NABONÆR

NEIGHBOURS HELPING NEIGHBOURS

TOWARDS AN AGE-FRIENDLY CITY

CITYSTUDIO

OSLO

FALL 2022

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PROJECT TEAM

SADAF PARWANY

Landscape architecture
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Sadaf's background helped visualize ideas, taking people's perspectives into the design of the project.

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Administration and leadership
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Farouk's background helped in administrating, spotting difficulties where things may go wrong and pointing out risk issues.

JASMIJN IN'T VELT

Geography, Spatial Planning & Environment

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Jasmijn's background helped in creating a realistic project which works with people and a broader understanding of volunteer work.

PROJECT SUMMARY

Oslo's senior population is steadily increasing. By 2040, Oslo will have 50.000 more seniors in Oslo and more seniors will live at home longer. Seniors living at home struggle with small household tasks, such as changing light bulbs or moving furniture.

The project works in favour to help seniors ageing in place more comfortably by creating age-friendly neighbourhoods. In addition, it aims to establish helpful networks by guiding the neighbourhoods to build their own local support networks. It is easier to trust neighbours than strangers and everyone has a neighbour. Therefore, the project aimed to strengthen the support network in neighbourhoods and create a low-threshold, non-digital way to reach out for help.

To build upon the existing network, NaboNær organised workshops in two neighbourhoods to co-design the support network with residents in Oslo. The workshops were meant to let residents of the neighbourhoods co-design the project to fit their needs and preferences.

NaboNær is designed to be implemented by the local members. This makes it easy to start and run in any neighbourhood.

1 neighbourhood
2 board members + facilitators (us)
3 the residents
4 helping network
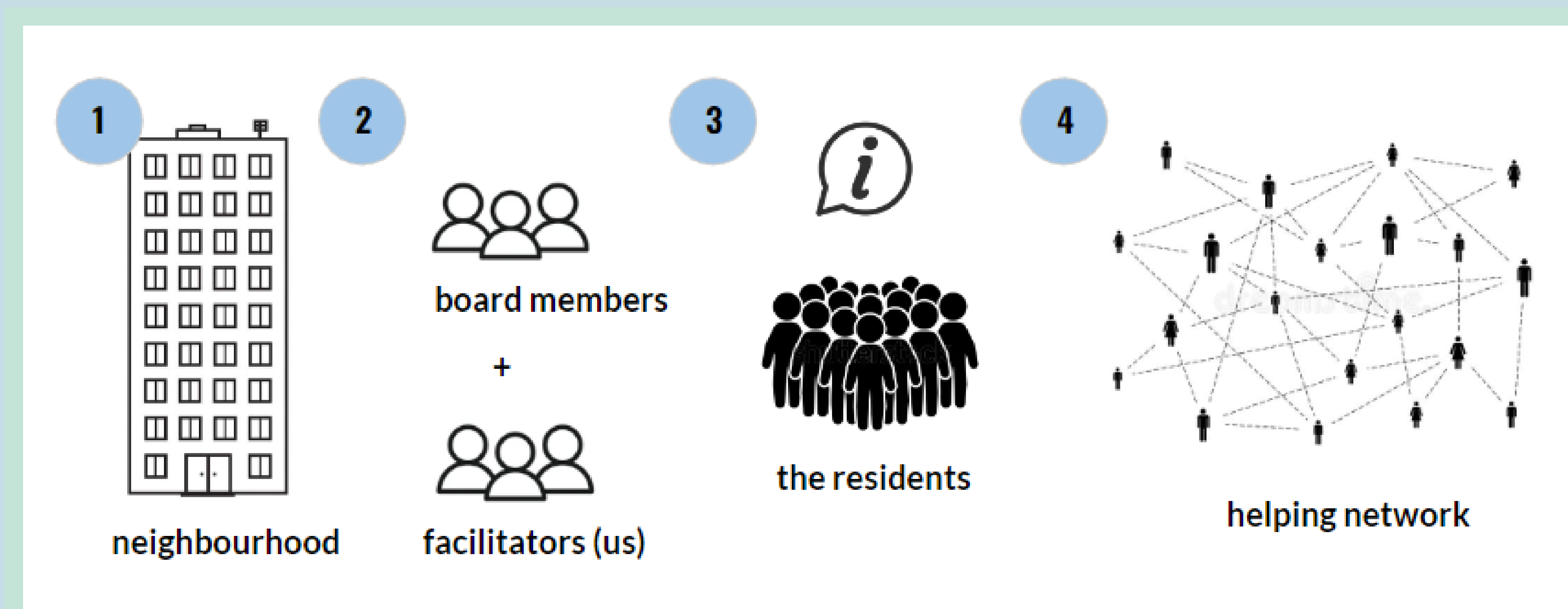
BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Oslo is facing the challenge of an ageing population. In 2018, it was estimated that the number of inhabitants above 67 years old will increase with 51% and the number of people above 80 will increase with 100% in 2040 (Leknes, 2018). That is why the City of Oslo joined the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities in 2014 (World Health Organization, n.d.). In addition, at this rate, one-third of the population will have to work in healthcare in 2060 to care for this ageing population (NTB, 2021).

