Supplementary Material for the paper "Designing impact evaluation for students' engagement with communities in planning education"

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This document present Cases 2 and 3 in full, in a similar format to how Case 1 is presented in the Paper proper.

Notes:

- DC = Tier 1 Dimensional Category
- Figures 1 and 2 are the Webs of Change for Cases 2 and 3 respectively. These are attached separately.

Case 2: 'Supporting Grassroots Participation'

SCE activities were part of a Master-level module on community participation in planning for which students engaged in diverse planning activities, including mapping, GIS and policy work (Frank and Sieh 2016, 519). This was mainly technical work that enabled the communities to participate in planning debates more aptly. The module was facilitated by a broker organization which supports a loose network of affiliated community organizations with a mission to facilitate more effective participation in planning. The organization enabled contact with its member organizations which in turn provided opportunities for students to carry out SCE. Our study focused on SCE work in one of the localities, where there was a fragmented set of communities just beginning to work together in response to major infrastructure projects and new developments in their vicinity. The communities were at the very early stages of defining themselves and developing strategies for getting heard. "(The) communities there are very fragmented, very frightened, voiceless, divided … and the students have been helping them building community networks," said one Course Leader. The analysis revealed three effects. First, the SCE enabled stakeholders to understand each other's needs better by supporting communication between them. Second, this was achieved in conjunction with helping them imagine alternative futures, via some technical research and propositions, as well as presenting precedents of 'what could be done'. Third, the results of SCE technical work structured the community's piecemeal responses to consultation, and thus contributing to their empowerment. An interesting feature of this case (and also Case 3) was that community interviewees were able to describe what the students did, but found it difficult initially to state what effects the SCE had. They only settled on these after extensive dialogue within the research interview. This suggests a process of retrospective making sense of the situation and reflects the nature of plan making outlined in the most recent planning and evaluation literature.

Case 2 Effect on Operations (DC1)

The operations are described in greater detail throughout the discussion and revealed the following. First, **the process of SCE** was the biggest contributor to its effect, rather than its substantive content. For example, SCE opened doors for Community Leaders, who were able to meet more people. Second, the process started with outreach around the SCE enabler's strategic planning needs, but as the students' own interest shaped project briefs, the results in form of **deeply-focused individual projects became fragmented**, rather than offering a big strategic approach which would have been preferred by the community. The SCE's **set up may also have prevented more and potentially valuable engagement with local authority** officers and politicians.

Case 2 Effect on Planning 'Ends' (DC2)

First, there were no obvious planning 'ends' met, and none were recorded in the WoC. The students were conducting background research for 'planning', and there was direct usage of the resulting evidence in community submissions to parliament and less formally, to the council. This raises the question of the scope of 'planning', and where its limits are. To complicate things, it was noted that it was **the very process of the SCE**, rather than the substantive content of the students' work that made the most difference to helping community move towards their planning goal (ill-defined as it was), an ancillary benefit.

Second, the quality of outputs were very good, but perceived by the community leaders as not as **relevant**. Could this be because of how the multiple objectives of different stakeholders were dealt with? Both the students, who were encouraged to develop their own interests, and the enabling organization, which has a London-wide policy focus, added more 'objectives' to each project, i.e. different 'ends'. As discussed in Frank and Sieh (2016), the clarity of objectives of key stakeholders in the SCE - identified as 'community objectives' and 'learning objectives' – are important from the start. In this case, there are further 'enabler objectives' and 'students' project objectives' which differ from Learning Objectives, accompanied by less-than-formed Community Objectives. These circumstances could have had an effect on the relevance of SCE for community.

Case 2 Effect on Consequential Effects (DC3)

A first effect was achieved through two channels by which **dissemination of evidence generated by SCE took place via communication to external parties** (directly to parliament via other community members' petitions, and by sharing student research with the local authority). From the case interviews, the intention to effectively disseminate evidence in pursuit of influencing the direction of the planning situation was certainly one intention for at least one of the participating community leaders, even if this was never explicitly stated. A second effect was the **achievement of 'designated community'** more quickly, which added to the credibility of the community group and influencing planning outcomes. From the WoC, we have **a third consequential effect, which is to 'help community imagine future'.** This should perhaps be a core planning outcome, not just consequential, but is often forgotten.

