

A RESILIENT NEIGHBOURHOOD:  
an evaluative study of the citizens' initiative  
'Krachtige Gezinnen'



**Master Thesis**

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## Abstract

*Resilience has become the 'magic word' to refer to the way we handle complex challenges in society. But what does it mean, by who and for whom is it used? And how can it be applied to neighbourhood development? By means of an evaluative case-study analysis, this thesis explores how the citizens' initiative 'Krachtige Gezinnen' aims to contribute to the resilience of the neighbourhood Bospolder-Tussendijken in the context of the program 'Resilient BoTu 2028'. This paper discusses how the innovative strategy of the program, emphasising open collaboration, provides both opportunities as well as constraints to all parties involved. Furthermore, following the Theory of Change approach, the paper explicates the underlying assumptions of the intervention, revealing social capital as essential to the goal of resilience, the community as a means, and collaboration as a resource. It concludes that the bottom-up approach has the potential to inspire agency within the community through inclusivity, thereby possibly contributing to the resilience of a neighbourhood where young people can develop their talents.*

## Keywords

Citizens' Initiative, Community, Neighbourhood Development, Resilience, Theory of Change

## Introduction

“BoTu 2028 is a large-scale project. The ambition is high, as is the diversity. Soon everyone can participate, and this will be a genuinely inclusive neighbourhood. The initiative also focuses on talent development; there is enough potential. The majority knows it.”<sup>1</sup>

– Ivan Words

Cities worldwide are challenged by highly complex, acute and chronic issues related to, amongst others, economic development, social polarisation, segregation and change (Spaans & Waterhout, 2017). Resilience seems to be the new “magic word” to refer to how we handle these challenges (Doff, 2019). This concept is becoming increasingly popular in the social sciences (Doff, 2017). But what does ‘resilience’ mean? Although various disciplines define ‘resilience’ differently, the idea central to all definitions is that resilience entails the agentic capacity and resources of individuals or groups to positively respond to adversity that forms a threat to their well-being (Hall & Lamont, 2012; Keck & Sakdapolrak, 2013; Wickes et al., 2017).

Resilience is not only a ‘hot topic’ in academia, but it is also increasingly employed by governments, the city of Rotterdam included. Rotterdam released its resilience strategy in 2016, thereby becoming one of the first participants of the ‘100 Resilient Cities’ program. This program is a global collaborative initiative aimed at creating resilient cities (Spaans & Waterhout, 2017). To reach its objective, the city has adopted a bottom-up approach that promotes community and citizen involvement (Rotterdam resilience strategy, n.d.). This ambition is in line with an overall trend in urban development policies whereby the focus is increasingly placed on citizens’ participation as the welfare state slowly withdraws (Koster, 2014).

The program ‘Resilient BoTu 2028’, which adheres to a ‘Social Impact by Design’ (from now on referred to as SIBD) strategy, fits the bottom-up ambition. By focusing on challenges as they are experienced by residents within the neighbourhood and realising open forms of collaboration between the municipality, market parties, social organisations and residents, this program attempts to bring the two city districts Bospolder and Tussendijken (from now on referred to as BoTu) to the ‘urban social average’ within ten years.<sup>2</sup> BoTu scores below the urban average on several indicators, particularly those in the social domain (Wijkprofiel Rotterdam, 2018). The residents of BoTu rate their quality of life to be relatively low, as most have few to none qualifications, feel lonely, depend on social assistance and have serious debts (Bospoldertussendijken.nl). However, despite low scores on most social domains, residents’ commitment to their communities is above the urban average in BoTu (Wijkprofiel Rotterdam, 2018). As Ivan Words, a poet and resident of BoTu, conveys in the message at

<sup>1</sup> The quote is translated from Dutch to English by the author. Spoken words’ performance at the launch of the program ‘Resilient BoTu 2028’. <https://www.gobotu.nl/geen-onderdeel-van-een-categorie/spoken-word-optreden-van-ivan-words-tijdens-lancering-programma-veerkrachtig-botu/>, accessed on 23/02/20.

<sup>2</sup> The ‘urban social average’ is the average score of the ‘social index’ of the city Rotterdam. The social index is divided into four themes: capacities, living environment, participation and bonding. Additionally, the ‘general quality of life’ that indicates how people assess the quality of their own lives is part of the index (Bospoldertussendijken.nl, n.d.).

the beginning of the introduction, “We [the people of BoTu] can make our neighbourhoods, together with the government” (Words).

The neighbourhoods consist of a predominantly young population with a high level of ethnic diversity. About 80 per cent of the population is “new Dutch”, and almost 70 per cent have a non-Western background (Bospoldertussendijken.nl, n.d.). This composition is continuously changing, as migration increases the diversity of the population and more single-family households settle down in the area (Bospoldertussendijken.nl, n.d.). To ensure that the residents of BoTu are ‘resilient enough’ to cope with current and future challenges, investing in families of all compositions and the development of the youth has been made a central priority within the program. The underlying reasoning here is that when families’ capacities for resilience is strengthened, they should be able to nurture their children’s resilience to a higher degree (Walsh, 2012).

### *The Problem Statement, Research Objective and Research Questions*

As the concept of resilience gains popularity, it is imperative to understand how resilience is situated in relation to neighbourhood development. Team ‘Krachtige Gezinnen’ (from now on referred to as ‘Team KG’)<sup>3</sup> is one of the seven teams within SIBD that developed an initiative to contribute to a ‘resilient’ BoTu. Team KG is a community-building proposal devised by the representatives of five multi-cultural organisations already active in the neighbourhood. The team aims to strengthen the sense of community so that children can grow up within positive and promising families and best develop their talents (SIBD, 2019).

At this moment, Team KG is at the beginning of phase three of the SIBD process, which entails finalising the proposal and arranging funding for the intervention (SIBD, 2019). Considering the intervention has not yet been implemented, it is impossible to evaluate the effectiveness of the initiative at this stage. However, it is possible to gain insights into how the initiative intends to contribute to a ‘Resilient BoTu 2028’. Thus, the purpose of this research is, to shed light on the team’s approach to social resilience and identify the underlying assumptions, means and purpose of the initiative through descriptive evaluation research (see methodology). As the initiative does not take place in a vacuum and its success partially depends on the actors involved, this study also maps the collaboration processes that take place in setting up the intervention.

These objectives have resulted in the following research question: *How does the initiative ‘Krachtige Gezinnen’ aim to contribute to the end goal of a resilient neighbourhood?*

The following sub-questions will be addressed:

1. How does team ‘Krachtige Gezinnen’ want to intervene in BoTu, and how do these interventions relate to their set goals and the notion of resilience?
2. What theory of change does the team of ‘Krachtige Gezinnen’ rely on with their intervention strategy, and how does diversity play a role in this?
3. How does team ‘Krachtige Gezinnen’ collaborate internally, and with the other actors involved in the initiative?

### *Scientific Relevance*

As previously stated, the topic of resilience is widely used in various academic disciplines and is broadly interpreted (Chandler, 2014; Doff, 2017). Criticality is therefore essential (Sanchez

<sup>3</sup> Krachtige Gezinnen’ is the original (Dutch) name of the team. It literally means ‘strong families’. From now on the team will be referred to as ‘Team KG’, an abbreviation of ‘Krachtige Gezinnen’.

et al., 2018). By means of an in-depth literature review and evidence-based on field research, this study aims to contribute to the debate on (social) resilience. Through an actor-oriented approach, it attempts to answer the questions what resilience means, what it contributes, and how it is used in an urban context from the perspective of those involved in the 'resilience-making' process. It simultaneously contributes to the lack of empirical studies on resilience (Doff, 2017).

Furthermore, it is imperative to reflect on the power relations between the formal and informal actors. Despite the importance placed on open cooperation and co-creation by the SIBD, diverging benefits and the growing complexity of collaborations, and an institutional desire for resilience can cause the interests of the residents to be overlooked and the roots of the problems ignored (Couto, 1998; Kaika, 2017).

### *Societal Relevance*

In addition to being relevant to the academic field, this research could also be useful for the wider public. For instance, the city of Rotterdam aims to make its city 'resilient', and despite an interest in citizen involvement, there is a lack of information on the impact of bottom-up approaches (Boonstra & Boelens, 2011). This study will also nuance the concern regarding the collision of stakeholders' interests and ideas in self-organisation (Uitermark, 2015) by examining the decision-making processes of citizens' initiatives.

On a closer scale, an interim evaluation of an existing project will provide valuable lessons on how the current project can reach its full potential and how future iterations might be adjusted. Lastly, evaluating a project focused on family resilience could be useful for the community of BoTu. In such neighbourhoods with a high ratio of youth, understanding how to harness young talent is imperative.

## **Theoretical Framework**

In order to situate the central research question around the contribution that citizens' initiatives make to resilience in deprived neighbourhoods, this section presents an overview of the existing literature on social resilience, citizen involvement in the urban context and family resilience in (diverse) neighbourhoods. First, the debate on the concepts of social and community resilience is addressed. Second, citizens' initiatives, community participation and self-organisation are discussed. Third, the empirical literature on family resilience in (diverse) neighbourhoods is considered.

### *Social Resilience in the Urban Context*

To study 'resilience' in society, social resilience is considered to be a relevant concept (Keck & Sakdapolrak, 2013). Social resilience refers to "the capacity of groups of people bound together in an organisation, class, racial group, community or nation to sustain and advance their well-being in the face of challenges to it" (Hall & Lamont, 2012, p.6). Keck and Sakdapolrak (2013) state that social resilience consists of three dimensions: coping capacities - the ability to overcome setbacks; adaptive capacities - the ability to learn from experience and to adapt to future challenges; and transformative capacities - the ability to participate in the decision-

making process and thereby change institutions. Investments must be made in these three dimensions to build the lives of marginalised groups (Keck & Sakdapolrak, 2013). In the case of BoTu, this transformative capacity seems to be most relevant, as the aim is to transcend neighbourhood recovery and reach the urban average.