AGE-FRIENDLY CITY
The City of Oslo defined an age-friendly city as "an inclusive and accessible urban environment that promotes active and healthy ageing" in its action plan (City of Oslo, 2017, p. 8). In this strategy, the municipality expresses the ambition to change the care of seniors to active ageing where seniors are in charge of their own lives and people are able to live longer at home.

AGEING IN PLACE
Ageing in place can be defined as 'the ability to live in one's own home and community safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, income, or ability level' (Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, 2009). Ageing in place includes many tasks, such as personal care, accessibility, household chores, meals, health care and money management (National Institute on Aging, n.d.). Tasks such as personal care and health care are covered by municipal services (City of Oslo, n.d.).

SMALL TASKS
Small tasks entail household tasks with no need for expert competence. The need for help with small household tasks, such as changing the light bulb or moving a heavy object, was identified by interviews. Seven out of ten interviewed seniors, as well as a librarian and a home nurse, mentioned this need. These tasks are not included in the work of a home nurse and home nurses do not have the time for them. Seniors have to rely on their network for these tasks, such as friends, family or neighbours, but not everyone has a support network that can help with these tasks.

EXISTING SOLUTIONS

There are existing solutions for this need in Oslo. There is one phone application, Nyby, that connects people from organizations to be of service to people who need help. Another phone application, Nabohjelp, connects neighbours to help each other. However, during interviews, only one of fourteen seniors said that they were aware of these applications. Nine senior citizens as well as the librarian were directly asked about digitalization. They brought up that seniors struggle with digital tools and missed a physical solution for the lack of digital access. These results show that the existing solutions are not sufficient.

TRUST

In addition, the problem of trust was identified. Since small household tasks are often inside, you have to let someone in your home. This is your own private space and requires a certain amount of trust in the helper. This is in line with research showing that handing over household tasks is complicated by trust problems (de Ruijter, E. et al., 2003). Nevertheless, social cooperation increases as social distance decreases. People show more trust towards neighbours than strangers (Buchan et al., 2002). In addition, the neighbourhood can work as a way of informal social control, so there is a consequence if a person does not follow up on the agreement. Moreover, effective norms for trusting strangers appear on a local level between neighbours (Macy & Skvoretz, 1998). However, this research was based on a neighbourhood where inhabitants meet each other often.

CITYSTUDIO STUDIO 5 S's

A CityStudio project uses the framework of 5S's. These five elements help structure and create a project. These elements are firstly city staff and city strategy, secondly support and resources, thirdly sites, fourthly stewardship and finally, stakeholders and scalability.

S1: CITY STAFF AND CITY STRATEGY

The city contact for this project is Monica Enge Eriksen, from the Department of Health, Ageing and Municipal Services. Camilla Jørgensen Tho, Heidi Røste and Johanne Marie Kildal Askvig from the Department of Health, Ageing and Municipal Services were also contacts for the project.