The construction of 'consequential effects' raises many questions, a key one being whether 'ancillary benefits' are the same as 'consequential effects' and whether they need their own dimensional category. The conclusion was that while there are overlaps of the two – i.e. some ancillary benefits are also consequential effects – it is necessary to consider them distinct concepts in practice. This in turn raises the question of whether we need a Dimensional Category of 'ancillary benefits'; it was concluded that since most effects in SCEs are ancillary, it would make sense to simply assume that

any ends that are not 'planned' are ancillary, with no need to create a new Dimensional Category for ancillary benefits.

Case 2 Effect on Participant Capacity (DC4)

There are two clear channels by which the SCE had an effect on participant capacity. First, there were many evidence-generating pieces of work by the students including "analytical work,… surveys, …mapping, and helped decode some planning documents. Looking at the London plan which is 400 pages. The borough plan they don't even know what it is because it consists of … documents all with slightly different standing. ... That sort of demystifying how people navigate through these documents" (Case 2 Course Leader). The design of the SCE seemed to focus on the increasing of technical capacity of community participants. The creation of knowledge can inform community members, which increases many types of capacity. Here, it enabled technical arguments that could be put forward confidently as evidence in extra-community communication. This has a knock-on effect of confidence, credibility and empowerment. Second, students helping to create arenas for exchange of information and networking led to intra-community capacity building. This structuring of issues for the community resulted in direct learning by community members as well, and would have been useful to share with local authority and politicians as well. "(It) started us realizing that we needed evidence". Last, an important consequence is that SCE helped community develop the capacity to imagine what was possible in the future, through the mix of precedent-sharing and evidence-generation.

Case 2 Effect on Progression (DC5)

The presentations and workshops, and general administrative help to create community consultation events provided by the students to community aided progression. The SCE may have accelerated the recognition of the wider Group (the multi-community alliance) as an official 'designated community', which allowed them to be consulted on other relevant projects. Apart from this, there is little evidence that SCE affected progression of the group's agenda.

Case 2 Effect on Mutuality (DC6)

The students carried out a range of activities including individual projects which were technical or translational (between professional and lay understanding), helped with organizing / presenting at community group's conference, as well as providing a presentation of precedents to community groups. One community leader suggested that "it was the (SCE) process itself (that) brought people together more than the (substantive content) of what the students did… so the fact is that you know we had (the course leaders) contacting us and then it meant that actually it did open doors for us meeting other people sort around the area" (Case 2 Community Leader). The WoC suggests that this complex interaction of factors increased mutual understanding and created the possibility of working together for mutual benefit.

Case 2 Effect on Redistribution of power (DC7)

These "fragmented" communities have always been "a silent community" (Community Leader). The SCE had begun to change this situation, empowering them, for example, by involving community right from the start to shape the activity to be relevant. The WoC shows a multi-lateral web of channels that fed 'empowerment'. Underpinning this is knowledge that SCE generated from the students' research as well as from presentations of 'precedents from elsewhere' that gave community confidence about what may be possible, even as they were still in the process of positioning themselves. The community felt that being informed gave them credibility when

communicating to others, as did going to council meetings with students as this showed that this group was serious and "not just busybodies". Confidence built up as community felt that they were being listened to. To summarize, we see that confidence and credibility – two indicators of empowerment – can emerge from various types of knowledge such as 'precedents' or 'technical knowledge' as well as through contextual features (students and course leaders accompanying them to council meetings), and reinforced through feedback (being listened to). Consequently, the community was able to negotiate the size of the neighborhood, and to gain designated community' status more quickly. Notably, SCE empowered not just community, but its other participants, including the enablers. In respect to the wider 'balance of power', one community leader, however, felt that the students 'missed a trick' to increase the impact of their work by not engaging with local authority officers and politicians.

This narrative would have been appropriate for a Value Network Analysis.

Case 2 Effect on Participant Satisfaction (DC8)

Community Leaders were highly satisfied with the quality of work, but less so with the scope, which could have been broader rather than focus on a particular physical aspect in the area, a canal. They would also have preferred discussion of the major national infrastructural project affecting the area. They noted that community expectations could have been better managed. Yet, the Course Leaders and SCE brokers had taken steps to adhere to a published SCE protocol and provided free access to information and reports. Finally, community leaders sensed that the SCE enablers did not want to get involved in publicity, something that would have helped the community significantly in this Case. This echoes the findings in Case 3, where there are unavoidable mismatches between community and learning or other objectives, which can never be completely resolved.