Furthermore, it is argued that social resilience depends on the presence of and access to resources (Breton, 2001; Chaskin, 2008; Matarrita-Cascante et al., 2017, Platts-Fowler & Robinson, 2016). These resources can be linked to various forms of capital, summarised in the table below.

*Table 1: Forms of capital and resources relevant to this study*

<b>Forms of Capital</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Social Capital	Networks, Contacts, Relationships, Bridging / Bonding, Trust
Human Capital	Income, Education, Skills, Knowledge
Cultural Capital	Identity, Values, Assumptions
Physical Capital	Infrastructure, Services (Social, Health, Spritual, etc.)

*Source: Based on Doff 2017, 2019; Breton, 2001; Chaskin, 2008; Platts-Fowler & Robinson, 2016*

Public and corporate policies that increase resources will strengthen these properties and boost resilience (Breton, 2001). In the results, it will become clear how this plays out in practice and how initiatives respond to these different forms of capital.

While social resilience can either pertain to individuals or collectives/communities, this study will primarily focus on community resilience (Keck & Sakdapolrak, 2013; Matarrita-Cascante et al., 2017). Community resilience can be adopted as a policy tool by local governments, “as a means of addressing the uneven ability of places to respond to changes wrought by social, economic and political processes” (Platts-Fowler and Robinson, 2016, p.763). Hence, resilience is not only a response to crises but can also be used as a way to tackle inequality by supporting vulnerable people (Mehmood, 2016; Platts-Fowler & Robinson, 2016). Breton (2001) suggests that a resilient neighbourhood has the ability to return to their state of equilibrium. However, bouncing back is not always desired or possible due to broader social, political and economic processes (Platts-Fowler & Robinson, 2016). Rather, it is about responding positively to change (Chaskin, 2008). So, there are different approaches to resilience and different levels on which to apply and analyse resilience thinking, namely the global-, national- and local level. In the case of ‘Resilient BoTu 2028’, this takes place at the local level, where the consequences of interventions surface (Platts-Fowler & Robinson, 2016).

At the local level, the contribution of social resources/capital to the resilience of residents has received much attention in the literature (Aldrich, 2015; Doff, 2019). Research has shown that exposure to shocks and recovery can be positively influenced by social networks (Doff, 2019). Similarly, social cohesion can help drive community resilience (Patel & Gleason, 2018). However, studies on resilience focus mainly on impacts of major (ecological) crises, and less on chronic issues (Fay-Ramirez et al., 2017; LaLone, 2012; Patel & Gleason, 2018; Wickes, Britt & Broidy, 2017). There seems to be a lack of literature that examines

the connection between social cohesion and resilience in the context of long term adversity. Therefore, the case of ‘Resilient BoTu 2028’ is compelling because the program focuses on long-term resilience.<sup>4</sup>

Although ‘resilience’ is widely adopted by policymakers and scholars, some remain critical of the concept. According to Cretney (2014), insufficient attention is paid to the role of power and inequality. Similarly, Couto (1998) stresses that there is a risk that other parties and institutions can overshadow the voice of the resident and not address the underlying problems (Kaika, 2017). Questioning the role of power, thus for whom and by whom resilience is used, is critical (Cretney, 2014; Vale, 2014). This study attempts to contribute to this debate by analysing the power relations and hierarchal structures related to the initiative of Team KG in order to offer an analysis of the equality of participation.

### *The Role of Citizen Participation and Initiatives*

An essential element in the various definitions of social- and community resilience is “agency”, which is understood as the capacity of a community to take action and shape changes (Doff, 2017; Magis, 2010). This principle of “agency” fits the current policy discourse of the Dutch government where the emphasis is placed on self-organisation and the responsibility of citizens (Davoudi, 2012; Doff, 2017; Koster, 2014). In this regard, Matarrita-Cascante et al. (2017) explain how bottom-up approaches by communities and stakeholders to neighbourhood development have become increasingly popular. These initiatives aim at improving social relations, supporting socio-political empowerment, fulfilling basic needs and constituting a primary source of resilience (Mehmood, 2013).

The relationship between community and resilience can be seen in two ways, either as context or an “agent of change” (Chaskin, 2008). ‘Community’ as context focuses on “communities as local environments” that offer protective and risk factors that affect the well-being of the members of the community, whereas ‘communities’ as “agents of change” focuses on how the members of the community can perform resilience by acting and organising in the face of adversity (Chaskin, 2008). When analysing bottom-up approaches to neighbourhood development, it is imperative to acknowledge the neighbourhood effects, the community’s capacities and willingness to act.

This willingness to act can be represented by citizen’s initiatives (referred to as CIs) or, “collective activities by citizens aimed at providing local ‘public goods or services’ in their street, neighbourhood or town, in which citizens decide themselves both about the aims and means of their project and in which local authorities have a supporting or facilitating role” (Bakker et al., 2012, p.397). In the Dutch “participation society”, citizens are expected to assume more responsibility as an alternative to public services; consequently, CIs are increasingly promoted (Bakker, 2012; Koster, 2014; Snel et al., 2018).

Boonstra and Boelens (2011) argue that there is a fundamental difference between collaborative participation and self-organisation; the former stands for initiatives taken by the government, and the latter stands for those taken by civil society. Nederhand et al. (2016), on the other hand, question if it is realistic to argue that self-organisation implies the absence of government control, specifically in policy sectors where the government plays a substantial role. Nevertheless, empirical analysis of the role of governments concerning CIs remains scant (Bakker et al., 2012). Hence, assessing governmental influence on CIs is valuable for determining the autonomy of the citizens.

<sup>4</sup> Due to the scope of this thesis, it is not possible to make any claims about long-term resilience. However, this specific case does provide opportunities to research this over time.

Creating opportunities for self-organisation is a key strategy for building resilience (Schauppenlehner-Kloyber & Penker, 2016). However, Uitermark (2015) takes a critical position towards self-organisation and stresses that it can lead to adverse consequences for relationships within communities and between communities and the government. Although it is an inspiring concept, it is important to be aware that, while different interests and ideas can come together, they can also tragically collide (Uitermark, 2015). Khwaja (2004) concurs by acknowledging that increased community participation does not always lead to better project outcomes (Khwaja, 2004).

In sum, it is imperative to critically investigate how concepts like ‘community participation’, ‘self-organisation’ and ‘citizen initiatives’ are operationalised in practice by assessing underlying power structures and interests at play and evaluating which actors are involved in the decision-making processes.

### *Family Resilience in the Neighbourhood*

As previously discussed, resilience can occur at the individual or collective level. More recently, the scope of resilience research has extended beyond the focus on individuals by encompassing the interpersonal realm, hereby giving rise to constructs, such as family resilience (Bahana & Bachoo, 2011). Family resilience is suggested to be a dynamic process encompassing positive adaptation and competent functioning following or within a context of significant adversity (Luthar et al., 2000; Patterson, 2002a).

The family is acknowledged to be a resource for individuals in times of stress but is simultaneously a functional unit in itself and an essential part of community resilience (Landau, 2007). Hence, families can reduce the burden of individuals, especially children, and can function as “agents of change” (Bahana & Bachoo, 2011; Landau, 2007). However, Secombe (2002) argues that the focus should lie on changing policies that disadvantage families instead of making families more resilient, so instead of teaching families how to beat the odds, the odds should be changed. Although this critical position emphasises that the government should not become complacent, it is crucial to not (only) “blame the victim” if they do not succeed (Mackay, 2003). Teaching families to tackle adversity independently is an essential bottom-up approach to empowerment.

This focus on empowerment is also seen in the strength-based approach applied to develop resilience. Family scientists examine positive coping factors rather than focusing on deficits of families (Black & Lobo, 2008; McCubbin & McCubbin, 1996). Family cohesion, positive parenting, parent engagement, family time, the use of coping strategies and support networks are qualities proposed to positively influence family functioning (Bahana & Bachoo, 2011; Black & Lobo, 2008; Mackay, 2003, Sheridan et al., 2013). Interventions targeted at strengthening these key processes can help families become more resourceful to deal with challenges and build competence in their children (Secombe, 2002; Walsh, 2012). In the results section, it will become clear how these ‘protective factors’ are incorporated into Team KG’s theory of change.

In addition to programs focusing directly on children or ‘good’ parenting, there are programs that aim to generate social capital at the neighbourhood or community level by assisting families in expanding their networks (Kalil, 2003). Social capital can be built within the family (parent-child social investment) and outside the family (family links to the community) (Kalil, 2003). Parents’ social capital can influence children’s chances, as this form of resourcefulness can be drawn upon in times of need (Furstenberg and Hughes, 1995; Mackay, 2003). Communities have the potential to facilitate such human and physical resources (Ungar, 2011).

Subsequently, the communities that families are part of and the neighbourhoods they reside in can play an essential role in one's ability to overcome challenges (Kalil, 2003). Neighbourhood characteristics such as socioeconomic status, ethnic composition, residential patterns and family disruptions can influence individuals mental health (Wandersman & Nation, 1998). The stability of the local population, rather than its composition (ethnic diversity), is identified as a factor underpinning resilience, as social ties are more likely to develop in a stable population (Platts-Fowler & Robinson, 2016). These ties and interactions can support a shared sense of belonging and identity that promotes community action (Platts-Fowler & Robinson, 2016).