The project addresses the city strategy for an Age-friendly City. The applicable objective is 'increased interaction and dialogue with the elderly to facilitate age-friendly solutions and design' (City of Oslo, 2017a, p. 30). It also addresses the action plan for safe and diversified care of older people, in this plan the City of Oslo shows different levels of care of older people. The level the project focuses on is 'volunteerism and low-threshold services in neighbourhoods' (City of Oslo, 2017b, p. 54).

S2: SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

NaboNær facilitated a workshop in Lohøgda Borettslag and Skauen Borettslag. The involved housing cooperative covered the costs of the room. The costs for materials and snacks were covered by CityStudio Oslo.
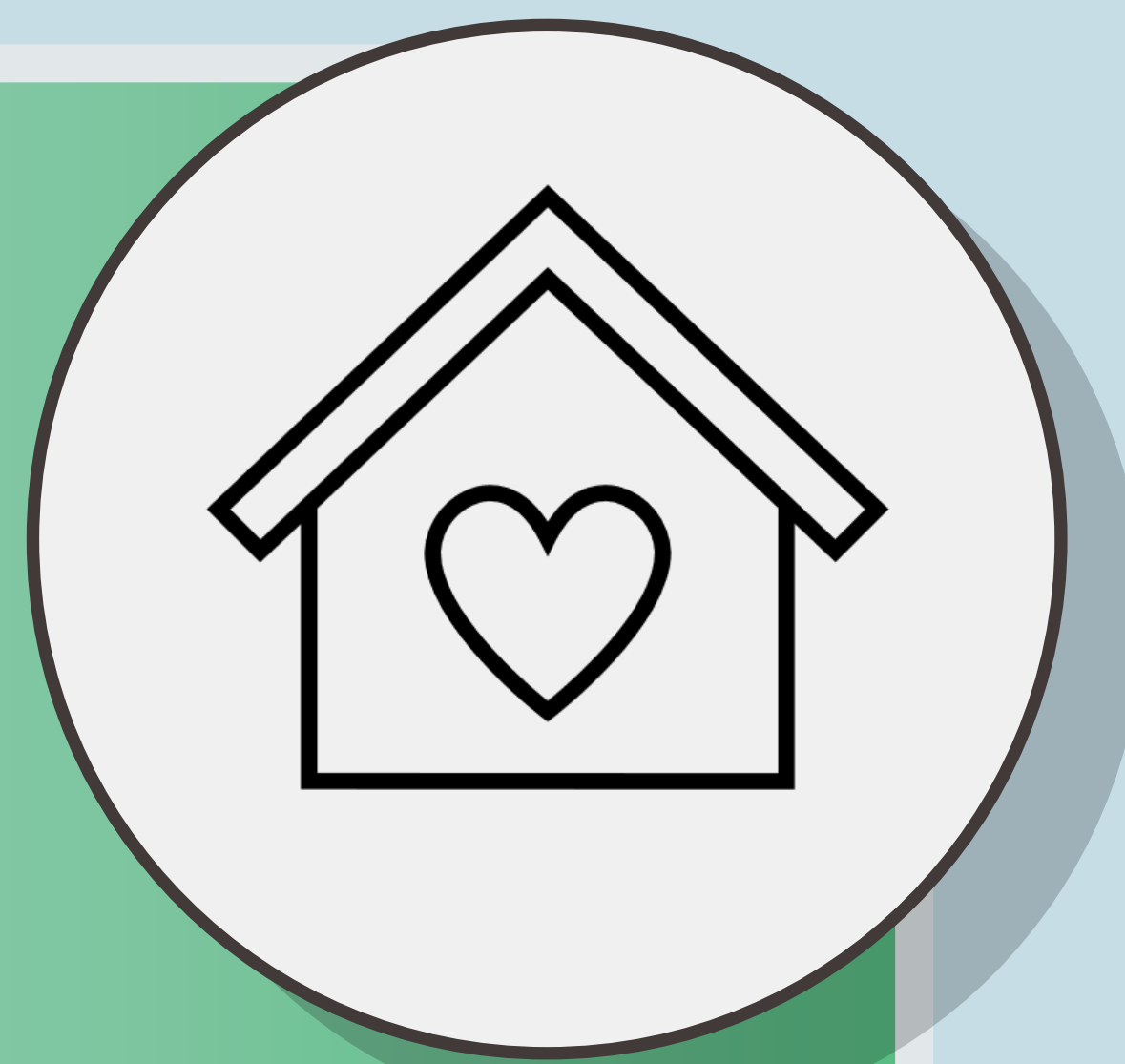
S3: SITES IN OSLO

