• Seberapa beragam menurut Anda latar belakang dari mereka yang berpartisipasi? Apakah orang-orang dari kelompok yang terpinggirkan atau kurang beruntung biasanya hadir?
• Menurut Anda, seberapa beragam pendapat dan pandangan dunia peserta Musrenbang biasanya? Mengapa Anda berpikir begitu?
• Untuk penyelenggara: bagaimana Anda mengidentifikasi dan mengundang peserta, dan pertimbangan apa yang Anda miliki saat mencoba memastikan tingkat partisipasi yang baik untuk proses yang berhasil?

6. Bagaimana Musrenbang dibuat lebih beragam atau inklusif?

Deliberative Quality

7. What are your overall impressions of the quality of discussions and deliberations of the Musrenbang events that you have attended? Has this changed at all over the past 5 years? How/why?

Probes:

- *How happy were you with the quality and quantity of information provided to you regarding projects being proposed*?
- *To what extent do you feel there is sufficient time and space to discuss issues?*
- *How respectful did you find the conversations between participants during PB?*
- *How are disagreements or differences of opinion typically dealt with during PB?*

8. Are there any changes you would like to see to improve the quality of discussion and deliberation?

Kualitas Deliberatif

7. Bagaimana kesan Anda secara keseluruhan terhadap kualitas diskusi dan musyawarah musrenbang yang Anda ikuti? Apakah ini berubah sama sekali selama 5 tahun terakhir? Bagaimana kenapa?

Probe:
• Seberapa senang Anda dengan kualitas dan kuantitas informasi yang diberikan kepada Anda mengenai proyek yang diusulkan?
• Sejauh mana Anda merasa ada cukup waktu dan ruang untuk membahas masalah?
• Menurut Anda, seberapa terhormat percakapan antara peserta selama Musrenbang?
• Bagaimana perselisihan atau perbedaan pendapat biasanya ditangani selama Musrenbang?
8. Apakah ada perubahan yang ingin Anda lakukan untuk meningkatkan kualitas diskusi dan musyawarah?

Decision-making

9. How were decisions about which projects to fund reached during Musrenbang? Has this changed at all over the past 5 years? How/why?

Probes:

- *How do you yourself decide which projects to support?*
- *How fair would you say the process of selecting projects is? Why?*

10. Are there any changes you would like to see in how project selection decisions are made?

Pengambilan keputusan

9. Bagaimana keputusan tentang proyek mana yang akan didanai selama Musrenbang? Apakah ini berubah sama sekali selama 5 tahun terakhir? Bagaimana kenapa?
Probe:

• Bagaimana Anda sendiri memutuskan proyek mana yang akan didukung?
• Seberapa adil menurut Anda proses pemilihan proyek? Mengapa?

10. Apakah ada perubahan yang ingin Anda lihat dalam bagaimana keputusan pemilihan proyek dibuat?

Section 2b - Musrenbang Outcomes

The next set of questions are about the results and effectiveness of Musrenbang.

11. How satisfied are you with the overall experience of participating in Musrenbang? Why/why not?
12. To what extent have there been changes in your community because of Musrenbang? What are they?

(Non-participants skip to Section 3 Q15)

Probes:

- *What issues or problems have seen the most progress since PB was introduced?*
- *How relevant to the needs of the community do you believe the winning projects have been through PB?*
- *Do you have any thoughts on the size of the budget that has been available through PB?*

13. Are there projects that have been funded and implemented that you personally support or have voted for? If yes, what is your understanding of how successful the project has been?
14. Are there projects that you supported that were not funded? If yes, are you aware of any further action that has been taken to try to secure resources for them?

Bagian 2b - Hasil Musrenbang

Rangkaian pertanyaan selanjutnya adalah tentang hasil dan efektivitas Musrenbang.

11. Seberapa puaskah Anda dengan keseluruhan pengalaman mengikuti Musrenbang? Mengapa/mengapa tidak?
12. Sejauh mana perubahan yang terjadi di komunitas Anda karena Musrenbang? Apakah mereka?

(Non-peserta melompat ke Bagian 3 Q15)

Probe:
• Isu atau masalah apa yang paling berkembang sejak Musrenbang diperkenalkan?
• Menurut Anda, seberapa relevan dengan kebutuhan masyarakat proyek pemenang telah melalui Musrenbang?
• Apakah Anda memiliki pemikiran tentang besarnya anggaran yang telah tersedia melalui Musrenbang?

13. Apakah ada proyek yang telah didanai dan dilaksanakan yang Anda dukung atau pilih secara pribadi? Jika ya, apa pemahaman Anda tentang seberapa sukses proyek tersebut?

14. Apakah ada proyek yang Anda dukung yang tidak didanai? Jika ya, apakah Anda mengetahui tindakan lebih lanjut yang telah diambil untuk mengamankan sumber daya bagi mereka?

Section 3 – Embeddedness and the democratic system

I'm now going to ask you some questions about the role you think Musrenbang plays in local democracy.

(Organisers/Government Skip to Q17)

15. How much would you say you involve yourself in local issues that matter to you? In what ways do you get involved?
    - <u>For non-participants:</u> If there is a local issue that is causing challenges for you, how might you typically address it? Is there any action you would take, or people/organisations you would reach out to?

16. Do you have a place to discuss your views freely? If so, where?

(Non-participants skip to Q19)

17. How typical is it for you to see people at the Musrenbang events that you know or recognise from other forums? If so, which spaces or forums are they?
18. How often would you say you have come across the other issues/concerns raised at Musrenbang? Have you yourself ever tried to raise the issues/concerns in other formal fora?

(Organisers/Government Skip to Q21)

19. Are there other accessible ways of accessing local government funds that you are aware of? If so, is Musrenbang more or less valuable do you think? / If so, what is your opinion on these?
20. Are there other accessible ways of engaging with the local government that you are aware of? If so, is Musrenbang more or less valuable do you think? / If so, what is your opinion on these?
21. **<u>For organisers:</u>** what political complexities do you face in trying to ensure the success of Musrenbang? What strategies do you use to try to overcome these challenges?
    <u>Probes:</u>
    - *How do you reconcile the requests made through Musrenbang with your own priorities, as well as the priorities of regional and national authorities?*
    - *What do you think about the guidelines you are provided for organising PB? Are there any changes you would make?*

22. Do you have any thoughts or suggestions on how Musrenbang can contribute more to advancing local democracy?

Bagian 3 – Keterlekatan dan sistem demokrasi

Sekarang saya akan mengajukan beberapa pertanyaan tentang peran Musrenbang menurut Anda dalam demokrasi lokal.

(Penyelenggara/Pemerintah Loncat ke Q17)
15. Sejauh mana Anda terlibat dalam isu-isu lokal yang penting bagi Anda? Dalam hal apa Anda terlibat?
o Untuk non-peserta: Jika ada masalah lokal yang menjadi tantangan bagi Anda, bagaimana biasanya Anda mengatasinya? Apakah ada tindakan yang akan Anda ambil, atau orang/organisasi yang akan Anda jangkau?

16. Apakah Anda memiliki tempat untuk mendiskusikan pandangan Anda dengan bebas? Jika demikian, di mana?

(Non-peserta melompat ke Q19)

17. Seberapa khas Anda melihat orang-orang di acara Musrenbang yang Anda kenal atau kenal dari forum lain? Jika demikian, apa ruang atau forum itu?
18. Menurut Anda, seberapa sering Anda menemukan isu/permasalahan lain yang diangkat dalam Musrenbang? Pernahkah Anda mencoba mengangkat sendiri suatu isu/masalah di forum formal lain?