Despite various (neighbourhood) risks, some individuals or families can manoeuvre around obstacles by creating their psychosocial ecology through frequent interaction with neighbours and neighbourhood institutions (Maholmes, 2014). Positive connections among individuals, groups, neighbourhoods and communities, can be fostered by activities and practices known as community building (Weil, 1996). As Team KG focuses on community building in economically disadvantaged and ethnically diverse neighbourhoods, it is crucial to understand how these factors relate to resilience and how Team KG responds to them in their intervention.

## Methodology

### *Descriptive Evaluation Research*

Process evaluation and the 'Theory of Change' approach have been applied to investigate the content of the initiative, the underlying intervention theory, how the chosen means relate to the defined goals and the development processes. These development processes include reasoning, planning and decision-making processes.

Process evaluation offers a systematic way of examining the operation and implementation of the intervention so that interim adjustments can be recommended, and unforeseen problems can be resolved (Movisie, 2014). The two following perspectives can be applied in this context. The instrumental (objective) perspective, focuses on what is going well and not so well (yet) during the intervention and the constructivist (subjective) perspective that focuses on the appreciation and experiences of all actors involved (Movisie, 2014). In this study, the focus lies predominantly on the latter.

Furthermore, every intervention is based on underlying assumptions of why and how it will reach its set goals (Weiss, 1995). The Theory of Change (from now on referred to as TOC) approach discovers and tests these explicit, sometimes implicit, assumptions (Snel, 2013). By exposing the assumptions, the TOC paves the way for proper evaluation of the processes related to the intervention's development. Moreover, the underlying theories are analysed in relation to existing scientific knowledge, to estimate the plausibility of the applied theories of change (Lub et al., 2011). Ultimately, considering the respondents are consciously undergoing evaluation research, focusing on the underlying assumptions ensures that the research is not only based on topics that the respondents can sugar-coat.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> The teams have been informed about the evaluative study by the Veldacademie research institute.

### *Research Strategy and Design*

Considering this study is focused on understanding the perceptions and insights of people, a qualitative research strategy has been applied (Bryman, 2012). Studying a person's point of view is recommended to comprehend how individuals make sense of the world around them and to grasp the meaning of their behaviour (Bryman, 2012). Thus, this strategy aims to discern how and why the actors involved in the initiative KG make certain choices.

With regard to the research design, a case study design has been chosen. This entails a detailed analysis of a single case and an in-depth examination of the setting, allowing room for complexity and being grounded in the "lived reality" (Bryman, 2012; Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2001). However, considering the small and idiosyncratic sample of a case study, it is not possible to determine the probability of the representativeness of the study, therefore 'merely' provisional truths will be provided (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2001). This research focuses on the specific case of Team KG in the context of the strategy Social Impact by Design as part of the program 'Resilient BoTu 2028'.

### *Research Methods*

Three different research methods have been combined in this study. This is referred to as triangulation. By cross-checking the findings, weaknesses, or intrinsic biases of a single method of data collection can be reduced, and credibility can be enhanced (Salkind, 2010).

The first method applied is document analysis. Through document analysis, an initial idea of the content of the initiative and the structure of the broader program is formed. An advantage of this method is that documents are non-reactive; 'produced' for one's own purpose and not for research, which reduces the bias of the researcher (Reulink & Lindman, 2005). The document analysis consists of both documents open to the public, such as (policy) reports, information on websites and previous studies, as well as private documents, such as the teams' (concept) proposal, plans for action and communication materials.

The second method, (participant) observation, has been somewhat limited due to unforeseen measures related to COVID-19. This method was supposed to be applied during team meetings and events to gain further insights into the process. Ultimately, an observation was only conducted once during the team's presentation at the end of phase two. Nevertheless, this observation proved to be valuable for identifying and recognising the often cited energy and group dynamic that the team radiates.

The third method, semi-structured in-depth interviewing, has been used to further contextualise the data obtained with the previous methods. A limited structure was applied to reveal the perspectives of the people studied. However, to ensure the desired information was discussed, a predefined topic list was developed beforehand (Bryman, 2012). Interviews have been conducted with three members of Team KG and four external actors.<sup>6</sup> These actors include affiliates of the supervisory board, the process manager of SIBD and the team coach. After conducting seven interviews, it was expected that additional data collection would no longer provide new insights and that therefore data saturation was reached (Bryman, 2012). Additionally, relevant secondary data, in the form of interview transcripts, have been analysed (see appendix B for an overview of the interview data).

<sup>6</sup> All interviews have been conducted in Dutch. The quotations used in the results have been translated into English by the author. As nuance is sometimes lost during the translation of quotes, the original quotes have been included in appendix A.

### *Data analysis*

All data, including private and public documents and interview transcripts, have been analysed using a process of open, axial and selective coding (Bryman, 2012). This coding process has been performed using the computer program ATLAS.ti. With the assistance of this program, key themes have been identified, and patterns and relationships between concepts have structurally been sought (Miles & Huberman, 1994). All codes have been subdivided into categories in accordance with the concepts from the theoretical framework.

### *Ethical considerations*

Ethical aspects are imperative to take into consideration when performing social research. In order to reduce the risk of harming the participants of the study, all respondents have been updated on the details of the research and asked to give their informed consent prior to the interview. Furthermore, to prevent compromising the confidentiality of the participants, precautions have been taken during the data collection and storage process. The risk that full anonymity might be hampered in this study, due to the small sample size, has been clearly stated when acquiring informed consent, and the permission of all respondents has been individually asked prior to using quotes in the final report.

With regard to data protection; the data have been encrypted, and confidential details have been omitted to guarantee the anonymity of the respondents. Moreover, the data will remain the exclusive property of the researcher. Finally, it is essential to reflect on the role of the researcher and the associated biases. Distancing oneself from one's judgments and interpretations is crucial to guarantee objectivity. This objectivity is especially relevant when being part of a process evaluation. Therefore, the data have been interpreted with attention to the context in which statements have been made. More information on the ethical considerations can be found in the ethics and privacy checklist in appendix E.

## **The Results**

The following chapter discusses the empirical findings resulting from the analysis of the above-mentioned data. The results have been divided into two sections. First, the broader program context in which the initiative has been established is analysed. Second, the content of the initiative and the intervention of Team KG is reviewed by means of a theory of change approach.

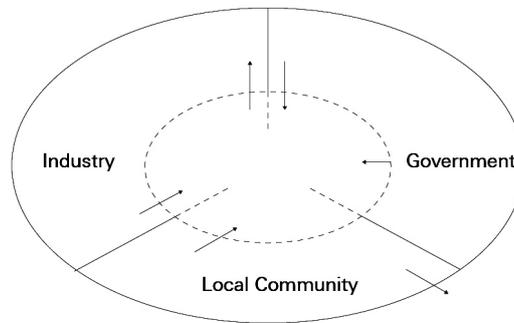
### **Resilient BoTu 2028 –The Program Context**

#### *A bottom-up approach of citizens' initiatives*

“Together we make a difference” is the motto of the call for action by the Go BoTu foundation (SIBD, 2019). The call is aimed at private parties, members of civil society and citizens who want to contribute to making the district Bospolder-Tussendijken resilient. To achieve this objective, the foundation believes an innovative approach is required where citizens, the local authorities and private companies work together. This approach is illustrated by the “metaphor

of the egg yolk”, where all parties move towards the centre (Interview 2) and citizens and local stakeholders receive an increasingly important role (Interview 4).

Figure 1: Cooperation of SIBD: The Egg Yolk Metaphor



Source: based on SIBD, 2019

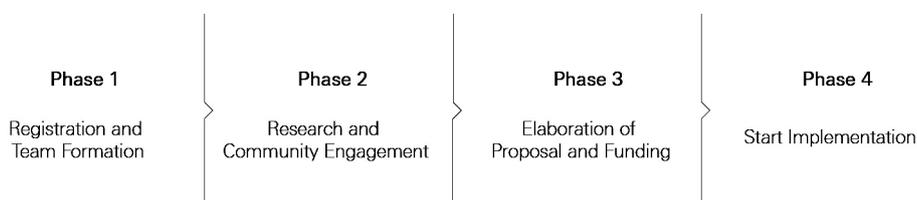
The approach consists of several components, of which inclusivity and integrality are deemed most important. Great value is attributed to the involvement of the residents of BoTu in the approach so “a plan for the district with the district” can be developed (SIBD, 2019). Moreover, significant emphasis is placed on broad and open collaboration between systems, institutions and people. Integrality has been as defining for the realisation as it is during the implementation of the program because it is believed that “there is no one who can deal with the multifaceted and complex problems that exist in such a neighbourhood on his own” (Interview 3).

SIBD is the strategy applied to facilitate this new form of cooperation. A respondent describes the strategy in the following way:

“Social Impact by Design also focuses on how we can collect the initiatives [...] in the neighbourhood and the ideas and the energy and convert them into implementable proposals together with these people.” – Interview 2

The applicants are expected to form coherent teams, after which the selected teams follow the process that is designed to guide them towards the phase of realisation as fast as possible (Interview 4). This process is composed of the four phases illustrated below:

Figure 2: The Four Phases of SIBD



Source: based on SIBD, 2019

The ‘design’ element of SIBD entails that it is an open process that may be customised per team. The results and participants’ experiences of the previous phase determine the pace and

structure of the following phase (Interview 4). The teams are closely monitored during the phases and encouraged to reach the set deadlines, but “not obliged to anything” (Interview 4). However, to receive the team allowance, the teams are required to qualify for the next phase. They are evaluated based on the statements of the core group and the advisory board. The process is organised in such a way that an independent party can make a final informed decision (see appendix C for the governance structure of SIBD).