The sites for the pilot were Lohøgda Borettslag and Skauen Borettslag.

In Lohøgda, the residents of three of the fifteen buildings were invited and that was 90 of the 777 housing units were invited. Lohøgda houses a lot of childless seniors. In Skauen Borettslag, the residents of 4 of the 11 housing blocks were invited to the workshop, which was approximately 40 housing units. In both housing cooperatives, the local board members were open to collaborating with this project.
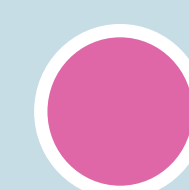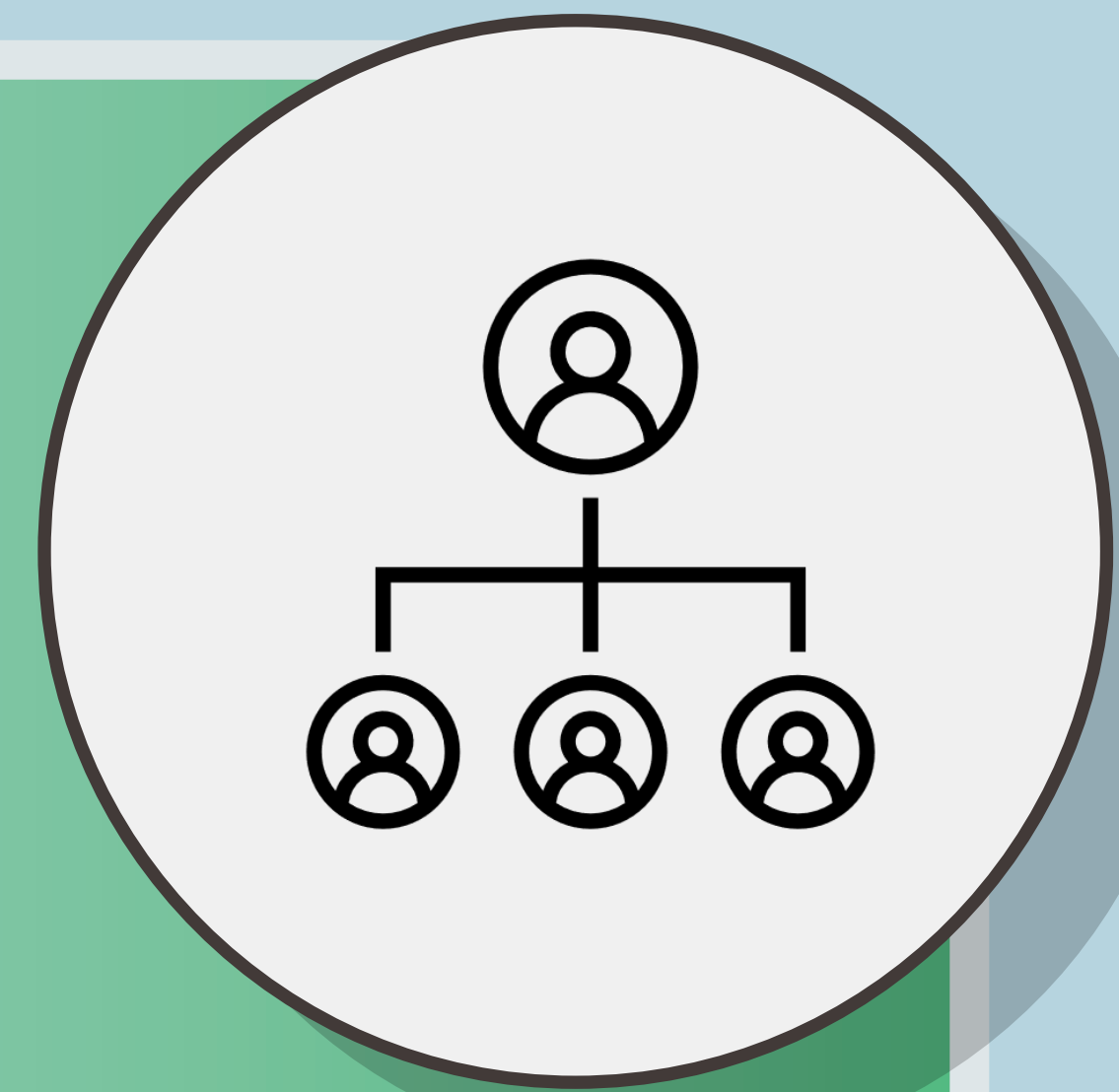
● Skauen Borettslag
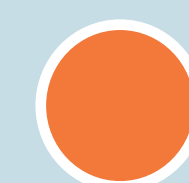
● ⊞ **Lohøgda** borettslag