(Penyelenggara/Pemerintah Loncat ke Q21)

19. Apakah ada cara lain yang dapat diakses untuk mengakses dana pemerintah daerah yang Anda ketahui? Jika demikian, apakah menurut Anda Musrenbang kurang lebih bernilai? / Jika demikian, apa pendapat Anda tentang ini?
20. Apakah ada cara lain yang dapat diakses untuk terlibat dengan pemerintah daerah yang Anda ketahui? Jika demikian, apakah menurut Anda Musrenbang kurang lebih bernilai? / Jika demikian, apa pendapat Anda tentang ini?
21. Untuk penyelenggara: kompleksitas politik apa yang Anda hadapi dalam upaya memastikan keberhasilan Musrenbang? Strategi apa yang Anda gunakan untuk mencoba mengatasi tantangan ini?
Probe:
• Bagaimana Anda mencocokkan permintaan yang diajukan melalui Musrenbang dengan prioritas Anda sendiri, serta prioritas otoritas regional dan nasional?
• Apa pendapat Anda tentang pedoman yang diberikan untuk menyelenggarakan PB? Apakah ada perubahan yang ingin Anda lakukan?

22. Apakah Anda memiliki pemikiran atau saran tentang bagaimana Musrenbang dapat lebih berkontribusi dalam memajukan demokrasi lokal?

Section 4 - Trust in government

I'm now going to ask you to tell me a bit more about the local area and your views on the authorities at the local and national levels.

23. Are you broadly satisfied or dissatisfied with the local administration?
    - <u>For government:</u> Would you say people are broadly satisfied or dissatisfied with the local administration?

(Government skip to Q25)

Probes:

- *To what extent would you say that you are satisfied with the quality of local services, such as healthcare, schools, and transportation in your ward/district?*
- *How would you describe the economy and job prospects in the municipality/region?*
- *How competent would you say the local government are at performing their duties?*
- *Have you had any interaction with your local elected officials in the last 5 years, and if so when was this? How satisfied with the interaction were you?*

24. To what extent would you say you trust the local government?

25. Has Musrenbang increased your trust in local government? How, if at all, has this changed over the last 5 years?
    - For government: do you think Musrenbang has increased people's trust in local government in Solo? How, if at all, has this changed over the last 5 years?

(Government skip to Q28)

26. To what extent would you say you trust the national government?
27. How, if at all, would you say your feelings about the national government have changed over the last 5 years?

Section 5 – Concluding questions:

28. Is there anything that we've not discussed today that you would like to tell me about? Or anything you have mentioned you would like to say more about?
29. Is there anyone else you recommend I speak to?

Bagian 4 - Kepercayaan pada pemerintah

Saya sekarang akan meminta Anda untuk memberi tahu saya lebih banyak tentang daerah setempat dan pandangan Anda tentang otoritas di tingkat lokal dan nasional.

23. Apakah Anda puas atau tidak puas dengan administrasi lokal?
o Untuk pemerintah: Apakah menurut Anda masyarakat pada umumnya puas atau tidak puas dengan administrasi lokal?

(Pemerintah lewati ke Q25)

Probe:
• Seberapa puaskah Anda dengan kualitas layanan lokal, seperti kesehatan, sekolah, dan transportasi di lingkungan/distrik Anda?
• Bagaimana Anda menggambarkan perekonomian dan prospek pekerjaan di kotamadya/wilayah?
• Menurut Anda, seberapa kompetenkah pemerintah daerah dalam menjalankan tugasnya?
• Apakah Anda pernah berinteraksi dengan pejabat daerah terpilih Anda dalam 5 tahun terakhir, dan jika ya, kapan? Seberapa puaskah Anda dengan interaksi tersebut?
24. Sejauh mana menurut Anda Anda mempercayai pemerintah daerah?

25. Apakah Musrenbang meningkatkan kepercayaan Anda terhadap pemerintah daerah? Bagaimana, jika sama sekali, hal ini berubah selama 5 tahun terakhir?

o Untuk pemerintah: apakah menurut Anda Musrenbang telah meningkatkan kepercayaan masyarakat terhadap pemerintah daerah di Solo? Bagaimana, jika sama sekali, hal ini berubah selama 5 tahun terakhir?

(Pemerintah lewati ke Q28)

26. Menurut Anda, sejauh mana Anda mempercayai pemerintah nasional?
27. Bagaimana jika perasaan Anda tentang pemerintah nasional telah berubah selama 5 tahun terakhir?

Bagian 5 – Pertanyaan penutup:
28. Apakah ada sesuatu yang belum kita diskusikan hari ini yang ingin Anda ceritakan kepada saya? Atau apa pun yang Anda sebutkan yang ingin Anda katakan lebih banyak?

29. Apakah ada orang lain yang Anda rekomendasikan untuk saya ajak bicara?

Scotland Interview Guide

Interview guide – Participatory Budgeting and Local Democracy

Introduction:

- Briefly explain the research aims and the objectives of this research interview.
- Ensure the participant has read the participant information and consent form, had an opportunity to ask any questions about these, signed the consent form and agreed an anonymised identifier.
- Emphasise they are free to skip any questions they do not feel they can answer, and if they want to end the conversation at any time for any reason it is okay.

Section 1 – Initial Questions

1. Can you tell me a little bit about yourself?
2. Have you had any experiences with participatory budgeting?
3. If **yes,** what experiences have you had or what roles have you played?

- *If **no/don't know,** what is your understanding of participatory budgeting?*
- *Why have you not attended a Participatory Budgeting event?*
- *What would make you more likely to attend something held in future?*

(Skip to section 2b Question 12)

Section 2a - PB Process

I'm now going to ask you some questions about your views of the Participatory Budgeting process.

4. What are your overall views on the participatory budgeting process in your area/ward and in the municipality more widely?

Inclusion

5. Do you have any thoughts about how representative of the local community the PB events typically are in terms of attendees? Has this changed at all over the past 5 years? How/why?

Probes:

- *How diverse do you think the backgrounds of those participating are? Do people from marginalized or disadvantaged groups typically attend?*
- *How diverse do you think the opinions and world views of those participating in the PB events typically are? Why do you think this?*
- ***For organisers:** how do you identify and invite participants, and what considerations do you have when trying to ensure a good level of participation for a successful process?*

Ask for any data/records

6. How could PB be made more diverse or inclusive?

Deliberative Quality

7. What are your overall impressions of the quality of discussions and deliberations of the PB events that you have attended? Has this changed at all over the past 5 years? How/why?

Probes:

- *How happy were you with the quality and quantity of information provided to you regarding projects being proposed*?
- *To what extent do you feel there is sufficient time and space to discuss issues?*
- *How respectful did you find the conversations between participants during PB?*
- *How are disagreements or differences of opinion typically dealt with during PB?*

8. Are there any changes you would like to see to improve the quality of discussion and deliberation?

Decision-making

9. How were decisions about which projects to fund reached during PB? Has this changed at all over the past 5 years? How/why?

Probes:

- *How do you yourself decide which projects to support?*
- *How fair would you say the process of selecting projects is? Why?*

10. Are there any changes you would like to see in how project selection decisions are made?

Section 2b - PB Outcomes

The next set of questions are about the results and effectiveness of PB.

11. How satisfied are you with the overall experience of participating in PB? Why/why not?

12. To what extent have there been changes in your community because of PB? What are they?

(Non-participants skip to Section 3 Q15)

Probes:

- *What issues or problems have seen the most progress since PB was introduced?*
- *How relevant to the needs of the community do you believe the winning projects have been through PB?*
- *Do you have any thoughts on the size of the budget that has been available through PB?*

13. Are there projects that have been funded and implemented that you personally support or have voted for? If yes, what is your understanding of how successful the project has been?

