

<b>Institution:</b> The University of Manchester		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 13 (Architecture, Built Environment and Planning)		
<b>Title of case study:</b> Ketso: improving professional practice and participation by embedding research findings into a physical toolkit		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> 2000 – 2020		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>
Dr Joanne Tippett	Lecturer in Spatial Planning	2000 – present
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> August 2013 – December 2020		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> Yes		
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>Ketso is a hands-on toolkit, developed through University of Manchester research, to improve stakeholder participation and ensure that more diverse perspectives are considered in service design and delivery. It achieves this goal by integrating pedagogical principles into tactile and colourful materials to organise participants' contributions in workshops. Ketso is used by multiple public and third sector organisations, extending beyond planning into new domains such as healthcare, community development, education and business. Since 2013, the number of organisations using Ketso has increased by 325 (to 625 in total), with 1,690 toolkits (2,220 total) supporting 34,500 workshop participants (42,500 total) in an additional 50 countries (77 total).</p>		
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>The foundational research underpinning Ketso improved the effectiveness of stakeholder engagement in environmental planning, connecting local level engagement with strategic planning at regional and national levels [1]. The research challenged established processes of stakeholder engagement by helping participants develop their own ideas through an in-depth, interactive process, bringing together community members and professionals [2]. The research developed a systems-based toolkit for participation in integrated river catchment planning [3,4], but the scope of its application has subsequently extended to other sectors beyond planning.</p> <p>The action research underpinning Ketso, involving a wide range of stakeholders in Manchester's Irk River Valley, tested an approach to stakeholder engagement developed from a review of existing participatory methods [2]. The overarching finding was that a toolkit designed to physically embody key pedagogical principles provides an effective way for lay facilitators to engage marginalised groups in environmental planning processes, ensuring all voices are heard [2].</p> <p>The research uncovered the following design principles, which informed the development of the toolkit:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ideas manifested in physical form enable tangible outcomes to emerge from a workshop, making it easier for ideas to be demonstrated and acted upon. The tactile and visual nature of the materials used to gather participants' input enhances inclusivity through different forms of communication (visual, aural, reading and kinaesthetic). The research developed and tested the effectiveness of varied materials and shapes in gathering and structuring information [2].</li> <li>2. The use of visual prompts helps participants to see patterns, resolve potential conflicts/disagreements and agree priorities. It is possible to hear every voice in a dialogue by ensuring that each participant has the physical means to develop their own thoughts, with their ideas incorporated into a wider group picture.</li> <li>3. The sequencing of questions has a powerful influence on the quality and type of ideas developed. The toolkit works best when animated through a structured turn-taking process, using a series of sequenced, colour-coded questions to gather participant's ideas and ensure that all views are included [2,4].</li> </ol> <p>These design principles were developed and assessed through a series of workshops, leading to a multi-scaled landscape restoration plan. Data sources included 'before and</p>		

after' interviews; participants' reflective journals; participant observation and interviews with 19 regional decision-makers [2].



*Using Ketso to explore climate change resilience amongst coffee growers in Uganda.*

A key innovation since the original research has been the development of a set of principles for effective engagement that can be transferred across contexts [5]. These principles ('hear everyone's voice', 'structure effective thinking and creativity' and 'link information across time and place') were derived from several years' experience of using Ketso in practice, including observations of the process, analysis of the outcomes, and feedback from participants [5]. The lessons drawn from this process have enabled the rapid development of online workshops using a new individual toolkit, Ketso Connect, deployed in 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic.

### 3. References to the research

1. **Tippett, J.** (2005) The value of combining a systems view of sustainability with a participatory protocol for ecologically informed design in river basins, *Journal of Environmental Modelling and Software*, 20(2): 119-139. DOI: [10.1016/j.envsoft.2003.12.016](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envsoft.2003.12.016)
2. **Tippett, J., Handley, J. and Ravetz, J.** (2007) Meeting the challenges of sustainable development – a conceptual appraisal of a new methodology for participatory ecological planning, *Progress in Planning*, 67(1): 1-98. DOI: [10.1016/j.progress.2006.12.004](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.progress.2006.12.004)
3. **Tippett, J.** (2005) 'Think like an ecosystem' – embedding a living system paradigm into participatory planning, *Systemic Practice and Action Research*, 17(6): 603-622. DOI: [10.1007/s11213-005-1232-y](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11213-005-1232-y)
4. **Tippett, J.** (2010) Going beyond the metaphor of the machine, in de Roo, G. & Silva (eds.), *A Planner's Encounter with Complexity* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishers), pp.237-262.
5. **Tippet, J. and How, F.** (2020) Where to lean the ladder of participation: a normative heuristic for effective coproduction processes, *Town Planning Review* 91(2): 109–132. DOI: [10.3828/tpr.2020.7](https://doi.org/10.3828/tpr.2020.7)

### 4. Details of the impact

#### Context and pathway to impact

Involving stakeholders in public service design and delivery often requires people who are not professional facilitators to run participation events. To meet this need, several years of product development followed the foundational research to create a physical toolkit that could be produced in bulk. The toolkit was designed to help lay facilitators and participants engage effectively. A social business, Ketso Ltd, was established to manufacture, sell and rent toolkits, and to develop open learning resources and training to support their use. Ketso features in 74 peer-reviewed outputs as a research or public engagement method (43 journal articles, 15 PhDs, 6 book chapters and 10 conference proceedings) [A]. The National

Centre for Research Methods offers training in participatory data gathering with Ketso [A]. To date, 2,220 toolkits worth circa £570,000 have been sold to 625 organisations worldwide (data from internal company records).