S4: STEWARDSHIP AND STAKEHOLDER

NaboNær is a project where housing board members and residents can co-design the project and develop it in a way that fits their own neighbourhood. Stakeholders, such as the local board members, municipalities and social entrepreneurs can play a major role in taking the project further.

S5: SCALABILITY

NaboNær works on a low-level scale, which makes it easy to implement in other apartment buildings or small housing complexes. This makes the project very scalable and can therefore be started in different districts until it encapsulates the whole city.

Moreover, more research can provide more ideas and methods on how to implement this project and how to contextualize the project in a different neighbourhood.
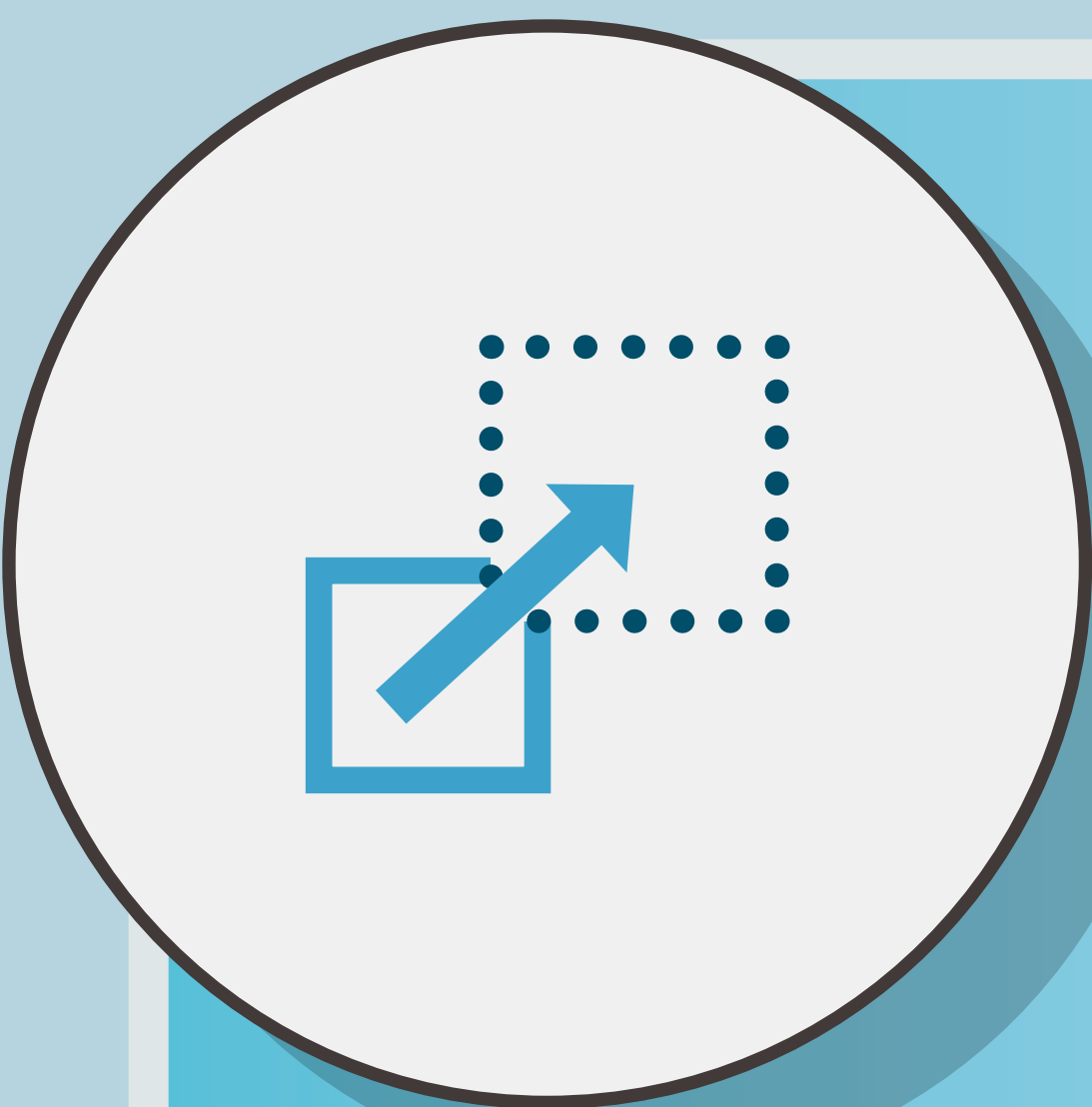
PROJECT OUTCOMES

FINAL PROJECT

NaboNær works towards an age-friendly city by strengthening the support networks between neighbours in apartment buildings and small housing complexes. The purpose behind strengthening the support network is to give the inhabitants the opportunity to help their neighbours with small household tasks. By improving the support network in the neighbourhood and building trust between neighbours, new connections are being established, so the quality of life gets improved. This will provide the seniors with a better opportunity to age in place and reduce pressure on the health sector.

To develop the support network in a way that fits the needs and preferences of the residents, NaboNær offers workshops to co-design a network set-up with the inhabitants. This network will be low-threshold and non-digital, so it can be accessible to everyone.

NaboNær suggested a framework of boundaries, as some neighbours might not be comfortable helping with certain household tasks(see Appendix A). A neighbour can decide their own boundaries, but a framework may help to know what to expect from the network.

NaboNær created workshops in two locations to pilot the idea and co-designing process. It was decided to work with housing cooperatives, since it is an opportunity to work on a small scale and work together with the local board.

PROCESS

Identifying the needs

Interviews were used to identify specific needs. Since the project was targeting seniors living at home, these interviews took place at locations which attract seniors, such as senior centres and the Deichmann Bjørvika library. Twenty-two seniors were interviewed, as well as a senior centre manager, a home nurse, a librarian and a manager of a volunteer centre. The list of questions is shown in Appendix B.

The interviews were meant to comprehend the situation of the seniors. Research areas mainly concerned the seniors' needs in daily life, how they spend their leisure time and using seniors as a resource. The main results were that Oslo's seniors needed help with small tasks, that home nurses do not have time to help with these tasks and that seniors struggle with digital transformation.

Workshops

To organize the workshops, NaboNær contacted local housing cooperative board members and included them in the process. They are trusted members of their neighbourhoods, which makes the project more trustworthy in the eyes of the inhabitants.