14. Are there projects that you supported that were not funded? If yes, are you aware of any further action that has been taken to try to secure resources for them?

Section 3 – Embeddedness and the democratic system

I'm now going to ask you some questions about the role you think PB plays in local democracy.

(Organisers/Government Skip to Q17)

15. How much would you say you involve yourself in local issues that matter to you? In what ways do you get involved?
    - <u>For non-participants:</u> If there is a local issue that is causing challenges for you, how might you typically address it? Is there any action you would take, or people/organisations you would reach out to?

16. Do you have a place to discuss your views freely? If so, where?

(Non-participants skip to Q19)

17. How typical is it for you to see people at the PB events that you know or recognise from other forums? If so, which spaces or forums are they?

18. How often would you say you have come across the other issues/concerns raised at PB? Have you yourself ever tried to raise the issues/concerns in other formal fora?

(Organisers/Government Skip to Q21)

19. Are there other accessible ways of accessing local government funds that you are aware of? If so, is PB more or less valuable do you think? / If so, what is your opinion on these?

20. Are there other accessible ways of engaging with the local government that you are aware of? If so, is PB more or less valuable do you think? / If so, what is your opinion on these?

21. **<u>For organisers:</u>** what political complexities do you face in trying to ensure the success of PB? What strategies do you use to try to overcome these challenges?
<u>Probes:</u>
- *How do you reconcile the requests made through PB with your own priorities, as well as the priorities of regional and national authorities?*
- *What do you think about the guidelines you are provided for organising PB? Are there any changes you would make?*

22. Do you have any thoughts or suggestions on how PB can contribute more to advancing local democracy?

Section 4 - Trust in government

I'm now going to ask you to tell me a bit more about the local area and your views on the authorities at the local and national levels.

23. Are you broadly satisfied or dissatisfied with the local administration?
    - <u>For government:</u> Would you say people are broadly satisfied or dissatisfied with the local administration?

(Government skip to Q25)

<u>Probes:</u>

- *To what extent would you say that you are satisfied with the quality of local services, such as healthcare, schools, and transportation in your ward/district?*
- *How would you describe the economy and job prospects in the municipality/region?*
- *How competent would you say the local government are at performing their duties?*
- *Have you had any interaction with your local elected officials in the last 5 years, and if so when was this? How satisfied with the interaction were you?*

24. To what extent would you say you trust the local government?

25. Has PB increased your trust in local government? How, if at all, has this changed over the last 5 years?
    - <u>For government:</u> do you think PB has increased people's trust in local government in Solo? How, if at all, has this changed over the last 5 years?

(Government skip to Q28)

26. To what extent would you say you trust the national government?

27. How, if at all, would you say your feelings about the national government have changed over the last 5 years?

Section 5 – Concluding questions:

28. Is there anything that we've not discussed today that you would like to tell me about? Or anything you have mentioned you would like to say more about?

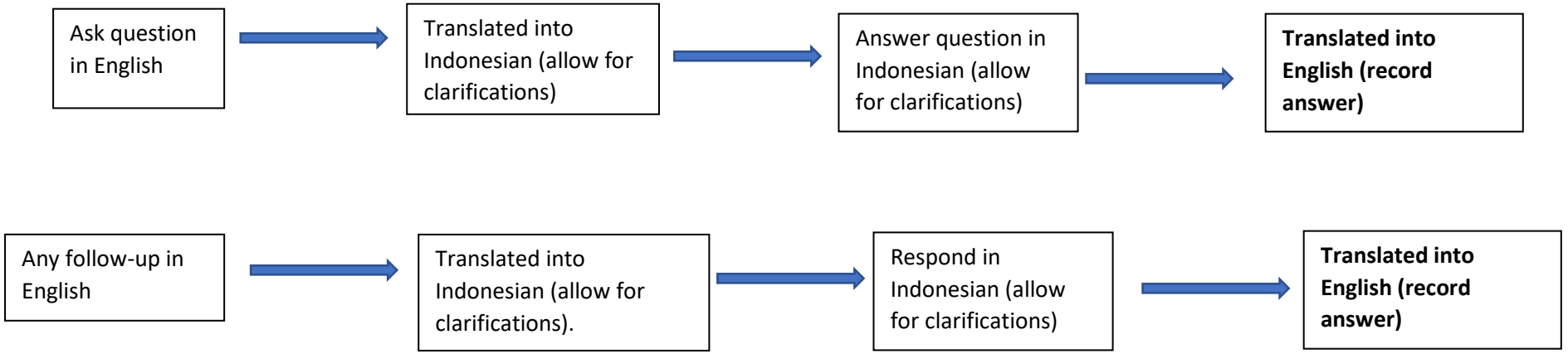
29. Is there anyone else you recommend I speak to? (esp. PB participants and voters)

Ask/remind about any relevant data or records mentioned

Annex 3 – Translation Procedure

Interview and Interpretation Flow Chart – February/March 2023 Data Collection

This flow chart explains the process that was followed for the interview and translation process during the majority of the Indonesian interviews, which were mostly conducted in Indonesian Bahasa.



Notes:

- Post interview debrief sessions held between Interviewer and interpreter to discuss, explore, and seek consensus on questions of meaning, non-verbal communication, or subtext.
- English recordings only to be transcribed.

Annex 4 – Interviewee Criteria

This document outlines the key criteria that were used to identify and select interviewees, beginning with the Indonesian and followed by the Scottish

Indonesia

- Citizens aged 18+
- Particular interest in:
    - People who have **regularly participated** in Musrenbang
    - People who have **never participated** in Musrenbang
    - People from the following disadvantaged or marginalised groups: ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, the elderly, unemployed, women from female-headed households, migrants, homeless.
        - People who have attended the Sangpuan forum meetings
        - People who have **not** attended the Sangpuan forum meetings
    - Members of the Musrenbang Organising/Planning Committee
    - Representatives from Kelurahan Authorities
    - Members of local civil society or community-based organisations (e.g. local women's groups, trade unions, disability groups, charities, religious institutions).
    - Local academics with an interest in democracy or community planning/development.

Scotland

- Citizens aged 18+
- Particular interest in:
    - People who have regularly participated in Participatory Budgeting
    - People who have never participated in Participatory Budgeting
    - People from the following disadvantaged or marginalised groups: ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, the elderly, unemployed, women from female-headed households, migrants, homeless.
    - Members of local civil society or community-based organisations (e.g. local women's groups, trade unions, disability groups, charities, religious institutions).
    - Local academics with an interest in democracy or community planning/development.
    - Representatives from organising authorities *(including facilitators, process designers, those in charge of oversight/direction of PB overall. Particularly those that have been in post for 5+ years, but not exclusively)*

Annex 5 – Lists of Interviewee Profiles

The following tables detail the profiles of the 56 interviewees that were spoken to for this thesis. The tables list them each by the four main categories, before providing further specific details for those corresponding to each category in each case study location. The first table set out is those interviewed in Indonesia. The second table is those interviewed in Scotland.