*Distribution of Ketso users (<https://ketso.com/case-studies/>)*

### Extent of impact

Ketso's impact was evident initially in relation to environmental planning, reflecting the focus of the underpinning research. While the impact on environmental planning has continued, (with 14 further examples of Ketso's use relating to climate change, landscape restoration, river basin, flood management and biodiversity plans since 2013 [A,B,C]), Ketso's impact has extended since August 2013 into new domains:

1. *Healthcare*: 33 examples, including disease prevention, improved mental health service delivery and integrated care planning [A,D].
2. *Shaping service delivery, social inclusion and community development*: 26 examples, related to housing, refugee integration, sustainable tourism, parish development, rural regeneration and human rights [A,E].
3. *Education and skills*: 29 examples, including school improvement plans [A], research skills development for Methods North West and National Centre for Research Methods [A], and student engagement in learning both in classroom [A] and remote learning (700 university students in 6 universities using Ketso Connect developed in response to the pandemic [A]).
4. *Business*: 11 examples, including sales planning, gathering customer insight and cross-functional communication [A].

Across these domains, Ketso has impacted in three principal ways in terms of significance and reach:

#### 1. Improved efficiency of stakeholder engagement

The Ketso toolkit helps practitioners without specialist facilitation skills to undertake more extensive and efficient stakeholder engagement [A,F,G]: *"My team have been able to pick up Ketso and run successful workshops. It's a very useful tool that helps you take ideas and make sense of them"* [G]. The physical nature of the toolkit has helped to maximise Ketso's reach, evidenced by its use by 42,500 participants. Many of these participants may not have been reached if expensive (and unaffordable) external facilitators had been required: *"Having the structure on the board keeps it focused, and it makes it fairer, otherwise you can have dominant people. I am not entirely sure what I would have done without Ketso"* (Customer Insight Analyst, Progress Housing) [A]. The use of Ketso is efficient because engagement can be undertaken in-house. Analysis of stakeholder views can be conducted more efficiently because participant inputs are gathered in a structured way, using a tailored spreadsheet built-in to the toolkit, which *"makes it a cost-effective approach"* (Tayside Landscape Partnership) [A].

In addition to increasing the number of people who can be engaged, Ketso helps practitioners perform their work more efficiently: *“We achieved in days what would normally have taken weeks, if not months. I know I couldn’t have got the same results with flip charts or sticky notes”* (Group President, PeerVoice, a global medical education firm) [A].

An important impact of Ketso has therefore been to streamline and simplify what is normally a complex process of engagement, making it easier for practitioners to implement. This explains why it has been employed widely in the Scottish Government, as one user makes clear: *“It’s really hard to listen and facilitate at the same time. With Ketso, you don’t have to do that because you can get people to write. Afterward, it is much easier to use the data and then pull out overarching themes and areas to work on”* [A].

Ketso has played an important role in allowing extensive stakeholder engagement in the challenging context of the Covid-19 pandemic, as a Partnership Manager at Natural England explains: *“We are using Ketso to explore national community engagement standards for Nature Recovery Networks. We have been able to carry on with this engagement despite the pandemic, engaging with 50+ people online, using the new Ketso Connect to develop our understanding of the potential reserve in more depth than would have been possible with digital tools only... Without Ketso we wouldn’t have understood how to engage the local community in broader scale spatial planning and landscape restoration. Using the toolkit builds capacity in project officers and participants to really engage with community members in meaningful dialogue. It helps all participants to think beyond their local patch.”* [F].

## **2. More effective engagement of marginalised groups**

The use of Ketso has resulted in more inclusive engagement across a diverse range of participants. It has facilitated more and better involvement by marginalised groups [A]. In a housing association, *“the Ketso method is a tried and tested, creative way to facilitate and record ideas, and enabled the group to ensure that every participant’s views [are] heard”* [E]. In the city of Alameda, California, a low-lying city threatened by rising sea levels, *“Ketso created an engaging and inclusive process for community members, which resulted in hundreds of community-sourced ideas generated in a relatively short amount of time”* (Climate Change Co-ordinator, City of Alameda) [A], and a community-created Climate Action and Resiliency plan for the city was subsequently adopted in 2019 [B].