The purpose of the workshops was to let inhabitants of certain housing blocks co-design a helping strategy to fit their needs and preferences. This gives inhabitants ownership of a project in their neighbourhood and therefore creates a bond between the neighbours.

The workshop consisted of questions and activities about trust, boundaries and the existing social structure. NaboNær also showed suggestions for a low-threshold, non-digital way to reach out for help. The first suggestion was an information board where people can put up tasks and a neighbour can offer help. The second suggestion was a door sticker, so a neighbour can show that they are willing to help and people can contact them.

The workshops were organized on 1 and 2 December 2022 at 18:00 (see the invitations in Appendix C) and took one hour. The first workshop took place in Skauen Borettslag and had one participant. The second workshop took place in Lohøgda Borettslag and was attended by the board leader and one other participant. The participants were positive and motivated to work on the project.

PROJECT BARRIERS

Trust

Letting someone inside your house requires trust. Therefore, the local residents were invited to participate in the project, giving them the opportunity to decide how to implement the project in their neighbourhood. Including the board members and the residents in the project established connections and trust between the neighbours.

Finding a location

A neighbourhood was required to advance and test the project, which was challenging. It took time to find housing cooperative board members that are willing to test the project in their neighbourhood. Besides, external factors such as the postponement of meetings with important stakeholders delayed the project process. However, after trying to reach out to a number of neighbourhoods, NaboNær eventually succeeded in choosing two interested neighbourhoods.

Neighbourhood politics

In both neighbourhoods, the rise of shared costs influenced the atmosphere of the neighbourhood negatively at the same time the workshop took place. This might have influenced the workshop and might influence the process of the implementation of the project. In that sense, the timing was not ideal.

TIMELINE

MAIN EVENTS OF THE WEEK

week 39: group formation

week 41: interviews with seniors at Grünerløkka flerbrukssenter

week 43: first meeting with city contact Monica E. Eriksen

week 44: interviews in Deichmann Bjørvika
interviews on the street in Grønland

week 45: Meeting with city contact Monica E. Eriksen
Feedback from Designit Oslo

week 46: finding locations for workshops

week 47:

meeting with city contact
meeting with board member Østreheim
meeting with board leader Andreas Francisco Myrstad

week 48: workshop at Skauen Borettslag
workshops at Lohøgda Borettslag

week 49: finalization of project meeting with city staff

week 50: showcase for dissemination

LESSONS LEARNED

APPROACHES

NaboNær depends considerably on people's participation. The way people are approached has a big impact on their willingness to participate. The low participation rate at the workshops shows that the project needs to have an active approach. An effective way to approach neighbourhoods is by actively spreading the word about a project before implementing it. Possible different approaches are visiting local meeting places, disseminating the idea more and partaking in existing neighbourhood meetings.

ADAPTABLE PLANS

NaboNær developed methods that work towards making the participants part of the project and not just participants. For instance, in a neighbourhood where the concept was pitched as a co-design project, the local board was more excited and engaged than in a neighbourhood where the concept was pitched as a pilot.
When implementing the project, many factors can interfere with the process. This is very relevant for a project working on a low-level scale, since the circumstances can differ in neighbourhoods. Having adaptable plans that can be contextualized to the neighbourhood's needs is the solution to move forward with the project.

SIMPLICITY

It is important to simplify the project and make it understandable for those who are not involved. Simplicity can be the key to higher participation and reaching out to more potential participants.

EXISTING SOCIAL DYNAMICS

When doing a project in a neighbourhood, the existing social dynamics and interactions have to be considered. If not, this will affect the implementation of the project and the project might harm the existing social structure.

NEXT STEPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The lessons learned during this project can be incorporated into recommendations and future steps for the project.

Marketing the project
It is important to market the project before people are involved. This can be done by announcing the project in public neighbourhood events or in meetings from the housing cooperative. In addition, the project should be made more visible by going to central meeting places and talking to people. This will increase participation in the project.