Indonesia Interviewee Profiles

Category	**Group**	**Solo**	**Semarang**
Mixed	Description	4x NGO/CSO representatives (participants + process contributors). 2x Ward-level facilitators (Ward-level organisers, sub-district and Municipality level participants). 1x Academic (process contributor + Municipality level facilitator). 1x former Steering Committee Head (former Ward-level organiser/facilitator, Municipality level participant + current citizen).	3x NGO/CSO representatives (participants + process contributors). 2x Ward-level facilitators (Ward-level organisers + sub-district, Municipality participants). 1x Researcher (one-time participant + CSO volunteer). 1x Academic (former head of block + previous/current participant at multiple levels).
	Total	8	7
Participants	Description	3x Ward-level participants (representatives of stakeholder groups).	2x CBO/activist group members.
	Total	3	2
Citizens	Description	2x activists (1x former participant + current non-participant; 1x non-participant). 1x Housewife (non-participant).	N/A
	Total	3	N/A
Organisers	Description	2x Municipal civil servants.	3x Municipal civil servants. 2x Sub-district civil servants.
	Total	2	5
TOTAL		**16**	**14**

Scotland Interviewee Profiles

Category	Group	Fife	Moray
Organisers		2x elected members 2x Ward level process organisers (Council staff) 1x Local Authority staff	4x Local Authority staff
	Total	5	4
Mixed		1x Retiree (former council staff member + current volunteer)1x Voluntary Group Leader (Ward-level process organiser + participant/recipient of council funding for PB). 1x CSO representative (observer/participant) 1x CSO representative	3x CSO representatives (organiser of CSO-led process + participant) 2x School teachers (organiser of school level process; recipient of Council funding for PB) 1x Community group lead (organiser of park PB + recipient of Council funding for PB) 1x Voluntary group lead (organiser of CSO-led process + recipient of Council funding for PB).
	Total	4	7
Participants		2x activists/community volunteers 1x non-active community member	2x CSO representatives
	Total	3	2
TOTAL		13	13

Participant Information Sheet for Interview Respondents

Name of department: European Policies Research Centre
Title of the study: Does Participatory Budgeting Positively Contribute to Local Democracy?

Introduction
This information sheet provides further details on a research project that you are invited to participate in concerning Participatory Budgeting in Fife. The lead researcher on this research is Gareth Mace, a PhD candidate at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow in the United Kingdom. His email address is gareth.mace@strath.ac.uk and his telephone/WhatsApp number is +44(0)77564008080.

What is the purpose of this research?

The purpose of the research is to study the extent to which different designs of participatory budgeting and different local conditions surrounding participatory budgeting mechanisms lead to changes in citizens perceptions of governments. The research hopes to generate recommendations for local authorities and civil society organisations to aid in the improvement of participatory budgeting exercises, ultimately with the aim of making them more valuable for participants and responsive to the needs of local communities.

Do you have to take part?
Your participation in the research is voluntary. Any information you provide will be exclusively used for the purposes of this research and your data will be processed in accordance with national legislation. To ensure you understand your rights as a participant you are being invited to sign a consent form. It is possible for you to withdraw from this research at any time, without providing a reason, even after the form is signed. If you do withdraw, there will be no consequences as a result. In such an event, any data that you have provided to the research will be destroyed unless you do not wish it to be.

What will you do in the project?
You are being invited to take part in an interview that will last roughly 60 minutes. The interview aims to understand more about your own personal experiences with participatory budgeting, and how they may have subsequently affected your views of government at both local and national level.

Why have you been invited to take part?
The understandings of diverse groups of people are crucial for this study to obtain. As participatory budgeting is about finding ways to include, consult and give power to local people, it is essential that this research hears from people in the local area. Given the importance that the research places on inclusion, this research encourages respondents from diverse backgrounds and identities to have their say.

What are the potential risks to you in taking part?
No risks are expected due to your participation in this study. Any information you provide will be treated in the strictest confidence and in accordance with national legislation.

What information is being collected in the project?
The information you provide will be used for the purposes of this research only, including for publication in academic journals, but the research has been designed in such a way that it is not possible to directly identify you personally through the information you provide. All data will be handled, processed, and stored in full compliance with national legislation.

Who will have access to the information?
Given the independent nature of PhD research, those with access to your information will be limited to the researcher and two supervisors. Your information will be anonymised following data collection and prior to data analysis – with any identifying details removed including your name and workplace.

Where will the information be stored and how long will it be kept for?
Thank you for reading this information – please ask any questions if you are unsure about what is written here.

All personal data will be processed in accordance with data protection legislation. Please read our Privacy Notice for Research Participants for more information about your rights under the legislation.

What happens next?
If you are happy to participate in the project you can be provided with a consent form to sign to confirm your participation. If you do not want to be involved, thank you for your attention.

Once the research is completed an executive summary of the key findings will be issued. If you wish to receive this information it can be shared with you using contact methods of your choosing.

Researcher contact details:
Gareth Mace, European Policies Research Centre, University of Strathclyde – gareth.mace@strath.ac.uk; Telephone: +4407564008080

Chief Investigator details:

Dr. Carlos Mendez, European Policies Research Centre, University of Strathclyde – carlos.mendez@strath.ac.uk
Tel: 07908032890

This research was granted ethical approval by the University of Strathclyde Ethics Committee.

If you have any questions/concerns, during or after the research, or wish to contact an independent person to whom any questions may be directed or further information may be sought from, please contact:

Secretary to the University Ethics Committee
Research & Knowledge Exchange Services
University of Strathclyde
Graham Hills Building
50 George Street
Glasgow
G1 1QE

Telephone: 0141 548 3707
Email: ethics@strath.ac.uk

Consent Form for Participant

Name of department: European Policies Research Centre
Title of the study: Does Participatory Budgeting Positively Contribute to Local Democracy?

- I confirm that I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet for the above project and the researcher has answered any queries to my satisfaction.
- I confirm that I have read and understood the Privacy Notice for Participants in Research Projects and understand how my personal information will be used and what will happen to it (i.e. how it will be stored and for how long).
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time, up to the point of completion, without having to give a reason and without any consequences.
- I understand that I can request the withdrawal from the study of some personal information and that whenever possible researchers will comply with my request. This includes the following personal data:
    - audio recordings of interviews that identify me;
    - my personal information from transcripts.
- I understand that anonymised data (i.e. data that do not identify me personally) cannot be withdrawn once they have been included in the study.
- I understand that any information recorded in the research will remain confidential and no information that identifies me will be made publicly available.
- I consent to being a participant in the project.
- I consent to being audio recorded as part of the project

(PRINT NAME)	
Signature of Participant:	Date:

Participant Information Sheet for Interview Respondents

Name of department: European Policies Research Centre
Title of the study: Does Participatory Budgeting Positively Contribute to Local Democracy?

Introduction
This information sheet provides further details on a research project that you are invited to participate in concerning Participatory Budgeting in Moray. The lead researcher on this research is Gareth Mace, a PhD candidate at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow in the United Kingdom. His email address is gareth.mace@strath.ac.uk and his telephone/WhatsApp number is +44(0)77564008080.

What is the purpose of this research?

The purpose of the research is to study the extent to which different designs of participatory budgeting and different local conditions surrounding participatory budgeting mechanisms lead to changes in citizens perceptions of governments. The research hopes to generate recommendations for local authorities and civil society organisations to aid in the improvement of participatory budgeting exercises, ultimately with the aim of making them more valuable for participants and responsive to the needs of local communities.

Do you have to take part?
Your participation in the research is voluntary. Any information you provide will be exclusively used for the purposes of this research and your data will be processed in accordance with national legislation. To ensure you understand your rights as a participant you are being invited to sign a consent form. It is possible for you to withdraw from this research at any time, without providing a reason, even after the form is signed. If you do withdraw, there will be no consequences as a result. In such an event, any data that you have provided to the research will be destroyed unless you do not wish it to be.