Ketso facilitates participation by marginalised groups and enables a deeper understanding of their lived experience and needs, leading to improved plans and processes [A]. For instance, SeeMe Scotland adopted Ketso in 2014 to engage 200 mental health service users, carers and providers to develop a national strategy to tackle mental health stigma [H]. Engagement using Ketso has now been extended to 400 additional participants [H]. SeeMe’s Programme Manager writes: *“The most useful aspect of Ketso is giving people without power a voice... Without Ketso, I would have used more traditional methods of doing focus groups and trying to record those conversations on flip charts. I would have lost voices and not heard from the quiet people; there would have been meaningful insights that would never have been captured. We would not have been able to hear from as many people in the time available. Those voices shaped our work going forward, how people wanted to be involved, and the work they wanted to see happening in Scotland in terms of tackling stigma”* [H].

Ketso has been used in the 14 departments of Health Improvement Scotland since 2014 [A]. In the ‘Caring for Bressay’ programme, organised by the Shetland Health & Social Care Partnership with Bressay Community Council, very isolated communities were engaged in exploring viable methods to provide the island’s future health and social care [D]. Ketso was chosen because it “[makes] sure that everyone has their say and can focus on moving forward” [D]. Staffing challenges had been identified on the island [D] and Ketso *“provided a different approach to consider the question, we could look at what were [the residents] healthcare issues and what did they really need. It was the process of the order of the leaves that really helped. Because we started with what was important to the Bressay community”* [A]. *“All who attended evaluated the session very positively, including those who had been a little uncertain at the start of the event”* [D]. Following the Ketso workshop, a new service model was developed and adopted in September 2019 [D].

### 3. Impacts on organisational efficiency and effectiveness

Ketso has had a discernible impact on the working arrangements of a range of organisations. In 2015, Trafford Housing Trust used Ketso to improve its services based on customer feedback: *“Our Anti-Social Behaviour service’s key performance indicators have been redesigned based on customer feedback gathered [using Ketso], and our development arm is using customer feedback to refine the houses it builds...In the past we’ve just used post-it notes and pens, but Ketso made it much easier to structure the focus group and to record and analyse the discussions.”* [A].

Ketso has also had a positive impact on the frameworks used to guide organisations’ activities. Wageningen University’s Centre for Development Innovation used Ketso in project work in Africa and Asia (2017-19), with 285 participants in workshops. *“A key aspect of Ketso that is different to other tools is its ability to consolidate ideas into something that can turn into a finished product that actually has an impact...it’s like a translation tool”* [I]. This work has resulted in new landscape governance frameworks and an understanding of the capacities required by landscape actors [J].

The use of Ketso has enabled organisations to procure resources more effectively. Ketso was used to engage communities to inform a successful bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund by Lancashire Wildlife Trust in 2017 for the GBP3,200,000 million Carbon Landscape Project:

*“The understanding of the people was critical in securing the funding for the Carbon Landscape. It required not only an ecological perspective; the case needed to be embedded into the social fabric of the whole area, and how the community would use and interact with the sites. Without Ketso we would not have been able to understand the perspectives of so many different stakeholders, and even more crucially, help them to feel part of the process, building ownership for its long-term success.”* [G].

Ketso has subsequently been embedded in the community engagement of the Carbon Landscape Project to engage new audiences (e.g. 25 workshops with Wigan Council, schools, community and youth groups) [C], and several partners have continued using Ketso in their own work [G]. Significant land improvement projects have been delivered on 18 key sites, underpinned by a programme of stakeholder and community engagement using Ketso. By 2019, the project had resulted in over 1000 volunteers making ecological enhancements to 335 hectares, creating ecological connections between the key sites [C].

In summary, principles developed in the underpinning research led to the design of a physical toolkit, enabling non-professional facilitators to run effective engagement workshops. Ketso has led to improved stakeholder engagement practices in multiple organisations across a range of sectors. It has helped to engage more participants in general, and more diverse stakeholders in particular, involving vulnerable and marginalised groups in the design and delivery of services.

### 5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- A. Analysis of 110 examples of Ketso’s use since August 2013 (2020)
- B. Alameda Climate Action and Resiliency Plan (September 2019) <http://bit.ly/3biJANQ>
- C. Carbon Landscape Partnership Evaluation Mid-Term Review (October 2019)
- D. Shetland Islands Health and Social Care Partnership Annual Performance Report 2018-19 <https://bit.ly/3k5cGV1>; and New healthcare model for Bressay given the green light. *Shetland News*, 27 September 2019 <http://bit.ly/3dr43mr>
- E. North East Tenants Residents and Landlords Together (NETRALT) Strategy and Action Plan 2019-2022 <https://bit.ly/3atalui>
- F. Testimonial from Partnership Manager, Natural England. Received January 2021.
- G. Testimonial from Director of Nature and Wellbeing, Lancashire Wildlife Trust. Received January 2021.
- H. Testimonial from Programme Manager, SeeMe Scotland. Received January 2021.
- I. Testimonial from Senior Advisor, Global Landscape Forum. Received January 2021.
- J. Southern Rift Association of Land Owners (2017) Building a Landscape Governance Framework for the Southern Rift Association of Land Owners.