With regard to the content, the teams are supported by members of the supervisory board. In the case of Team KG, two officials from the municipality’s social development department have been assigned as advisers. The officials refer to their role as “the responsive government, where you are not so much in charge as government, but invite, facilitate and connect with the energy in society” (Interview 2). This role corresponds with Bakker et al.’s (2012) description of the facilitatory responsibility of the government towards CIs; the officials continuously try to adapt to what the team is doing, what the team wants and how they can best help them. This is reflected in Interview 3: “It’s up to the team. It’s their idea. It’s theirs. And we’re only here to amplify it.” Although this relationship respects the autonomy of the team, the officials emphasise their independent authority and that “this does not mean that you say yes and amen to everything” (Interview 2). At some point, “judging” is deemed necessary, for instance, if a grant is awarded from the municipality or when the decision needs to be made if the team qualifies for the next phase (interview 3).

The process manager and officials consider this direct contact with the municipality an advantage of SIBD for both the overall process and the teams. First of all, the municipality has committed to the program, so they can be held accountable, which possibly results in a quicker process (Interview 4). For the team, this collaboration has other suggested advantages:

“I don’t think that if they had done this on their own, they would have been linked to a policy officer in the social development cluster [...] you don’t get in there just like that.”  
– Interview 2

Besides this, SIBD has “resources, manpower, brainpower and organisations which [...] they normally would not have at their disposal” (Interview 2). Furthermore, the team members highlight that despite the time pressure, the structure of the program supports them in making their proposal more concise (Interview 1):

“Social Impact by Design seems to help the team to structure their story and get it across in a good way [...], so that their initiative can make a long-term contribution.” – Interview 4

Although it is argued that the program has many benefits for the teams, it is imperative to consider Team KG’s contribution to the program. In addition to the fact that the team focuses on a topic that is considered necessary for the neighbourhood, it is also perceived to be an initiative that comes from the neighbourhood itself. It is “one of the few proposals where the proposers have a different background and have more feeling with the residents” (Interview 2). This sentiment corresponds with the vast cultural diversity of the neighbourhood:

“Everything that’s in that neighbourhood is in that group. It’s actually the most beautiful thing there is [...] it’s like the Droste cacao effect. Everything is in it when you unwrap it [...] like those Russian dolls, [Matryoshka].” – Interview 5

Moreover, it is valued that the team members are not the “usual suspects” to respond to comparable appeals: “This is what we wanted, isn’t it? If we don’t let this [the team] in,

we're not worth anything. We wanted to have other kinds of initiatives as well" (Interview 3). The initiative by Team KG is essentially described as a 'legitimisation' of the program and its approach. Their participation is perceived as a chance to "use the strength of the neighbourhood" (Interview 3). The external actors involved in the initiative believe in the teams' vision and agency (Interviews 2;4).

The overall program and the initiative therefore appear to be complementary. This innovative strategy of SIBD seems to bring the self-organisation strategy adopted within the team together with the collaborative participation that forms the framework of the program. Although this SIBD strategy provides opportunities, it also creates challenges. While the program embraces an innovative and open process, there are certain expectations involved. The review aspect possibly prompts the team to adopt "policy language" and to focus too much on scientifically supporting their goals. In turn, the clarity of the approach and its translation to practice fall short (Interviews 4;5). Thus, on the one hand, the SIBD process has a relatively firm structure; on the other hand, there appears to be room for customisation and open interpretation. As will become evident in the analysis below, the latter is essential for this team, as a 'strict' structure could limit the practice-oriented approach through which the team aims to shape their intervention along the way and in dialogue with its participants. Nevertheless, paradoxically, this active inclusion of the residents and the team's close connection to the neighbourhood is one of the reasons they were acknowledged in the first place.

### **'Krachtige Gezinnen' – The Project**

'Ik word wie ik ben, Krachtige Gezinnen'<sup>7</sup> is the proposal of five multi-cultural organisations already active in the neighbourhood. Together the five representatives of the organisations form Team Krachtige Gezinnen (KG). Their objective is to reinforce the 'resilience resources' of individuals (parents and children) and groups (families and the community), thereby strengthening the families and the sense of community in BoTu. They hope to achieve these goals by offering programmes and workshops, by community building through art, and by building a support network of individuals and organisations. They intend to customise these activities to the necessities of the project participants. Using the input of residents and action research, the team hopes to find out which activities are most effective to reach their goals, and finally, to develop an integrated approach that can be applied elsewhere.

Ultimately, they believe that strengthening the families will enable children to grow up in positive and promising families where they can develop their talents optimally. As children are the future of BoTu, this would contribute to the resilience of BoTu by 2028. This vision is illustrated in their slogan: "Zonder Krachtige Gezinnen, Geen Krachtig BoTu."<sup>8</sup> (Interview 6). The TOC of the intervention by Team KG is visually represented in Figure 3 on the next page.

<sup>7</sup> Literal translation by the author: "Becoming who I truly am, Strong Families."

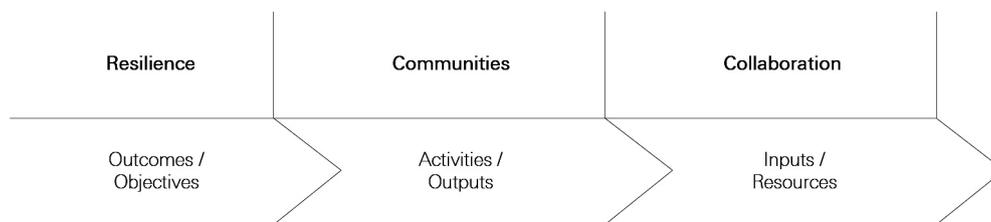
<sup>8</sup> Literal translation by the author: "Without Strong Families, No Strong (Resilient) BoTu."



Figure 3: The Predicted Theory of Change of Project Krachtige Gezinnen – An Interpretation of the Author

Based on three frequently occurring themes, the next sections are structured following the backward mapping of the TOC approach. First, the desired outcome of resilience through strengthening families is discussed. Second, it is discussed how the intrinsic qualities of communities are the means through which objectives are achieved. Third, the team's collaboration and its impact on the resources are considered.

*Figure 4: Structure placing the TOC in a broader framework*



### *Working Towards Resilience*

As conveyed in the theoretical framework, there is not one clear notion of resilience. Although the respondents indeed voiced different definitions of resilience, they all similarly expressed that resilience has to do with dealing with hardships and making the best out of the situation by using one's strength (Interviews 1;2;3;6). Team KG puts a significant emphasis on 'strength' in their approach. They are convinced that there is a lack of positive approaches supporting the well-being of families, as relief efforts focus on people's issues, and less on what they have to offer (KG, 2020). This critical view and their strengths-based approach are appreciated by external actors involved (Interviews 2;3).

Recognition of one's strengths and talents is not self-evident for most residents in this neighbourhood because of the various adversities people often have to deal with (Interview 1; KG, 2020). This 'shortcoming' is something the team discerns from the resident's accounts of their personal experiences, which arguably legitimises their approach (Interview 5). Nevertheless, personal strength and resilience are considered critical to becoming self-reliant and not solely dependent on other people or institutions (Interview 3;6).

Respondents stressed that resilience is not only an individual matter but is something that develops through one's relationships (Interview 9). As one respondent put it, one's community can provide vital tools to help people recover (Interview 8). The team wishes to actively respond to this by contributing to the formation and maintenance of close-knit communities where people know each other and can support one another (KG, 2019). This is considered important for the following reason: "As many people with problems or debts withdraw themselves or have no contacts; you have to work on this" (Interview 6). Hence, expanding one's social capital, in the form of networks and close-knit communities, along with one's personal capital, through parenting skills and learning to cope with stress, are aspects this team actively attempts to foster (Interview 2).

As described in the theoretical framework, access to numerous resources or forms of capital can contribute to social resilience (Breton, 2001; Chaskin, 2008; Matarrita-Cascante et al., 2017; Platts-Fowler & Robinson, 2016). This view is endorsed by one of the respondents: "The more capital you have, the more resilient you are" (Interview 2). This perception of the impact of capital on resilience seemingly can be applied to the 'resilience resources' defined by Team KG (see table 2).

*Table 2: The Resilience Resources promoted by Team KG and the related forms of capital*

<b>Forms of Capital</b>	<b>Resilience Resources</b>
Cultural Capital	1. Identity, Self-image and Self-confidence
Human / Cultural Capital	2. Talents and (Self)recognition
Human Capital	3. Dealing with Conflicts and Stress Factors
Human Capital	4. Expanding Knowledge and Parenting Skills
Social Capital	5. Sense of Belonging / Togetherness
Social Capital	6. Participation Room for Reciprocity

As mentioned earlier, the teams' goal is to reinforce the resilience resources of individuals and groups. These resources have been derived from studies by, amongst others, psychologists Walsh and Vandamme (Interview 1; Walsh, 2015; Vandamme, 2019). However, these "fancy words" need to be translated into practice, which can be a challenge with concepts such as identity (Interview 5). Therefore, it is argued that these resources should not receive too much attention and that the approach is more critical (Interview 5).

The team proposes to reach their goals by following four "paths to resilience" (see appendix D for an illustration of the relationships between resilience resources and paths). These paths entail executing various activities and workshops, stimulating participation and supporting families. By following these paths, one's cultural, human and social capital should, in theory, be increased. Although access to the above-mentioned forms of capital is invaluable to build resilience, it is a twofold process. It is not just about the opportunities one is given, but also about a proactive pursuit of these opportunities (Interview 9). As the following quote illustrates, this proactivity is considered difficult for the target group: "Because with our target group it's prevalent that people think they can only receive, and they can't give anything, because they've forgotten what they can give" (KG, 2020).

