

Embedding the unembedded – How to involve residents in local transition management processes?





Project/Study region

Local Energy Transition

Experiments for a low-carbon society transformation – Piloting a transition management process in the Bernese Alps (CH)

We initiate, implement, and evaluate a transition management process towards climate neutrality in the Eastern Bernese Oberland region.

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Local Energy Transition

Experiments for a low-carbon society transformation – Piloting a transition management process in the Bernese Alps (CH)

We initiate, implement, and evaluate a transition management process towards climate neutrality in the Eastern Bernese Oberland region.

More specifically, together with local stakeholders, we aim to develop initiatives or ‘energy experiments’ in the following sectors:

- Mobility
- Energy
- Housing
- Tourism
- Private sector (agriculture/forestry)
- Consumption
- Communication, education and participation

Theoretical background

Transition Management

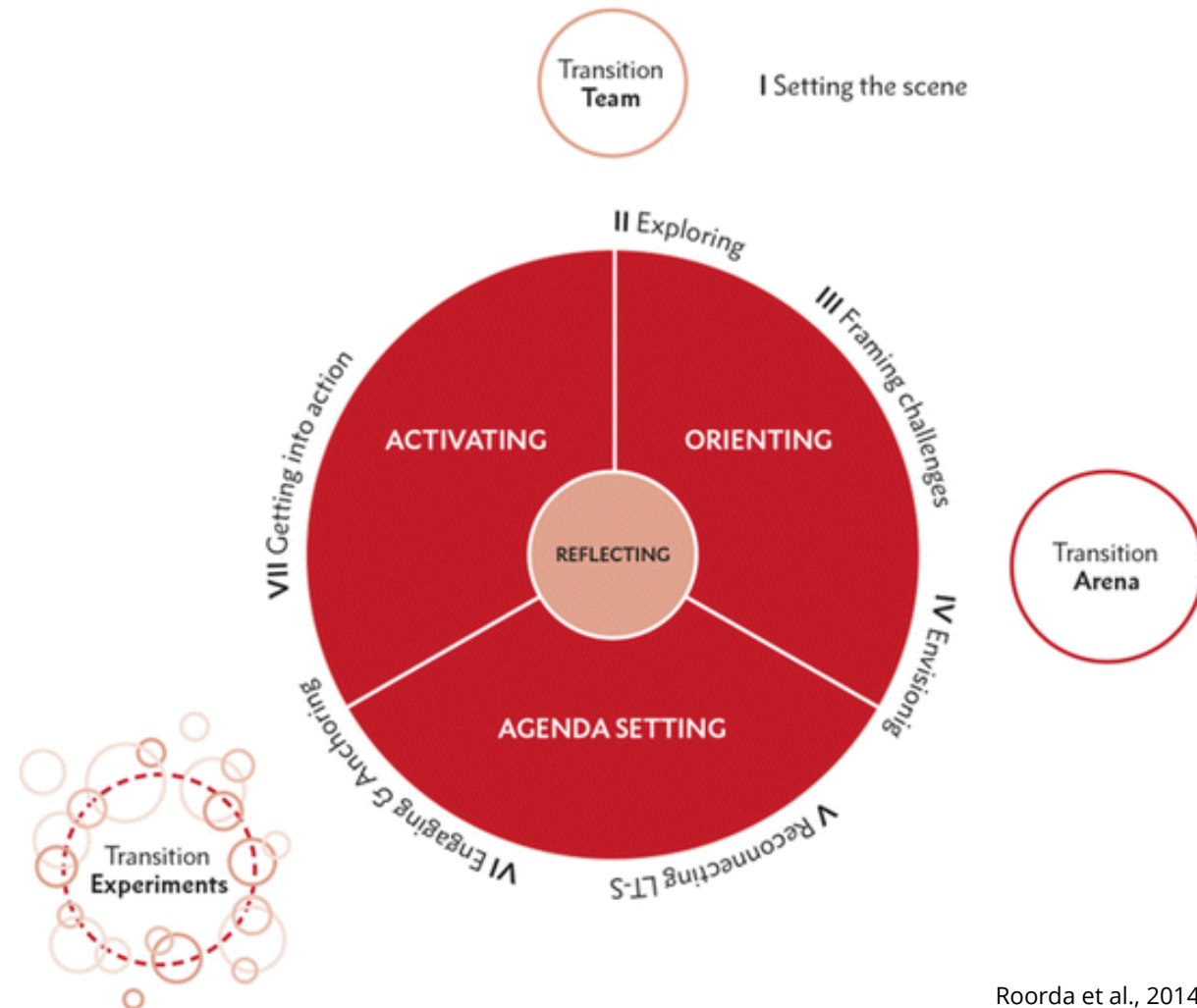
Transition management offers guidance on how to set up a:

“interactive and selective participatory stakeholder searching processes aimed at learning and experimenting” (Grin et al., 2010: 140).