Case 2 Effect on Adhering to Principles (DC9)

Two key principles were adhered to by this SCE. The first is the notion of 'fairness' in relation to wider meaningful participation, which the SCE helped achieve in supporting the intra-community conference, sharing precedents and research results. SCE also ensured inclusiveness of concerns through 'collaborative' brief setting open to all groups in the community. A second principle is the attitude by which the SCE is approached: "The philosophy is mutual aid, it helps students to learn about the city and they help citizens of their group to achieve their objectives better. That's a very important principle" (Course Leader).

Case 2 Emergent Dimensional Category: Unexpected / unexpectedness of Ancillary Benefits

"The process itself brought people together more than the (student-generated substantive content) did", for example, through the 'opening of doors' and 'meeting people' via the Course. The evolution of the community's understanding and hence capacity – in this case, the community starting to realize that they needed evidence - should not be a surprise, but it often is. While Course leaders often try to 'design out' the unexpected, but some unexpected features are beneficial.

Case 3: 'Supporting Local Authority Plan-Making'

Case 3 is set in Northern Ireland. The SCE involved the development of a community plan for a set of communities comprising three housing estates (one mixed Catholic-Protestant, and two predominantly Protestant with very different socio-economic profiles). The document was to serve as the basis for a Statutory Community Plan when legislation allowed (in the following year).

The SCE thence was an extension of the City Council's work on community planning, and effectively provided some of the 'legwork' for the Council. Like Case 1, the scope of SCE activity was neatly demarcated by the objective of requiring a community plan document as an output although the scope was much broader. The scope was determined in close collaboration between the local authority officer and the course leader, but without necessarily the direct input of the community members themselves. The coverage of the plan document was of three physically distinct but neighboring communities.

Evidence of effects was mainly gained from interviews with broker and course leaders; community leaders were less clear regarding effects on their communities. The abstract and long-term-future-focused nature of a Community Plan document with significant intangible content, in contrast to say, consultation about a community space, may have meant that community members were less able to imagine the effects of such a Plan, and thus, of the SCE activity in which they participated.

A notable contribution of Case 3 to the Dimensional Categories is the recognition of 'the sense of ownership' over plan and place. This does not fit under any existing Dimensional Category, and merits the suggestion of an additional Category – 'stakeholder interest'. This adds to that of 'capacity' to affect an issue, and community engagement in planning issues and is an important impact considering the frequently encountered apathy by the general public in respect to planning issues.

Case 3 Effect on Operations (DC1)

The Course Leader designed a highly structured approach, but one that brought people together to discuss potentially contentious issues in a **'safe space'**, and to share learning and build capacity with all participants including community group members, council officers, politicians and of course, students. **Students acted as facilitators** in the workshop sessions, and conducted survey work in the wider community. Great care was taken to ensure issues were relevant and the enabling officer played an important role to that effect.

Case 3 Effect on Planning 'Ends' (DC2)

The effect on planning ends is the same as the SCE output itself, which is the Community Plan. How did the SCE serve the planning 'ends'? It delivered the Community Plan document. "… we're not there to create a wish list for those communities – we're there to have an open and honest discussion… about how we create services" (Course Leader).

Case 3 Effect on Consequential effects (DC3)

The document is an end, but also an enabler - it is a live document which will potentially be adopted to deliver further consequential ends. The fact that the document exists has effects - it keeps people focused and accountable to the principles set out, it is a strong evidence base for arguments.

The Consequential effects are clear and significant. The community was using the Plan, and it had already been used to win funding for a new community facility even though it did not have legal status yet. It was expected to evolve and be used further, and be adopted in some form, statutorily.

The different speeds (quick win versus evolutionary) for consequences to emerge means evaluators need to monitor evolution, i.e., to evaluate at different times post SCE as well as during and before.

Case 3 Effect on Participant Capacity (DC4)

The relevant communities have limited capacity to participate in planning. However, there has been increased interest from the communities to get involved and this involvement has increased capacity in a number of ways. First, the resulting Community Plan is seen as a viable resource in terms of generating future capacity within the community; we surmise this to be confidence in policies based on solid consultation. The documents' abstract nature, unfortunately, makes it difficult for many community members to imagine what it delivers, and how. Second, the SCE exercises in pursuit of producing this document have helped build capacity supporting members to recognize more strategic issues outside their own small neighborhood. The SCE involved activities which include dialogue and presentations regarding community planning, which resulted in shared learning for community members, politicians, council officers as well as students.