The team encourages the residents to embrace their agency by advocating the notion that through the resident's participation and cooperation, it is possible to make families stronger (KG, 2019). A critical observer could question if an approach that promotes (collective) self-reliance and active participation does not put additional pressure on families themselves. As a possible counterargument, the team states that they attempt to provide residents with access to the right support network. This network provision can take the form of building communities, but also bringing them into contact with more formal institutions. This unification is deemed necessary as families often encounter difficulties finding support (SIBD, 2019). So, although the team tries to go against the stigmatisation of tackling problems, they realise some issues must be attended to. Being informed about the possibilities is crucial in this respect (Interview 6).

Although Team KG's approach seems to be predominantly aimed towards parents, their long-term vision is directed towards the talent development of children:

“Parents who feel supported and empowered by a community and who can rely on their own strength are better able to offer their child a safe and secure nest in which they can develop positively. In this way, the future families of BoTu (the children of today) can break a negative pattern.” – KG, 2020

Thus, the team’s intermediate objective of strengthening the resilience resources of individuals and groups needs to be achieved to reach their long-term outcome. Although these resilience resources are selected from the literature, the next section will demonstrate that the activities might not be directly related to the objectives.

### *The Community as a Tool*

Resilience and communities appear to be inherently intertwined. As explained in the theoretical framework, a distinction can be made between the community as a local setting or as an active agent of change (Chaskin, 2008). In the initiative, KG builds upon the latter understanding by promoting and providing the mechanisms and capacities deemed necessary to act resiliently (Doff, 2017).

As previously mentioned, proactivity at the individual level is deemed to be a driver of resilience. Likewise, at the collective level, the willingness of communities to act is of significance. The team assumes that social cohesion and this willingness to act reinforce each other. Partaking in activities will increase their sense of belonging. Likewise, they will be more willing to act if they feel connected to their community (Interview 1; KG, 2020). Furthermore, the team believes residents will become more entrepreneurial once their confidence increases and they feel that they can truly make a difference. Consequently, one of their objectives is to promote self-organisation. Resident participation is considered valuable. By creating a parent platform and including parents in the process, the team hopes the project will be taken over by the residents in four years. This acquisition would supposedly make the project more sustainable by “preserving the knowledge and experience in the neighbourhood” (Interview 6). Although the team expects a vigorous contribution of some of the parents, they doubt the long-term commitment of others. Based on prior experiences, it is expected that keeping families motivated to continue the one-year coaching trajectory will be a significant challenge (Interviews 3;6). Accordingly, they hope to keep the families engaged by providing the families with a financial stimulation and engaging the broader community.

Community building is embraced as one of the central strategies to increase residents’ social capital, confidence and proactivity. Community building and community art projects are approaches that various team members have experience with. Through this the project aims to “create connections between residents, initiatives and organisations from which friendships, neighbourly help and social harmony, among other things, can emerge” (KG, 2020). The first step is that people get to know each other and build a bond of trust. In order to connect and mobilise communities, the team subsequently intends to apply the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) method. The ABCD method is a strengths-based approach that follows the following ethos: “The best place to start is what is strong within communities, not with what is wrong” – Founder ABCD method Cormac Russell (Bospoldertussendijken.nl, n.d.). From prior experience, the team knows that the level of participation of residents in activities is reasonably good (Interview 7). One could argue that they encourage and build upon this engagement in their intervention. Consequently, there appears to be a tension between, on the one hand, activating what is already present in the neighbourhood and, on the other hand, creating new networks and forms of social capital. This implicitly implies that the existing support networks of some people are not robust enough.

During their pilot program “Brood and Spelen” the team aims to find out which activities are deemed necessary to achieve their goals (Interview 4). The current intervention is perceived to be a “learning process” that must prove which activities are effective and deemed necessary by the residents (Interview 1). Therefore, the outputs formulated in the TOC visual are subject to change.

“Our approach is mainly about activities that are related to individual or personal development, but also increasing and strengthening solidarity and collective self-reliance. So, we still need to clarify the themes of the activities in relation to the goal. Moreover, how these activities are going to influence the development of resilience resources.” – Interview 1

Thus, the intervention contains both an individual component, with a self-help dimension, as well as a collective, community-based, component. The team assumes that the two components reinforce one another in, for instance, in the communal workshops where people share personal experiences (see Appendix D for an overview of the outputs). In this case, the emphasis appears to lie primarily on the community as a way to support individual resilience. Nevertheless, when the support platform is considered, social cohesion and sharing resources as drivers of community resilience surface. The team regards the well-known phrase “it takes a community to raise a child” as their fundamental principle (KG, 2020).

To conclude, by working on activities on the individual and community level, the team aspires to contribute to the resilience of individuals and groups by providing them with knowledge and an extensive support network. Active participation of the residents and collaboration with external parties, therefore, seems essential. The team aims to find out which activities are most effective to reach their objectives. They accomplish this primarily through action-research, but also through prior experiences.

### *Resourceful Collaboration*

To execute the activities and achieve the objectives revealed above, the team requires resources. In order to understand what resources the team has at its disposal; it is imperative to look at the composition of the team and where the value of their internal and external collaborations lies.

“It’s been hard, especially in the beginning, because we’re from different organisations. Everyone has their own way of working, but so far we’ve really grown stronger as a team.”  
– Interview 1

The team is composed of five women from five different foundations, which represents both an asset as well as a challenge according to all respondents. All foundations, distinctive in nature, retain their own approach (Interview 3). Hence, the team consists of “all strong women with strong opinions, so sometimes it’s exhausting, and the conversations take a very long time” (Interview 1). These different opinions have resulted in the team having many ideas and insights, protecting them from “tunnel vision” but arguably also making them “too ambitious” at times (Interviews 3;4). In order to improve internal development, the Go BoTu board suggested, with the advice of the supervisory board, that the team would look for a coach. This suggestion was primarily made to bring more focus to the project (Interviews 2;3;4).

“[Name coach] of course has a lot of experience in that area and [...] she also has much experience in fundraising, which is, of course, important at this stage. Moreover, she’s an

impartial coach, so that's nice. Otherwise, you've got one club against the other.”

– Interview 6

The team selected an experienced coach who is familiar with the neighbourhood, well networked, and who could advise on funding proposals. The coach describes her role as “strengthening and structuring their organisation”, “bringing them down to earth” and assisting them in converting “their pieces into plain language” (Interview 5). The latter is essential when informing and convincing the target group to participate (Interview 6). The coach’s presence is perceived as helpful by the team. Additionally, the core group hopes that the coach will clarify what the added value is of their proposal to arrange funding: “Arranging money is quite complicated [for the team] because the pre-investment is quite high for affairs of which you do not know in advance if it will contribute” (Interview 4). The team is aware that their continuously developing approach can be perceived as problematic by funders, and they believe the MKBA they were required to make for SIBD might be helpful in this aspect (interview 6). Getting their message across, especially on paper, is difficult for the team, partly due to the language barrier (Interviews 1;3;4). However, as soon as the team presents in real-life “their passion and energy radiates [...], they have conquered the hearts of many people in the neighbourhood, purely with their way of doing things and the way they tell their story” (Interview 4). Although this enthusiasm “cannot be measured on a yardstick”, it is considered in the SIBD evaluation (Interview 3;4). Furthermore, as previously mentioned, the different backgrounds of the team members are beneficial. All members have different areas of expertise, ranging from educational to community building skills. A team member sums up their resources in the following way:

“Of course we have experience here in the neighbourhood, we have a network too because we work here. We have experiential expertise, because we come from these ‘care families’ ourselves because we are all migrants ourselves, so we know very well what it means to be a mother or father when having a migrant background. Well, we have an office here. We also have connections with different neighbourhood partners.” – Interview 1

The team members either live or work in the district and are members of various communities such as the Latin-American, Somali and Moroccan community. This ensures an existing bond of trust (Interview 7). Similarly, they assume not being “an outsider” and sharing a migratory and diverse background has proven to be beneficial when approaching participants during their research:

“BoTu is a district with a lot of cultural diversity and therefore many different communication codes. Our Krachtige Gezinnen team has the advantage of being a diverse and equal group with a powerful ability to reach the diversity of our neighbourhood.” – KG, 2020

Furthermore, the skill to co-operate with various organisations as a team has given them experience in bringing different parties together (Interview 3). This skill is relevant when setting up their support network.

Finally, it is evident that “the team is well connected to the informal network, to parts of the communities, but less so to the formal network [institutions]” and the network of the “strong shoulders [highly skilled]” (Interview 2). Therefore, they can less easily access “subsidy pots” than the other teams (Interview 5). However, this access or “political buy-in” is precisely something the municipal supervisors could potentially facilitate (interview 3; SIBD, 2019).

Overall, the team assumes to successfully execute their pilot programme due to their

different areas of expertise, prior experiences in the neighbourhood, their large (informal) network and their multi-cultural background that corresponds to the diverse neighbourhood. Moreover, the resources offered by the external actors from the program and their coach, such as access to formal networks and funding opportunities, is a welcome, arguably necessary, addition in catalysing their success.

## Conclusion

By means of the case study of Team Krachtige Gezinnen, this study explores how the citizens' initiative aims to contribute to the resilience of the neighbourhood Bospolder-Tussendijken. To answer this question, the meta-governance structure of the Social Impact by Design program was examined, hereby illustrating the benefits and challenges this strategy entails. Subsequently, following the Theory of Change approach, the development process of the initiative was analysed by explicating the underlying assumptions and attempting to understand how the team aims to structure their intervention. Both aspects are important for this thesis as the structure of the program, and the project itself are inextricably related. Moreover, an 'ordinary' process evaluation following the TOC approach did not seem applicable at this stage of the intervention.