What will you do in the project?
You are being invited to take part in an interview that will last roughly 60 minutes. The interview aims to understand more about your own personal experiences with participatory budgeting, and how they may have subsequently affected your views of government at both local and national level.

Why have you been invited to take part?
The understandings of diverse groups of people are crucial for this study to obtain. As participatory budgeting is about finding ways to include, consult and give power to local people, it is essential that this research hears from people in the local area. Given the importance that the research places on inclusion, this research encourages respondents from diverse backgrounds and identities to have their say.

What are the potential risks to you in taking part?
No risks are expected due to your participation in this study. Any information you provide will be treated in the strictest confidence and in accordance with national legislation.

What information is being collected in the project?
The information you provide will be used for the purposes of this research only, including for publication in academic journals, but the research has been designed in such a way that it is not possible to directly identify you personally through the information you provide. All data will be handled, processed, and stored in full compliance with national legislation.

Who will have access to the information?
Given the independent nature of PhD research, those with access to your information will be limited to the researcher and two supervisors. Your information will be anonymised following data collection and prior to data analysis – with any identifying details removed including your name and workplace.

Where will the information be stored and how long will it be kept for?
Thank you for reading this information – please ask any questions if you are unsure about what is written here.

All personal data will be processed in accordance with data protection legislation. Please read our Privacy Notice for Research Participants for more information about your rights under the legislation.

What happens next?
If you are happy to participate in the project you can be provided with a consent form to sign to confirm your participation. If you do not want to be involved, thank you for your attention.

Once the research is completed an executive summary of the key findings will be issued. If you wish to receive this information it can be shared with you using contact methods of your choosing.

Researcher contact details:
Gareth Mace, European Policies Research Centre, University of Strathclyde – gareth.mace@strath.ac.uk; Telephone: +4407564008080

Chief Investigator details:

Dr. Carlos Mendez, European Policies Research Centre, University of Strathclyde – carlos.mendez@strath.ac.uk
Tel: 07908032890

This research was granted ethical approval by the University of Strathclyde Ethics Committee.

If you have any questions/concerns, during or after the research, or wish to contact an independent person to whom any questions may be directed or further information may be sought from, please contact:

Secretary to the University Ethics Committee
Research & Knowledge Exchange Services
University of Strathclyde
Graham Hills Building
50 George Street
Glasgow
G1 1QE

Telephone: 0141 548 3707
Email: ethics@strath.ac.uk

Consent Form for Participant

Name of department: European Policies Research Centre
Title of the study: Does Participatory Budgeting Positively Contribute to Local Democracy?

- I confirm that I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet for the above project and the researcher has answered any queries to my satisfaction.
- I confirm that I have read and understood the Privacy Notice for Participants in Research Projects and understand how my personal information will be used and what will happen to it (i.e. how it will be stored and for how long).
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time, up to the point of completion, without having to give a reason and without any consequences.
- I understand that I can request the withdrawal from the study of some personal information and that whenever possible researchers will comply with my request. This includes the following personal data:
    - audio recordings of interviews that identify me;
    - my personal information from transcripts.
- I understand that anonymised data (i.e. data that do not identify me personally) cannot be withdrawn once they have been included in the study.
- I understand that any information recorded in the research will remain confidential and no information that identifies me will be made publicly available.
- I consent to being a participant in the project.
- I consent to being audio recorded as part of the project

(PRINT NAME)	
Signature of Participant:	Date:

Lembar Informasi Peserta untuk Peserta Wawancara

Nama departemen: European Policies Research Centre
Judul penelitian: Apakah Penganggaran Partisipatif Berkontribusi Positif pada Demokrasi Lokal?

Pengantar
Lembar informasi ini memberikan rincian lebih lanjut tentang proyek penelitian yang mengundang Anda untuk berpartisipasi tentang Musrenbang di Surakarta (Solo). Peneliti utama dalam penelitian ini adalah Gareth Mace, kandidat PhD di University of Strathclyde, Glasgow di Inggris. Alamat emailnya adalah gareth.mace@strath.ac.uk dan nomor telepon/WhatsAppnya adalah +44(0)77564008080.

Apa tujuan dari penelitian ini?
Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mempelajari sejauh mana desain penganggaran partisipatif yang berbeda dan kondisi lokal yang berbeda seputar mekanisme penganggaran partisipatif menyebabkan perubahan persepsi warga terhadap pemerintah. Penelitian ini berharap dapat menghasilkan rekomendasi bagi pemerintah daerah dan organisasi masyarakat sipil untuk membantu peningkatan pelaksanaan penganggaran partisipatif, yang pada akhirnya bertujuan untuk membuatnya lebih bernilai bagi peserta dan tanggap terhadap kebutuhan masyarakat setempat.

Apakah Anda harus mengambil bagian?
Partisipasi Anda dalam penelitian ini bersifat sukarela. Setiap informasi yang Anda berikan akan digunakan secara eksklusif untuk tujuan penelitian ini dan data Anda akan diproses sesuai dengan undang-undang nasional. Untuk memastikan Anda memahami hak-hak Anda sebagai peserta, Anda diundang untuk menandatangani formulir persetujuan. Anda dapat mengundurkan diri dari penelitian ini kapan saja, tanpa memberikan alasan, bahkan setelah formulir ditandatangani. Jika Anda melakukan penarikan, tidak akan ada konsekuensi sebagai hasilnya. Dalam kejadian seperti itu, setiap data yang Anda berikan untuk penelitian akan dimusnahkan kecuali Anda tidak menginginkannya

Apa yang akan Anda lakukan dalam proyek tersebut?
Anda diundang untuk mengikuti wawancara yang akan berlangsung kurang lebih 60 menit. Wawancara ini bertujuan untuk lebih memahami pengalaman pribadi Anda dengan penganggaran partisipatif (dikenal sebagai Musrenbang di Indonesia), dan bagaimana hal itu selanjutnya dapat memengaruhi pandangan Anda tentang pemerintah di tingkat lokal dan nasional.

Mengapa Anda diundang untuk mengambil bagian?
Pemahaman dari kelompok masyarakat yang beragam sangat penting untuk diperoleh dalam penelitian ini. Karena penganggaran partisipatif adalah tentang menemukan cara untuk melibatkan, berkonsultasi, dan memberdayakan masyarakat lokal, penting agar penelitian ini didengar dari masyarakat di daerah setempat. Mengingat pentingnya penelitian ini terhadap inklusi, penelitian ini mendorong responden dari berbagai latar belakang dan identitas untuk mengungkapkan pendapatnya.

Apa potensi risiko bagi Anda dalam mengambil bagian?
Tidak ada risiko yang diharapkan karena partisipasi Anda dalam penelitian ini. Setiap informasi yang Anda berikan akan diperlakukan dengan sangat rahasia dan sesuai dengan undang-undang nasional.

Informasi apa yang dikumpulkan dalam proyek?
Informasi yang Anda berikan hanya akan digunakan untuk kepentingan penelitian ini, termasuk untuk publikasi dalam jurnal akademik, namun penelitian tersebut telah dirancang sedemikian rupa sehingga tidak memungkinkan untuk mengidentifikasi Anda secara langsung melalui informasi yang Anda berikan. Semua data akan ditangani, diproses, dan disimpan sesuai dengan undang-undang nasional.

Siapa yang akan memiliki akses ke informasi?
Mengingat sifat penelitian PhD yang independen, mereka yang memiliki akses ke informasi Anda akan terbatas pada peneliti dan dua penyelia. Informasi Anda akan dianonimkan setelah pengumpulan data dan sebelum analisis data – dengan detail identitas apa pun dihapus termasuk nama dan tempat kerja Anda.