For designing SCE itself and its evaluation, this suggests the need to pay attention to effects on a wider range of stakeholders. In particular, the problem of abstraction in planning and communication has to be overcome if evaluation is to be meaningful. Different types of capacity should be considered: capacity to participate, i.e. access issues; capacity to meaningfully participate, which requires some form of ability to engage in the instrumental argumentation; capacity to take effective action, recognized in the assessment of 'progression' below.

Case 3 Effect on Progression (DC5)

Evidence of SCE providing impetus that was instrumental was observed. The substantive content of the Community Plan document was used as means to progress a community priority, i.e., the creation of a new joint community facility. This might be seen as the 'primary planning benefit' for which SCE played a critical role in catalyzing action towards planning goals. In designing the SCE, the importance of quick wins and creating momentum in process emerged (Course Leader Case 3).

Case 3 Effect on Mutuality (DC6)

Arising out of co-learning and dialogue opportunities is an increase in mutual understanding and better working relationships. Given the backdrop of N.I. and its history of faith-based conflict, this is significant. Underpinning this may be the presence of the students as neutral facilitators. This is a key ancillary benefit as it itself has many positive consequences. Monitoring and understanding what makes mutual understanding happen is important for designing better SCEs in future as this is a benefit that appears in all three Cases, despite their diverse contexts.

Case 3 Effect on Redistribution of power (DC7)

Redistribution of power which includes empowerment of some parties was enabled at two points by this SCE: before the SCE proper in the sense that the university was a neutral party that facilitated dialogue between community actors, and across sectors. During the process of the SCE and preparation of the Community Plan, community leaders were empowered to voice their concerns that would feed into the substantive plan content. It is also imaginable that communities may be empowered by evidence produced by SCE students.

It is clear that the primary planning aim – producing the community plan – and the primary planning product – the substantive policies / requirements of the plan itself, were only one channel by which interventions wrought change in the planning situation. The others are 'ancillary benefits'.

Case 3 Effect on Participant Satisfaction (DC8)

Of the two community leaders interviewed, one was far less able to discuss the importance of the SCE. The one who was able, expressed alternative preferences to how the SCE was conducted, but was still generally happy with output and process. Specifically, she would have liked to deploy 'students as manpower' differently, echoing the community leader in Case 2. In Case 3, the manpower was at the disposal of council officers, rather than Community directly. This community leader expressed preference for more direct community-student contact within her community group. This was achieved, but the student-community contact happened with the community-at-large rather than within specific community groups. At the same time, the SCE enabling Council Officer recognized that community satisfaction was tied closely to expectation and it was important not to over-promise. This implies the need to clarify 'beneficiary' and 'audience' differentiation when designing evaluation.

This echoes the situation in Case 2, which illustrates that it is impossible to completely remove all conflicts of objectives, even between partners, and that trade-offs always occur. In both cases, the design of SCEs were carefully crafted to provide these trade-offs (a published SCE protocol and free access to info and reports in Case 2, and iterative set of face-to-face meetings and discussions in Case 3). In both cases, the features of SCE that the community leaders would prefer to have been different could well have been deliberately designed by the Course Leaders. In Case 2, an avoidance of publicity was probably desired by the SCE Enablers, who run a range of planning enabling initiatives across the city and this may be affected by un-managed publicity. In Case 3, the potentially major consequences of minor conflicts in the Northern Irish context could have explained the reason for less direct contact with community groups in large-scale meetings. Instead, direct contact with the communities was conducted on individual bases.

Case 3 Effect on Adhering to Principles (DC9)

The principle of fairness (i.e., Inclusiveness, 'widening participation' and collaboration) has particular resonance in Northern Ireland. The students did plenty of work in street and doorstep surveys to directly involve individual community members, not just community groups. Much work was done to not just keep people informed and to build technical capacity during SCE events, but also to communicate clear benefits of participating, and to manage expectations of outcomes. While SCE evaluation should include numbers of participants, these should be supplemented by an assessment of fairness of access and of actual conduct of SCE.

Case 3 Emergent Dimensional Category: Ancillary benefits, interest

Ancillary benefits of the document itself, as well as from the process to create the document are many, including building **capacity and interest,** co-learning, enabling broader and more strategic discussions. Like elsewhere, interest of the community members / groups was not a given and knowledge that such a document exists was not widespread. These ancillary benefits need to be captured by evaluation and communicated. They are as important as the primary planned benefit (of developing the plan document). Since ancillary benefits may not be obvious to the community members, the Council Officer (SCE enabler) may need to communicate such benefits to manage expectations and to facilitate continued 'buy-in' to the SCE project.