### *The Program*

The findings of this study further nuances the current literature on social resilience, while also touching upon the studies that express concerns regarding the (in)equality in voice and participation that is sometimes disguised in the concept (Couto 1998; Kaika 2017). Moreover, the role of the government vis-à-vis CIs and self-organisation is empirically unravelled (Nederhand et al., 2016).

The analysis shows that the strategy of SIBD appears to provide opportunities as well as constraints to all parties involved. The SIBD program offers added value to the teams with regard to access to resources, such as formal networks and funding, and a clear structure that guides the teams towards implementation. These resources have been identified as crucial for empowerment (Taylor, 2007). In turn, the team offers the program local input relevant to the intervention in the specific neighbourhood. Consequently, acknowledging the teams' grassroots approach and close connection to the community serves justice to the inclusionary component of the SIBD strategy. It is highlighted in the literature that there is a fear of incorporating grassroots projects into more formal channels as this could legitimise inequalities (Punch, 2002). However, in this case, including the grassroots approach of the team seems to comply with the objective of the program and legitimises the loosening of the reins of the self-professed experiential strategy. This is visible in the slight diversions from the structure and the embracement of the role of the 'responsive government'.

Although the teams have a certain autonomy and are somewhat free to decide on their purpose and means, a constraint presents itself in the 'shadow of hierarchy' looming in the background as the teams depend on the support of the program and formal actors involved (Nederhand et al., 2016). In order to monitor the quality of the process, the teams are required to meet certain expectations and set objectives to qualify for the next 'phase'; thus a 'performance culture' requiring 'appropriate' behaviour is imposed (Taylor, 2007). This judging

of the teams is not only present during the program, where the team depends on the 'team allowance', but will continue after the four SIBD phases when the team is required to arrange funds from the municipality to implement their intervention. This 'shadow of hierarchy' poses challenges as the team appears to feel the need to adopt 'policy language' and scientifically substantiate their goals, what is said to obstruct the clarity of their approach.

Furthermore, the requirement to clarify team goals and means on paper is perceived as particularly demanding for this diverse team and their practice-based intervention that relies on action research to redefine their methods. Although this knowledge from practice does not translate well to the requirements, one could argue that with the right amount of customisation, the overall process of SIBD and the initiative KG appear to be complementary. This research thus sheds light on the concern that interests and ideas could collide when self-organisation takes place (Uitermark, 2015). Through an 'innovative' strategy, a CI can be supported in a more process-oriented way. This view nuances literature bearing a critical undertone that top-down initiated citizens participation is merely a form of tokenism legitimising the loosening of the welfare state (Tahvilzadeh, 2015). In this case, the bottom-up approach of the CI appears to be complemented by the structure of the program in a similar way to which the bottom-up approach of the CI legitimises objectives of the program.

### *The Project*

Team KG's approach to resilience corresponds with the definitions provided in the literature that resilience entails the agentic capacity and resources of individuals and groups to respond to adversity. By increasing people's social, cultural and human capital, referred to as 'resilience resources', they aim to build upon the residents' commitment and stimulate their participation. The results demonstrate that the frequently contended understanding 'access to capital is essential to resilience' has been applied. Besides capital, one's 'agentic capacity' is argued to be essential to resilience. Considering the participation of the broader community is vital to achieving their goals, it appears the team relies on the perception of the community as an 'agent of change' that acts together in the face of adversity (Chaskin, 2008). Hence, the team intends to support the residents' 'agency', the capacity of the community to shape change, confirmed to be an essential element to social- and community resilience (Doff 2017; Magis, 2010).

The analysis further reveals that the literature supports the majority of the underlying theoretical assumptions. For example, the assumptions that social networks and social cohesion at the neighbourhood level can contribute to resilience (Doff, 2019; Patel & Gleason, 2018; Maholmes, 2014) or that families can reduce the burdens of children and function as agents of change to improve resilience (Bahana & Bachoo, 2011; Landau, 2007), are substantiated. How this plays out in practice still needs to be proven. This similarly applies to the more 'practical' assumptions based on prior experiences; for example, if enough BoTu residents intend to get involved. The SIBD process offers space for these fine-tunings and verifications in the devised pilot program. Many of the respondents expect that after 'sending the team into practice' their approach will become more evident. Until now, the structure of the program has prevented this.

### *Limitations and Recommendations*

It is imperative to mention that the results of this study are based solely on the case of the citizens' initiative by Team KG within the SIBD program. Hence, some of the findings might be limited due to the scope of this paper and the adapted research methods in consideration of

the COVID-19 measures. Furthermore, the results of this research are predominantly based on short-term progress as the team was only established one year ago. The intervention is thus at a premature stage to make any claims about the effectiveness of the project or to determine if the underlying assumptions hold up in practice. Follow-up research could, therefore, shed light on this 'evidence', which could provide insights into the debate on the effectiveness of initiatives concerning the concept of resilience (Cretney 2014; Kaika, 2017). Additionally, once the pilot program of the project kicks off, the team could benefit from action-research to determine what means are necessary to reach the stated goals.

Overall, this study hopes to offer a further understanding of how citizens' initiatives aim to contribute to resilient neighbourhoods and how an innovative and open process with increased 'horizontal collaboration' can be beneficial as well as challenging for all parties involved. The warning that an institutional desire for resilience might overlook the interests of the residents, as stated by Kaika (2017), appears to be reduced through this strategy of co-creation. Moreover, the insights gained from this interim evaluative study can be used by all parties involved in SIBD, or similar programs, to align the experiences of the process to reach its full potential. If we endorse the notion that bottom-up approaches and self-organisation are a key strategy in building resilience (Mehmood, 2013; Schappenlehner-Kloyber & Penker, 2016), then one could argue that the teams' intentions are well on track. With 'Krachtige Gezinnen' the potential of a bottom-up approach has become clear. It has demonstrated how inclusivity can inspire agency within the community, and how this can generate a resilient neighbourhood for a future its young people can believe in.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A

#### *Interview Quotes Original Language*

Nuance is sometimes lost during the translation of quotes from their original language. To minimise the loss and to offer the (Dutch) reader a finer distinction, the original Dutch quotes from the interviews displayed in the ‘results’ chapter of the thesis are presented below. The page numbers are provided to speed up the return search.

Q1 – p.12

“Wij willen die eigen kracht vergroten en we geloven dat er niemand meer is die in z’n eentje nog de veelvormige en complexe problemen die er in zo’n wijk spelen kan oplossen.”  
– Interview 3

Q2 – p.12

“Ik denk dat Social Impact By Design juist ook is gericht op hoe kunnen we de initiatieven in de stad, dan wel in de wijk en de ideeën en de energie ophalen en ook met die mensen omzetten in implementeerbare voorstellen.” – Interview 2

Q3 & 5 – p.13

“Die responsieve rol van de overheid is een overheid die dus niet zichzelf, dus niet de eigen regie functie, centraal stelt, maar de bewoners, de wijk, de energie in de wijk. En dat probeert te faciliteren en dat ook probeert uit te nodigen.”[...] “Wat overigens niet betekent dat je op alles ‘ja’ en ‘amen’ zegt.” – Interview 2

Q4 – p.13

“Ja het is aan het team. Het is hun idee. Het is van hun. En wij zijn er alleen om het te versterken.” – Interview 3

Q6 – p.13

“Ik denk niet dat als zij dit vanuit zichzelf hadden gedaan dat zij zomaar in het cluster maatschappelijk ontwikkeling met een beleidsmedewerker waren gekoppeld. Of met de afdeling project en programma’s. Daar kom je niet zomaar binnen.” – Interview 2

Q7 – p.13

“Dat Social Impact by Design een aantal voordelen heeft, middelen, menskracht, denkkraft, organisaties, waarvan ze gebruik kunnen maken, [...] waar ze niet over zouden beschikken.”  
– Interview 2

Q8 – p.13

“Social Impact by Design lijkt het team te helpen om hun verhaal te structureren en op een goede manier over de Bühne te krijgen. Met behulp van de verschillende stapjes in het proces kunnen we ze de begeleiding bieden om hopelijk net tot iets extra's te komen, zodat hun initiatief langdurig een bijdrage kan leveren in BoTu.” – Interview 4

Q9 – p.13

“Zij zijn een van de weinige voorstellen waar de indieners een andere achtergrond hebben en wat meer ‘feeling’ hebben met de bewoners.” – Interview 2

Q10 – p.13

“Alles wat in die wijk is, zit ook in dat groepje. Dat het is eigenlijk het prachtigste wat er is. Weet je je hebt zo'n Droste cacao effect, dat alles erin zit terwijl je het uitpelt. Of die Russische poppetjes...[matroesjka].” – Interview 5

Q11 – p.14

“Zo van de dit is toch wat we wilden en als we deze [het team] niet gaan toelaten dan zijn we eigenlijk niks waard, want wij wilden juist ook andersoortige initiatieven hebben.” – Interview 3

Q12 – p.14

“Wij willen ook de kracht van de wijk benutten en dit is één van de weinige dingen die echt vanuit de wijk zelf naar voren komt en dan ook nog eens een keer uit de wijk zelf naar voren wat niet de ‘usual suspects’ waren” – Interview 3

Q13 – p.16

“Want heel veel mensen met problemen of schulden, die trekken zich terug of die hebben geen contacten en daar moet je dus ook aan werken.” – Interview 6