Di mana informasi akan disimpan dan berapa lama akan disimpan?
Terima kasih telah membaca informasi ini – jangan ragu untuk bertanya jika Anda tidak yakin dengan apa yang tertulis di sini.
Semua data pribadi akan diproses sesuai dengan undang-undang perlindungan data
Silakan baca Pemberitahuan Privasi untuk Peserta Riset untuk informasi lebih lanjut tentang hak-hak Anda berdasarkan undang-undang

Apa yang terjadi selanjutnya?
Jika Anda senang berpartisipasi dalam proyek ini, Anda mungkin diberikan formulir persetujuan untuk ditandatangani untuk mengonfirmasi partisipasi Anda. Jika Anda tidak ingin terlibat, terima kasih atas perhatian Anda.
Setelah penelitian selesai, ringkasan eksekutif dari temuan utama akan dipublikasikan. Jika Anda ingin menerima informasi ini dapat dibagikan dengan Anda menggunakan metode kontak yang Anda pilih.

Detail kontak peneliti:
Gareth Mace, European Policies Research Centre, Universitas Strathclyde – gareth.mace@strath.ac.uk;
Telepon: *+4407564008080*

Detail Ketua Investigator:
Dr. Carlos Mendez, European Policies Research Centre, Universitas Strathclyde – carlos.mendez@strath.ac.uk
Telepon: 07908032890

Studi ini diberikan persetujuan etis oleh Komite Etika Universitas Strathclyde.

Jika Anda memiliki pertanyaan/kekhawatiran, selama atau setelah penelitian, atau ingin menghubungi orang independen kepada siapa pertanyaan dapat diarahkan atau informasi lebih lanjut diminta, silakan hubungi:

Secretary to the University Ethics Committee
Research & Knowledge Exchange Services
University of Strathclyde
Graham Hills Building
50 George Street
Glasgow
G1 1QE

Telepon: 0141 548 3707
Surel: ethics@strath.ac.uk

Formulir Persetujuan untuk Peserta

Nama departemen: European Policies Research Centre
Judul penelitian: Apakah Penganggaran Partisipatif Berkontribusi Positif pada Demokrasi Lokal?

- Saya menegaskan bahwa saya telah membaca dan memahami Lembar Informasi Peserta untuk proyek di atas dan bahwa peneliti telah menjawab setiap pertanyaan sesuai dengan kepuasan saya.
- Saya menyatakan bahwa saya telah membaca dan memahami Pemberitahuan Privasi untuk Peserta dalam Proyek Penelitian dan memahami bagaimana informasi pribadi saya akan digunakan dan apa yang akan terjadi padanya (yaitu bagaimana informasi itu akan disimpan dan untuk berapa lama).
- Saya mengerti bahwa keikutsertaan saya bersifat sukarela dan saya bebas untuk mengundurkan diri dari proyek ini kapan saja, sampai titik penyelesaian, tanpa harus memberikan alasan dan tanpa konsekuensi apa pun.
- Saya mengerti bahwa saya dapat meminta penarikan dari studi beberapa informasi pribadi dan bahwa bila memungkinkan peneliti akan memenuhi permintaan saya. Ini termasuk data pribadi berikut:
- o rekaman audio wawancara yang mengidentifikasi saya;
- o informasi pribadi saya dari transkrip.
- Saya memahami bahwa data yang dianonimkan (yaitu data yang tidak mengidentifikasi saya secara pribadi) tidak dapat diambil setelah disertakan dalam penelitian.
- Saya memahami bahwa setiap informasi yang dicatat dalam penelitian ini akan tetap dirahasiakan dan tidak ada informasi yang mengidentifikasi saya yang akan tersedia untuk umum.
- Saya setuju untuk menjadi peserta dalam proyek ini.
- Saya setuju untuk direkam secara audio sebagai bagian dari proyek

(CETAK NAMA)	
Tanda tangan Peserta:	Tanggal:

Lembar Informasi Peserta untuk Peserta Wawancara

Nama departemen: European Policies Research Centre
Judul penelitian: Apakah Penganggaran Partisipatif Berkontribusi Positif pada Demokrasi Lokal?

Pengantar
Lembar informasi ini memberikan rincian lebih lanjut tentang proyek penelitian yang mengundang Anda untuk berpartisipasi tentang Musrenbang di Semarang. Peneliti utama dalam penelitian ini adalah Gareth Mace, kandidat PhD di University of Strathclyde, Glasgow di Inggris. Alamat emailnya adalah gareth.mace@strath.ac.uk dan nomor telepon/WhatsAppnya adalah +44(0)77564008080.

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Semua data pribadi akan diproses sesuai dengan undang-undang perlindungan data
Silakan baca Pemberitahuan Privasi untuk Peserta Riset untuk informasi lebih lanjut tentang hak-hak Anda berdasarkan undang-undang

Apa yang terjadi selanjutnya?
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Setelah penelitian selesai, ringkasan eksekutif dari temuan utama akan dipublikasikan. Jika Anda ingin menerima informasi ini dapat dibagikan dengan Anda menggunakan metode kontak yang Anda pilih.

Detail kontak peneliti:
Gareth Mace, European Policies Research Centre, Universitas Strathclyde – gareth.mace@strath.ac.uk;
Telepon: *+4407564008080*

Detail Ketua Investigator:
Dr. Carlos Mendez, European Policies Research Centre, Universitas Strathclyde – carlos.mendez@strath.ac.uk
Telepon: 07908032890

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Research & Knowledge Exchange Services
University of Strathclyde
Graham Hills Building
50 George Street
Glasgow
G1 1QE

Telepon: 0141 548 3707
Surel: ethics@strath.ac.uk

Formulir Persetujuan untuk Peserta

Nama departemen: European Policies Research Centre
Judul penelitian: Apakah Penganggaran Partisipatif Berkontribusi Positif pada Demokrasi Lokal?

- Saya menegaskan bahwa saya telah membaca dan memahami Lembar Informasi Peserta untuk proyek di atas dan bahwa peneliti telah menjawab setiap pertanyaan sesuai dengan kepuasan saya.
- Saya menyatakan bahwa saya telah membaca dan memahami Pemberitahuan Privasi untuk Peserta dalam Proyek Penelitian dan memahami bagaimana informasi pribadi saya akan digunakan dan apa yang akan terjadi padanya (yaitu bagaimana informasi itu akan disimpan dan untuk berapa lama).
- Saya mengerti bahwa keikutsertaan saya bersifat sukarela dan saya bebas untuk mengundurkan diri dari proyek ini kapan saja, sampai titik penyelesaian, tanpa harus memberikan alasan dan tanpa konsekuensi apa pun.
- Saya mengerti bahwa saya dapat meminta penarikan dari studi beberapa informasi pribadi dan bahwa bila memungkinkan peneliti akan memenuhi permintaan saya. Ini termasuk data pribadi berikut:
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- o informasi pribadi saya dari transkrip.
- Saya memahami bahwa data yang dianonimkan (yaitu data yang tidak mengidentifikasi saya secara pribadi) tidak dapat diambil setelah disertakan dalam penelitian.
- Saya memahami bahwa setiap informasi yang dicatat dalam penelitian ini akan tetap dirahasiakan dan tidak ada informasi yang mengidentifikasi saya yang akan tersedia untuk umum.
- Saya setuju untuk menjadi peserta dalam proyek ini.
- Saya setuju untuk direkam secara audio sebagai bagian dari proyek

(CETAK NAMA)	
Tanda tangan Peserta:	Tanggal:

Data Management Plan (DMP) – generic template

This template is partially based on the Digital Curation Centre's Checklist for a Data Management Plan.
Links to Strathclyde-specific platforms and services are included, where indicated (i.e.).