Workshops
More workshops can be held after marketing for the project to co-design the project with the residents. Through workshops, participants can introduce more people to the project and invite them to the next meeting, so residents get ownership of the project and make more residents interested.

Handbook
Create a handbook with instructions about how to hold and organize the workshops and implement the project. This handbook can be handed to the board members in order to help them implement the project in their own neighbourhood.

Evaluation
It is necessary to hold an evaluation after the implementation of the project. This evaluation can help refine the process for other neighbourhoods, which improves the scalability of the project.

Continuation
NaboNær is reaching out to possible stakeholders who would be interested to take the project further on. One of the possible stakeholders is an architect network interested in neighbourhoods.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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APPENDIX A: GUIDLINES TASKS

In the workshop the boundaries of a Nabonær service were introduced. In addition, the residents were asked if they wanted to add more guidelines, so the NaboNær service would fit their boundaries. The guidelines are created for both the helper and the person receiving help.

NABONÆR GUIDELINES BOUNDARIES

PROPOSAL FOR GUIDELINES FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD HELP
NABONÆR SERVICE DO NOT INCLUDE:

– TASKS WHICH TAKE LONGER THAN 20 MIN
– PERSONAL HYGIENE
– CLEANING TASKS
– MONEY–RELATED TASKS
– TASKS WHICH NEED EXPERTISE
– TASKS YOU ARE NOT COMFORTABLE WITH

DO YOU WANT TO ADD MORE BOUNDARIES?
NOTE BELOW:

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

In order to validate the problem NaboNær had a number of interviews with both seniors and the manager of a senior centre, a librarian, a home nurse and a manager of a volunteer centre. The interviews were different depending on the interviewee and the phase of the project. Below is a list of questions that were asked during those interviews.

Interview questions.
How you used to spend your free time before retiring ?
How do you spend your free time now ?
How do you wish to spend your free time ?

Voluntary work:
What passion do you have?
What are you doing that is connected to that passion?
Are you doing voluntary work?
What do you think of voluntary work?

Social life:
How big is your social circle?
What impact does retiring have on your social life?
Where do you know people from?

Small services:
Who/where do you ask for help with small tasks?
What do you need help with?
In what way do you want to ask for help? (via an app, senior centre, call a phone number)
Would you use an app to ask for help?

Trust Building
Would you be comfortable with letting people do tasks in your house?
What would make you trust people?

Existing projects:
Have you heard of existing projects that work with neighbour help?
If yes. Does it work in the way you want it to?

KJÆRE BEBOERE

VELKOMMEN TIL WORKSHOP MED NABONÆR

Vi er tre studenter fra tre forskjellige universiter, NMBU, Universitet i Oslo og OsloMet. Sammen har vi laget prosjektet Nabonær, i samarbeid med Oslo kommune. Prosjektet handler om å skape et aldervennelig nabolag. Sammen med dere ønsker vi å styrke hjelpenettverket i nabolaget, slik at det er lavere terskel for å tilby hjelp, men også å få hjelp.

Vi håper at dere ønsker å delta på denne workshopen, slik at dere kan bidra med å forme det endelige resultatet.

Sted: Lohøgda borettslag, Kristins vei 39
Rom: Utleie rommet **Gimle**
Dato: 2. Desember 2022
Tid: Første workshop 18:00 – **Kristinsvei 26-36**
Andre workshop 19:00 – **Kristinsvei 14-24**

Sadaf Parwany Jasmijn in't Velt Farouk Joubi

CITYSTUDIO OSLO Oslo

KJÆRE BEBOERE

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Vi håper at dere ønsker å delta på denne workshopen, slik at dere kan bidra med å forme det endelige resultatet.

Sted: Skauen borettslag, Tonsenhagen Oslo
Rom: Utleielokalet – Selvbyggerveien 50
(Vi står ved inngangsdøren)
Dato: 30. November 2022
Tid: 18:00

Sadaf Parwany Jasmijn in't Velt Farouk Joubi

CITYSTUDIO OSLO Oslo