Q14 – p.17

“Want ook bij onze doelgroep is heel gewoon dat de mensen denken dat zij kunnen alleen krijgen en zij kunnen niks geven omdat zij hebben vergeten wat zij kunnen geven.” – KG, 2019

Q15 – p.17-18

“Ouders die zich gesteund en gesterkt voelen door een gemeenschap en op hun eigen kracht kunnen vertrouwen, zijn beter in staat om hun kind een veilig en geborgen nest te bieden waarin het zich positief kan ontwikkelen. De toekomstige gezinnen van BoTu (de kinderen van nu) kunnen op die manier een negatief patroon doorbreken.” – KG, 2020

Q16 – p.18

“Met community building wil het project Krachtige Gezinnen verbindingen tussen bewoners, initiatieven en organisaties tot stand brengen waaruit o.a. vriendschappen, burenhulp en samenredzaamheid kan ontstaan.” – KG, 2019

Q17 – p.19

“Onze aanpak gaat vooral over activiteiten die mee te maken hebben met individueel persoonlijke ontwikkeling, maar ook samenhang en de samenredzaamheid vergroten en versterken. Dus de activiteiten misschien ja wij moeten nog steeds een beetje meer verbeteren en duidelijk maken vooral in het thema van het doel. En hoe gaan deze activiteiten een invloed

hebben in de ontwikkeling van de veerkracht bronnen. Dus in dit geval denk ik wat moet gebeuren is vooral een duidelijke verbinding bestaan tussen de activiteiten zelf en de eindelijke doel van de activiteiten.” – Interview 1

Q18 – p.19

“Het is wel moeilijk geweest vooral in het begin, want we zijn verschillende organisaties. Iedereen heeft zo zijn eigen manier om te werken, maar tot nu toe we zijn echt steviger als team geworden.” – Interview 1

Q19 – p.19

“Natuurlijk we zijn allemaal sterke vrouwen [lacht] met allemaal een sterke mening, dus soms is het wel vermoeiend. De gesprekken duren heel lang.” – Interview 1

Q20 – p.19

“[Naam coach] heeft natuurlijk heel veel ervaring op dat gebied en zij draagt ook allerlei mogelijkheden aan van...zij heeft ook veel ervaring op het gebied van fondsenwerving wat natuurlijk belangrijk is in dit stadium. En ze zit er als onpartijdige coach bij...dus dat is wel prettig. Anders heb je het ene clubje tegen het andere clubje.” – Interview 6

Q17 – p.20

“Het regelen van geld is best ingewikkeld, omdat de voorinvestering best hoog is voor zaken waar je aan de voorkant nog niet weet of het een bijdrage levert. Dit hoort echter bij experimenteren.” – Interview 4

Q18– p.20

“De passie en de energie spat er echt vanaf. Zij hebben van veel mensen in de wijk echt wel de harten veroverd puur met hun manier van doen en de manier waarop ze het verhaal over brengen.” – Interview 4

Q19– p.20

“We hebben natuurlijk ervaring hier in de wijk, we hebben een netwerk ook, want we werken hier. We hebben ervaringsdeskundigheid, want we komen zelf van deze zorggezinnen, want we zijn zelf allemaal migranten, dus we weten heel goed wat het betekent om een moeder of vader in situatie van met migratieachtergrond hebben. Bueno, we hebben hier een kantoor. We hebben ook connecties met eh verschillende wijkpartners.” – Interview 1

Q20– p.20

“BoTu is een wijk met veel culturele diversiteit en daarom veel verschillende communicatiecodes. Ons Krachtige gezinnen- team heeft het voordeel dat het een diverse gelijkwaardige groep is met een krachtig vermogen om de diversiteit van onze buurt te bereiken” – KG (2019)

Q21– p.20

“Wat je ziet is dat zij goed zijn aangesloten bij een deel van het informele netwerk, bij een deel van de gemeenschappen, maar minder goed bij het formele netwerk.” – Interview 2

## Appendix B

### *List of Conducted Interviews*

The conducted interviews are listed below. The main purpose of this table is to provide insights into whether a respondent is a team member or externally involved with the team. This is important for the reader, in order to understand in which context the statements are made. Seven interviews have been conducted by the author. Two interviews have been conducted by others who have done previous research on this specific topic/team. The secondary data is listed as interview 8 and 9 to keep consistency in the referencing.

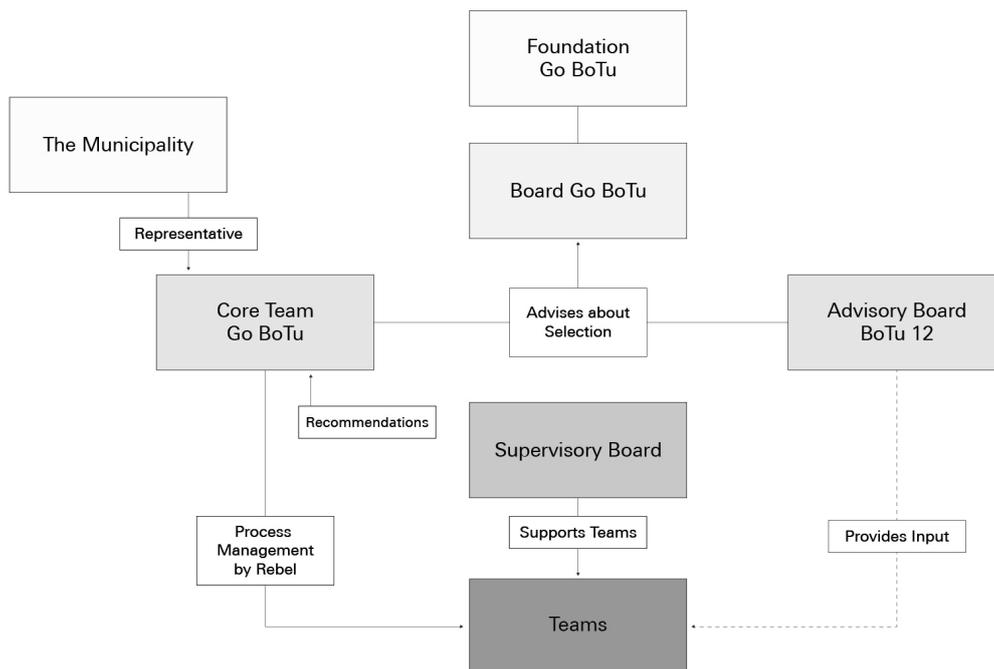
<i>Interview Nr.</i>	<i>Type Of Actor</i>	<i>Conducted By</i>
Interview 1	Team Member	Author
Interview 2	External Actor	Author
Interview 3	External Actor	Author
Interview 4	External Actor	Author
Interview 5	External Actor	Author
Interview 6	Team Member	Author
Interview 7	Team Member	Author
Interview 8	Team Member (the same respondent as interview 1)	W. Doff
Interview 9	External Actor (the same respondent as interview 2)	R. Langerak

## Appendix C

### *Governance of Social Impact by Design*

A schematic representation of the governance of SIBD is illustrated below. This representation is based on the author's understanding of the governance structure.

Beneath the visual, the roles and relationships between the different groups are described. This explanation is primarily based on the 'Governance of Social Impact by Design' structure provided in the Social Impact by Design – BoTu call for action document (SIBD, 2019).



**The Foundation Go BoTu** is the organiser of Social Impact by Design and the contracting party. The foundation has partnership agreements with the municipality, housing corporation Havensteder, Rebel and Delfshaven Cooperation.

**The Board Go BoTu** is an independent board that makes the final decisions, such as if a team may proceed to the next phase.

**The Core Team Go BoTu** has a representative of each partner. The Core Team advises Foundation Go BoTu at the end of the different phases about the selection of the teams. This Social Impact by Design process is managed by Rebel, an independent consultancy firm that specialises in public-private partnerships.

**The Advisory Board** advises Foundation Go BoTu at the end of the different phases about the selection of the teams. The advisory board consists of 10 active residents of BoTu, under the name of the BoTu 12. Additionally, the BoTu12 are buddies of the teams, but their input is not mandatory.

**The Supervisory Board** consists of representatives of the Municipality and Havensteder. Each team has access to one or more representatives, who actively reflect with the teams, and can support the teams in overcoming obstacles in public organisations.