Scan for digital version

Project Name /Title:	Does Participatory Budgeting Improve Local Democracy?
Researcher name:	Gareth Mace, https://pureportal.strath.ac.uk/en/persons/gareth-mace
Funder:	EPRC
Supervisor:	Carlos Mendez, Clementine Hill O'Connor
Department:	EPRC
Date of First Version:	19/10/22
Date of Updates:	01/02/23, 20/08/24, 17/10/24, 20/01/25

Data Collection - what data (file types) will be collected and generated during the project?

Please add details of data (files) in the table below; examples are given on the first four rows.

Data (file) type	Original format	Preservation format*	Does data (file) contain personal, or sensitive data?	Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) owner	Active storage location	Completed storage location (post-project)
Interview Transcripts	..docx	.pdf	No	UoS (University of Strathclyde)	i: drive	Pure

*Preservation formats should be easy to access without the need for specific proprietary software.

How will the data be collected or created in the project?

Outline how data will be collected and /or generated; for example, from participant interviews; an online survey, using Qualtrics; from analysis of existing /secondary data sources; via equipment, Scanning Electron Microscope. Also, in this section, consider the following points:

- How will the data (files and folders) be organised, and **file names** applied? For example, create distinct folders based on workstreams, and separate folders for raw and processed data, to distinguish data types.
- How will you manage **file versioning** (e.g., first version of project DMP file: DMPv1.docx; if minor changes are made: DMPv1.2.docx; where significant changes are made: DMPv2.docx)
- What **quality assurance** processes will you adopt (e.g. double-checking results)?
- Will any third-party tools, platforms, or equipment be used to collect data? If so, name these in the DMP.
- The University's Information Security Policy advises that personal and /or sensitive data should not be held in unencrypted storage platforms: please **check that any third-party platforms or tools used for collecting data are permissible and offer robust security** before use.

There are several sources of data that I will collect through this research project:

- Primary data collected through the following methods:
  - Semi-structured interviews (audio recordings and written transcripts)
  - Field notes (observation notes taken during field visits)
- Secondary data from available PB organiser records (attendance data, written procedures and guidelines, projects funded, monitoring & evaluation data relating to project implementation, in-house evaluations, etc.)

Organiser records will be sought and gathered as part of the initial agreement process with case study locations. One of the criteria for being selected as a case study location is willingness to make internal records related to Participatory Budgeting available to the research project. Given the differences in capacity and context among different local authorities, the research project needs to be pragmatic about reaching consistency in data that is collected in this regard.

Interviews will be sought and scheduled with approximately 10-15 individuals per case study location, in accordance with literature regarding saturation points for qualitative data collection, with the primary consideration being incorporation of a broad diversity of perspectives. Due to the interviews being semi-structured the data gathered here will be quite broad and in-depth, rather than short responses given to closed questions. Therefore, I anticipate quite significant amounts of transcription being required from the audio recordings. Intepretation will be used in the Indonesian case studies. The interpreters will be comprehensively briefed beforehand, with discussions regarding key terminology and concepts undertaken to ensure as much alignment – and therefore consistency - as possible.

Versioning will be managed through saving each new file with date codes at the end. Additional monikers such as DRAFT and FINAL will also be used. Month-dated folders will be used to separate versions to ensure that the progression of how data has been developed and refined over a period of time will be clear.

For hard copy notes I will have different notebooks for different locations, and have them clearly labelled with information containing location (country, province/regional, district/ward), field visit number and date (e.g. Visit #1, date period – 3/2/22-8/2/22), with the first page on each set of notes reserves for information about the respondents (name, age, consent given, date).

I will use a check list to track the naming, versions, filing of data. Before each field visit is completed I will cross-check the list and sign and date when it has been done so at the bottom. Each electronic folder that has been signed off for completion will be relocated to a folder marked “final”.

Documentation and Metadata - What documentation and metadata will accompany the data?

What is data documentation?

Documentation helps others to understand the **provenance and background to research data**; examples of **documentation might include a survey questionnaire or interview schedule** - because they provide context to the answers and feedback collected from the respondents.

Electronic and paper lab notebooks and **readme files** offer a mechanism for documenting data; as would, for example, a **codebook**, which lists and explains variables and scales used.

What is metadata?

Metadata is effectively **‘data about data’,** often ‘intended for reading by machines, metadata helps to explain the purpose, origin, time references, geographic location, creator, access conditions and terms of use of a data collection' (UK Data Service, Metadata).

Why are documentation and metadata important /required?

Rich, meaningful documentation and metadata help to make your dataset(s) discoverable and re-usable to the wider research community, as per the **FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Re-usable) Principles.**
Briefly outline how will you capture and create documentation and metadata.

The data will be accompanied by the following documentation:

- Interview guide

Ethics and Legal Compliance - How will you manage legal and ethical issues?

Ethics and data protection are often linked because they usually involve **collaborating with human participants;** however, they are matters which need to be addressed separately.

Re: **Ethics** - **Ethics and sponsorship approvals are required for all research involving human beings as participants, their data, and the use and/or collection of human biological tissue and/or fluid**. The process of recruiting research participants and collecting their data must not begin until such approvals are in place. **Whatever is agreed as part of the ethics approval process should be mirrored in the respective project DMP** and in how data (files) are managed. The University Ethics Committee website has guidance: a Code of Practice on Investigations Involving Human Beings and templates for use when drafting **Consent forms, Participant info sheets,** and **Privacy notices** for your project.

Re: **Data Protection** - **Researchers must comply with the legislation when processing 'personal data**,' i.e., data which relates to identified/identifiable living individuals. Please consult the Information Governance Unit's guidance on **Data Protection and Research**, and outline how you (research team) will handle and protect 'personal data'. Please note that using the standard University consent forms, PIS, and privacy notices will help you to ensure compliance with elements related to transparency and fairness.

In this section, please clarify the following and ignore any questions that are not relevant to your research:

- Are you submitting an ethics application?
- Will you collect and/or process **personal data**? If yes, please specify, what type of data this will be.
- Will you collect personal data that is also **Special Category data** (i.e. data relating to: racial or ethnic origin; political opinions; religious or philosophical beliefs; trade union membership; genetic data; biometric data (where used for identification purposes); health; sex life; and sexual orientation)? If yes, please specify the category.
- Will you process other particularly sensitive information, e.g. criminal conviction/offence data? If yes, please specify what type of data this will be.
- What steps will you take to protect research participants' data (e.g., anonymisation)?
  - Any and all participants engaged in my project will be provided with a participant information sheet (using the University template) outlining the key information from the project such as purpose, research questions, summary methodology, and how their data will be collected, analysed and protected. Participants will be asked to sign this as proof of informed consent. In line with legal obligations, a privacy notice will also be provided, utilising the University template.
  - In order to maximise the prospects of candid and revealing insights from participants, I will notify them that their responses will be anonymised. In order to understand the context behind responses, however, information about their identity will be included upon agreement with participants themselves upon consultation. In instances where the pool of individuals is larger this may be more straightforward to achieve, whereas if there is only one "person with disabilities" that has been known to have participated in my study, due consideration and sensitivity will be need to be paid to this to ensure that their anonymity is fully respected and ensured.
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  - Any secondary data received from stakeholders (such as attendance data received from PB organisers, approved project information, etc.) will also be anonymised, or have defining details removed or redacted ahead of any wider sharing or publication. Any other requests from those stakeholders regarding the management of these data will also be respected. If respecting requests for data handling causes challenges for the research, further discussion and negotiation will be sought to ensure all parties are comfortable.
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  - Personal data in **Scotland** is subject to the provisions of the 2018 Data Protection Act, which is the UK's implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). According to this law there are several