Criticism

Focus on a ‘select’ group of actors might:

- sustain or create unequal power structures (Smith and Stirling, 2010; Hölscher et al., 2018).
- empower some actors might disempower others (Avelino, 2009; 2017, Wittmayer 2015).



Theoretical background

Support of local population is key

Social acceptance by local residents is key for sustainability transitions (Ingold et al., 2019), especially true in a Swiss context.



Einsprachen gegen Biomasse Jungfrau

Inbetriebnahme frühestens ab März 2012

Aus Angst vor Geruchsemissionen haben mehrere Parteien Einsprache gegen die geplante Biogasanlage der Biomasse Jungfrau AG erhoben. Durch die breite Unterstützung, welche die Anlage trotzdem erfährt, ist die Finanzierung zu 90 Prozent gesichert.

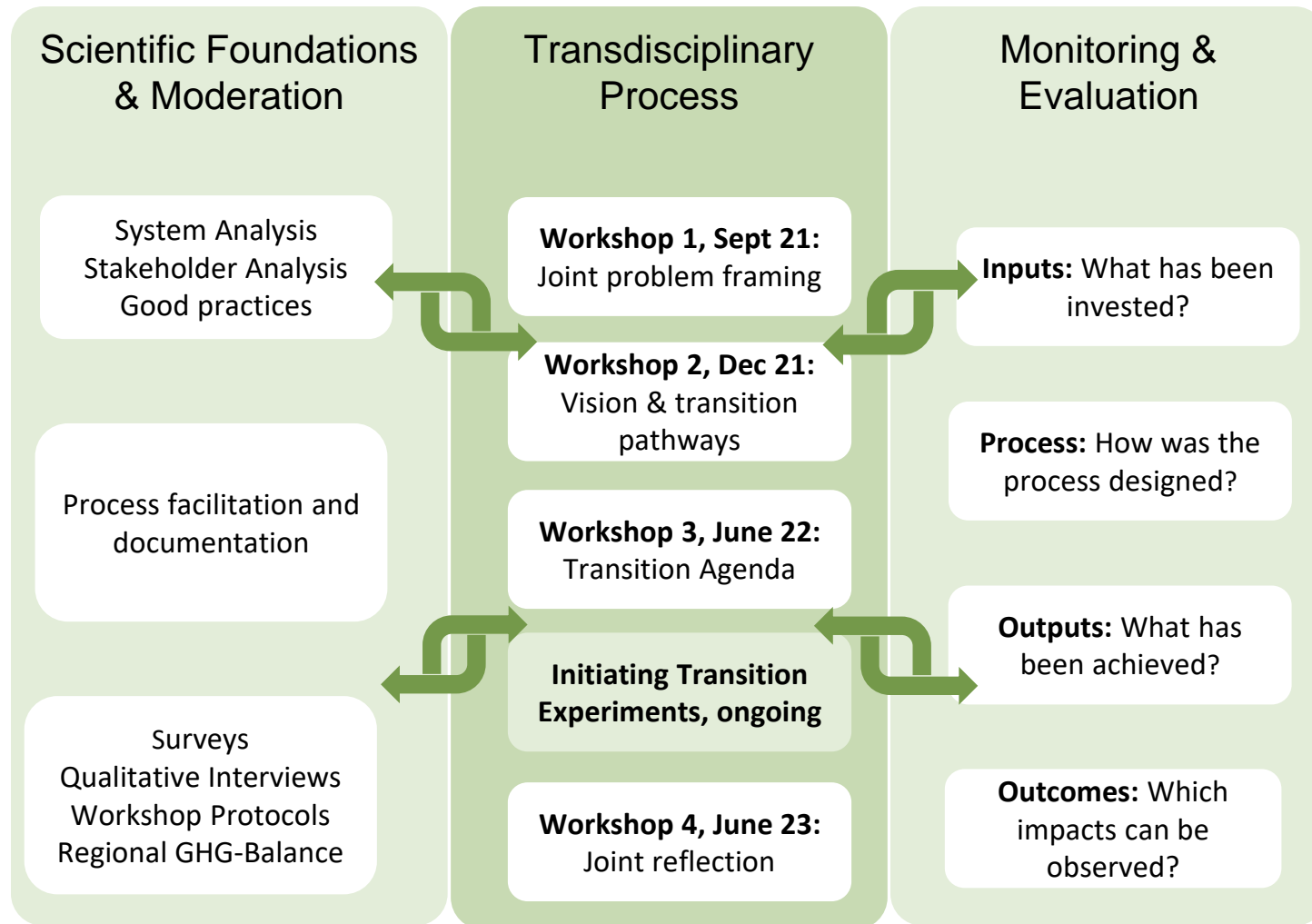
von Florian Wehrli



So könnte die Biogasanlage der Biomasse Jungfrau AG später aussehen. Sie nimmt frühestens ab März 2012 den Betrieb auf.
Bildmontage: Biomasse Jungfrau AG

Theoretical background

Implementation of the transition management process



Transition team facilitates process



Transition arena develops the transition agenda

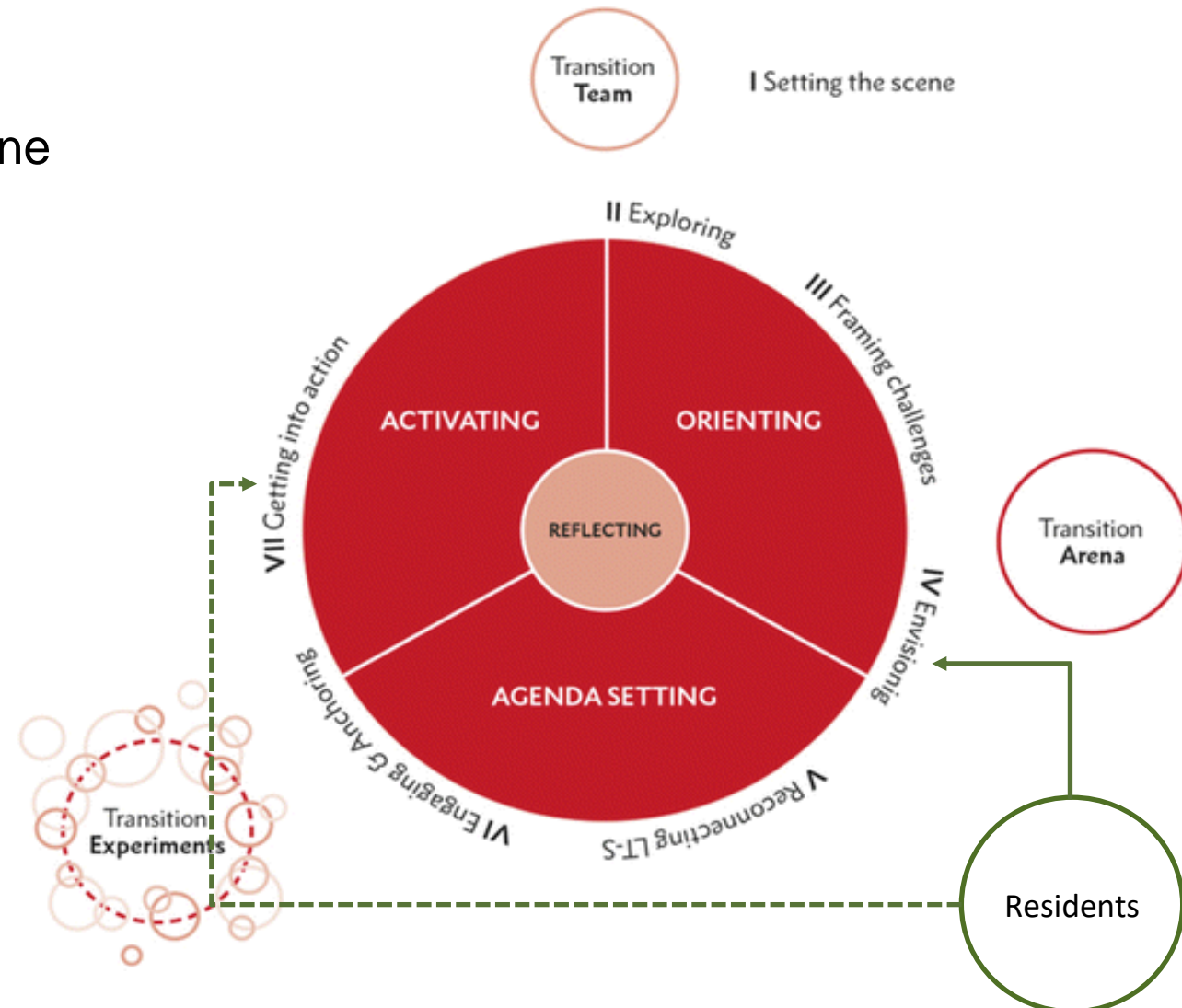
- 40-50 stakeholders: private sector, municipalities, civil society