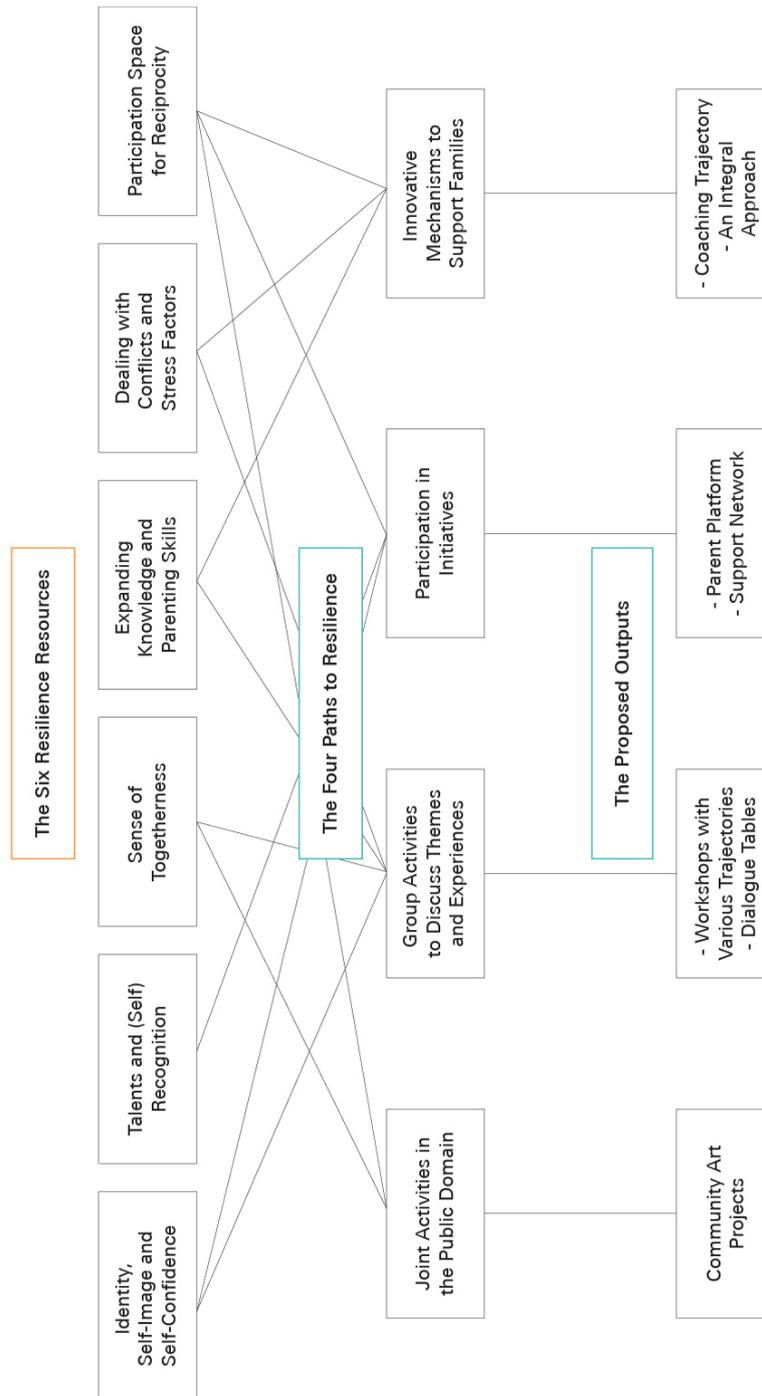
**The Teams** consist of experts and/or organisations with innovative ideas on how to contribute to the resilience of BoTu.

**The Municipality of Rotterdam** retains independent, content-related responsibility in BoTu. It adopts an open attitude towards ideas by citizens and companies related to Social Impact by Design. The municipality has a representative in the core team.

## Appendix D

### *Relationships between the Six Resilience Resources, Four Paths to Resilience and the Conditional Products*

A schematic representation of the internal content-related project structure is illustrated below. This representation is based on the author's understanding of the project structure.



## Appendix E

### *The ethics and privacy checklist*

The checklist includes revisions made after conducting the research.



## CHECKLIST ETHICAL AND PRIVACY ASPECTS OF RESEARCH

### INSTRUCTION

This checklist should be completed for every research study that is conducted at the Department of Public Administration and Sociology (DPAS). This checklist should be completed before commencing with data collection or approaching participants. Students can complete this checklist with help of their supervisor.

This checklist is a mandatory part of the empirical master's thesis and has to be uploaded along with the research proposal.

The guideline for ethical aspects of research of the Dutch Sociological Association (NSV) can be found on their website ([http://www.nsv-sociologie.nl/?page\\_id=17](http://www.nsv-sociologie.nl/?page_id=17)). If you have doubts about ethical or privacy aspects of your research study, discuss and resolve the matter with your EUR supervisor. If needed and if advised to do so by your supervisor, you can also consult Dr. Jennifer A. Holland, coordinator of the Sociology Master's Thesis program.

### PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Project title: *A Resilient Neighbourhood: an evaluative study of the citizens' initiative 'Krachtige Gezinnen'*

Name, email of student: *Lilly Brouwer, 489018eb@eur.nl*

Name, email of supervisor: *Thomas Swerts, swerts@essb.eur.nl*

Start date and duration: *11 December 2019 – 21 June 2020*

Is the research study conducted within DPAS YES - ~~NO~~

If 'NO': at or for what institute or organisation will the study be conducted?  
(e.g. internship organisation)

### PART II: TYPE OF RESEARCH STUDY

Please indicate the type of research study by underlining the appropriate answer:

1. Research involving human participants. YES - ~~NO~~

If 'YES': does the study involve medical or physical research? YES - NO  
Research that falls under the Medical Research Involving Human Subjects Act (WMO) must first be submitted to an accredited medical research ethics committee or the Central Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects (CCMO).

2. Field observations without manipulations that will not involve identification of participants. YES - ~~NO~~

3. Research involving completely anonymous data files (secondary data that has been anonymised by someone else). YES - ~~NO~~

### PART III: PARTICIPANTS

(Complete this section only if your study involves human participants)

Where will you collect your data?

*The data for this research has been collected online, in accordance with the safety measures related to the COVID-19 virus, present at the time of the research. The online data collection includes interviews via the media Skype, Zoom and Microsoft teams. Moreover, data has been retrieved from internet websites, public, and private documents.*

What is the (anticipated) size of your sample?

*A total of seven interviews have been conducted for this study. Three of the respondents were team members of 'Krachtige Gezinnen' and four of the respondents were externally involved with the team. These external actors include the team's coach, the process manager of Social Impact by Design and two municipal officials. The document analysis consisted of about five public documents, five private documents, and three websites.*

What is the size of the population from which you will sample?

*The team 'Krachtige Gezinnen' consists of eight team members, of which four are active participants. Furthermore, four external actors have been identified as actively involved with the team. With regard to the content analysis, all available and relevant documents will be included in the research.*

1. Will information about the nature of the study and about what participants can expect during the study be withheld from them? YES - NO

2. Will any of the participants not be asked for verbal or written 'informed consent,' whereby they agree to participate in the study? YES - NO

3. Will information about the possibility to discontinue the participation at any time be withheld from participants? YES - NO

4. Will the study involve actively deceiving the participants? ~~YES~~ - NO  
 Note: almost all research studies involve some kind of deception of participants. Try to think about what types of deception are ethical or non-ethical (e.g. purpose of the study is not told, coercion is exerted on participants, giving participants the feeling that they harm other people by making certain decisions, etc.).
5. Does the study involve the risk of causing psychological stress or negative emotions beyond those normally encountered by participants? ~~YES~~ - NO
6. Will information be collected about special categories of data, as defined by the GDPR (e.g. racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a person, data concerning mental or physical health, data concerning a person's sex life or sexual orientation)? YES - ~~NO~~
7. Will the study involve the participation of minors (<18 years old) or other groups that cannot give consent? YES - NO
8. Is the health and/or safety of participants at risk during the study? YES - NO
9. Can participants be identified by the study results or can the confidentiality of the participants' identity not be ensured? ~~YES~~ - NO
10. Are there any other possible ethical issues with regard to this study? YES - NO

If you have answered 'YES' to any of the previous questions, please indicate below why this issue is unavoidable in this study.

*With regard to the analysis of (ethnic) diversity of the neighbourhood Bospolder-Tussendijken data has been collected about where the respondents originally come from. As all respondents have remained anonymous, the racial or ethnic origin cannot be traced back to individuals. However, with regard to the identification of respondents, full anonymity might be hampered in this study because the participants of the team 'Krachtige Gezinnen' might be easily traceable due to their role within the cooperation coalition, which is a small sample size. This has been clearly stated at the beginning of the interview to confirm that this is not an obstacle for the participation of the respondents. Finally, the quotes used in this study have been presented to the respondents individually before they were included in the results. Consent has been given for all direct quotes included in the study.*

What safeguards are taken to relieve possible adverse consequences of these issues.

*Informed consent of the respondents has always be asked prior to the data collection and also after the research has taken place.*

Are there any unintended circumstances in the study that can cause harm or have negative (emotional) consequences to the participants? Indicate what possible circumstances this could be.

*This research will have no unintended negative consequences for the participants. However, as this is an evaluation study, there is a possibility that certain results of the evaluation may influence the further course of the process. Naturally, efforts have been made to formulate any less positive outcomes of the evaluation study as neutrally as possible, hereby including constructive recommendations.*

#### PART IV: DATA STORAGE AND BACKUP

Where and when will you store your data in the short term, after acquisition?

*All digital files have been secured on a private desktop, which is only accessible with a password. A back-up of the data has been made regularly on an external hard drive, which is only accessible for the researcher.*

Who is responsible for the immediate day-to-day management, storage and backup of the data arising from your research?

*The researcher (me) is responsible. All data have been secured by the researcher, who solely knows the passwords to access the data.*

How (frequently) will you back-up your research data for short-term data security?

*The research data have been backed-up every two weeks. In the period of more frequent data collection in the field, the data have been backed-up twice a week.*

In case of collecting personal data how will you anonymise the data?

*All data files have been completely anonymised. Personal details have been omitted from the transcripts and the list of respondents has been kept separately from the other data files.*

#### PART VI: SIGNATURE

Please note that it is your responsibility to follow the ethical guidelines in the conduct of your study. This includes providing information to participants about the study and ensuring confidentiality in storage and use of personal data. Treat participants respectfully, be on time at appointments, call participants when they have signed up for your study and fulfil promises made to participants.

Furthermore, it is your responsibility that data are authentic, of high quality and properly stored. The principle is always that the supervisor (or strictly speaking the Erasmus University Rotterdam) remains owner of the data, and that the student should therefore hand over all data to the supervisor.

Hereby I declare that the study will be conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the Department of Public Administration and Sociology at Erasmus University Rotterdam. I have answered the questions truthfully.

Name student: Lilly Brouwer



Date: 22/03/20

Name (EUR) supervisor: Thomas Swerts



Date: 22/03/20