rules for ensuring this data is protected. It must be: used fairly, lawfully and transparently, used for specified, explicit purposes, used in a way that is adequate, relevant and limited to only what is necessary, accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date, kept for no longer than is necessary, handled in a way that ensures appropriate security, including protection against unlawful or unauthorised processing, access, loss, destruction or damage. There are also more stringent expectations around particularly sensitive information including regarding: race, ethnic background, political opinions, religious beliefs, trade union membership, genetics, biometrics (where used for identification), health, sex life or orientation. There are also rights enshrined in the act giving individuals the right to: be informed about how their data is being used, access personal data, have incorrect data updated, have data erased, stop or restrict the processing of their data, data portability (allowing individuals to get and reuse their data for different services), object to how their data is processed in certain circumstances. Rights also apply when organisations are using individuals data for automated decision-making processes (without human involvement), or profiling, for example to predict your behaviour or interests[1].

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- While there is no over-arching data protection law in **Indonesia**, the provisions of the Electronic Information and Transaction (EIT) law are relevant to this project. This law is chiefly concerned with how prior consent for information should be obtained (ideally through hard copy written consent). In obstaining consent, the individual collecting: *"is required to explain the purpose of the data use, processing, transfer and disclosure in detail in the consent document, and can only use or process such personal data based on the scope consented by the data subject".*[2] *The EIT law applies both within Indonesia as well as outside of Indonesia when deemed to be detrimental to the interests of the country.*

Copyright and IPR issues

Re: **copyright ownership** - When a person authors a paper, creates a drawing, takes a photograph, they automatically own the copyright of this. In the same way, if you use existing/secondary data - created by others in your research - you need to acknowledge this. Moreover, **if you create new data from your use of existing and/or secondary data sources**, you must adhere to any third-party licence and/or re-use agreements.

Re **IPR (Intellectual Property Rights)** - These are relevant when a study/project works with data that contains protectable data not in the public domain; this is usually of commercial value, belonging to a company or organisation (e.g., Irn Bru - case study). Commercially sensitive or safeguarded data must be restricted accordingly

When a Strathclyde researcher deposits their dataset in Pure, following project completion, the default licence applied is CC BY 4.0. Anyone who uses a dataset with a CC BY 4.0 licence must 'must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made'. **You can choose a different licence be applied to your dataset**, as befits any project contract, or ethical agreement.

In this section consider the following points (ignore any questions that are not relevant):

- If you will use secondary data, are there any restrictions on how you can reuse this?
- Are you collaborating with a company or commercial partner?
- Have you asked participants to create materials for the research, e.g., Photovoice, or diary? If so, do you plan to publish these?
- This research project will use the default licensing system. The data will be open for reuse as long as it is cited.
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[1] https://www.gov.uk/data-protection

[2] https://www.linklaters.com/en/insights/data-protected/data-protected---indonesia

Storage and Backup – Where will data be stored during the research project, and how will you manage access, back-ups, and security?

The **University has secure file storage and sharing platforms** which are **automatically backed-up throughout the day**. There is a **File Storage Selector** tool to help you find the most suitable platform for your research. In this section consider the following points (and ignore any questions that are not relevant):

- Where will you store the data (files) during your project/study?
- How will data be transferred to the University's network/storage platforms if it originates from another location?
- How will you share files with your supervisors and /or project collaborators?
- NB: Before sharing data (files) out-with the University (e.g., with external partners, collaborators, transcription service) during an active project, you must check with the PI /Supervisor that this does not breach any contractual agreement, and that appropriate access and security controls are in place. Moreover, where this includes 'personal data', you must implement appropriate data protection clauses; this may require a **Data Sharing and/or Data Processing Agreement.**

- Data will be stored on the University OneDrive during the research period. This will be uploaded using the upload form on the platform.
  Supervisors will also have access to research data, on request.

Data Curation and Open Access to Data – plans for preparing data for preservation (i.e., following project completion or publication) and making it 'open.'

At, or near to project completion, or following publication, Strathclyde researchers must **upload the (completed) data** associated with project/s, publications, theses, etc. **to the University's institutional data repository in Pure**, so that it can be catalogued, preserved, and, if appropriate, made **openly accessible from the KnowledgeBase Research Information Portal**

If uploading data to an external data repository (e.g., UK Data Service; GitHub) you must **create a record (with metadata and a persistent link, e.g., DOI) in Pure**, so that the University can record compliance with any funder mandate and keep track of the data.

Researchers should consider the following when selecting data for curation and preservation:

- Which data (files) underpin your thesis, publications?
- Does the data need to be 'cleaned' or anonymised before deposit into a data repository?
- Are there any other data (files) which do not underpin a publication/s, but are of value?
- Which data (files) will be shared openly?
- When will you make these data openly available?
- How will data be preserved and shared publicly (e.g. preserved in Pure and made publicly available via the KnowledgeBase – the public portal of Pure?).
- If data are unsuitable for deposit in a data repository and/or being made open access, please outline why this is so, for example, confidentiality clause; safeguarding concerns; contains personal data, i.e. individuals are identified/identifiable.

N/A

Are any restrictions to data sharing, i.e., 'open data' sharing required?

When drafting a DMP, it is **helpful to differentiate between the data sharing which may take place between student and supervisor**, and project members /partners **during the project timeline**, from **the data sharing which takes place after a project completes, or along with a publication, i.e., what many funders and publishers' term, 'open data sharing' or open access data. Open data sharing is** often a requirement of public funding.

In some cases, (completed) research data may not be suitable for publication and may need to be restricted. For example, if it contains personal data; protectable intellectual property (IP); there are plans to commercialise the research; it is otherwise confidential /sensitive or, if there are safeguarding concerns.

NB. If you intend to make research data that includes personal data, i.e. data relating to identified/identifiable living individuals, accessible to others/outside the University, you must ensure, in advance, that you can do so lawfully. You should consult the University's Information Governance Unit in advance with any queries.

If data relates to a patent application it should not be uploaded to Pure, or any other data repository, nor shared, until such times as clearance has been given by the Principal Investigator, Supervisor, and/or the University's IP & Commercialisation staff.

Please confirm if the research data can be shared openly after project completion (or along-with publication) and if not, explain why.

No restrictions on data sharing anticipated at this time. Updates will be made upon agreements being reached with local governments in case study locations.

Responsibilities and Resources - Who is responsible for data management?

Please confirm who is responsible for implementing the DMP, and for ensuring it is reviewed and revised regularly?

As the sole individual responsible for developing and implementing this research assignment, I have sole responsibility for data management. In ensuring it is regularly reviewed and revised I will seek advice and guidance from my two supervisors, Dr Carlos Mendez and Dr. Clementine Hill O'Connor. Doing so will ensure that the plan can be be strengthened as much as possible and validated prior to its being put into effect.

What resources will you require to look after and manage research data?

- Is any additional specialist expertise (or training for existing staff) required?
- Do you require hardware or software which is additional to existing institutional provision?

- No additional specialist expertise shall be required for this research.
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NB. Help with preparing a DMP, including review and feedback on draft DMPs, is available on request to the RDMS Specialist. The **provisional and final version of a project DMP should be uploaded to the DMP Inbox (or Neptune or SPIDER)** - as per the requirements of the RDMS Policy.