Transition networks implement experiments of the transition agenda

- 10 initial project ideas

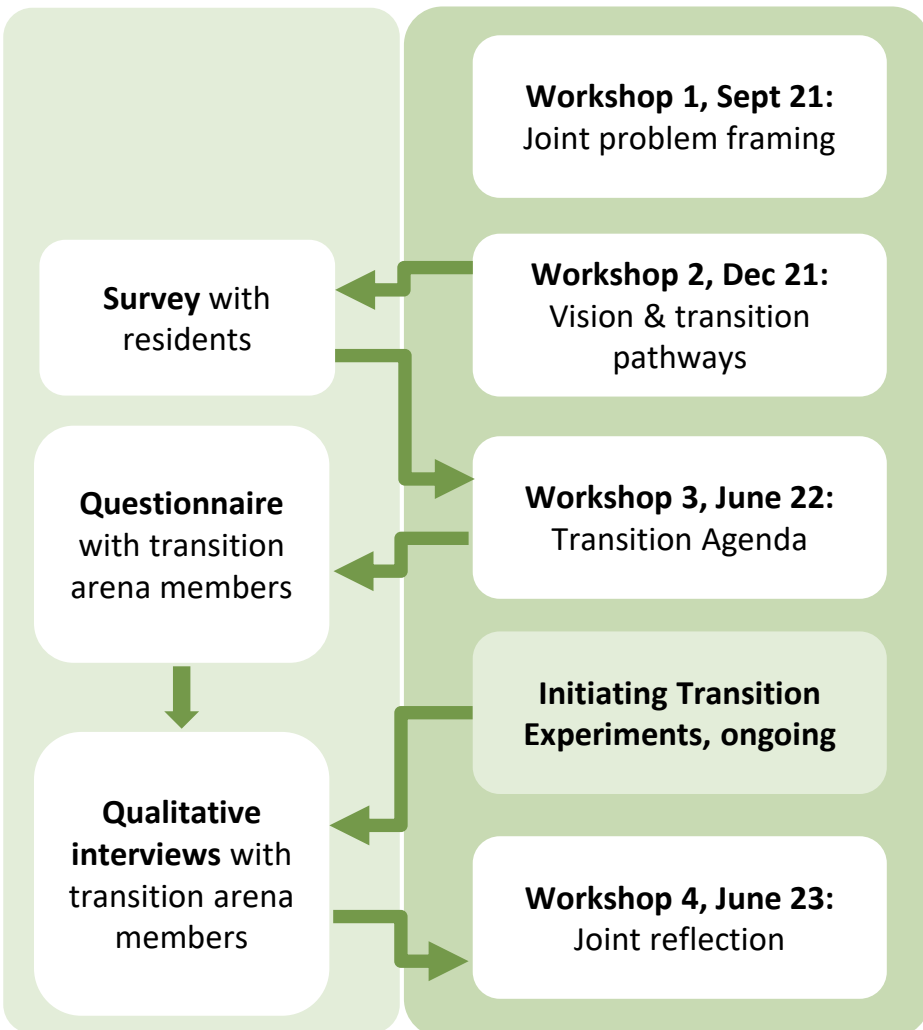
Research questions

- How do residents judge the visioning done by local stakeholders in the transition arena?
- How do residents evaluate the transition process?
- How do local stakeholders perceive the inclusion of residents?
- How do local stakeholders use the feedback of the residents?



Data & methods

Inclusion of residents



Survey

- Residents evaluated the visions developed in the transition arena and could become active themselves.
- Results of the survey served as a key input for workshop 3.

Workshop 3

- Protocols of workshops exercises as well as questionnaire

Qualitative interviews

- 4 member of the transition team
- 11 members of the transition arena

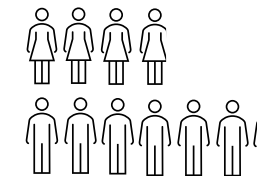
**No. of
Respondents**

519

**Mean
age**

**54
years**

Gender



Results

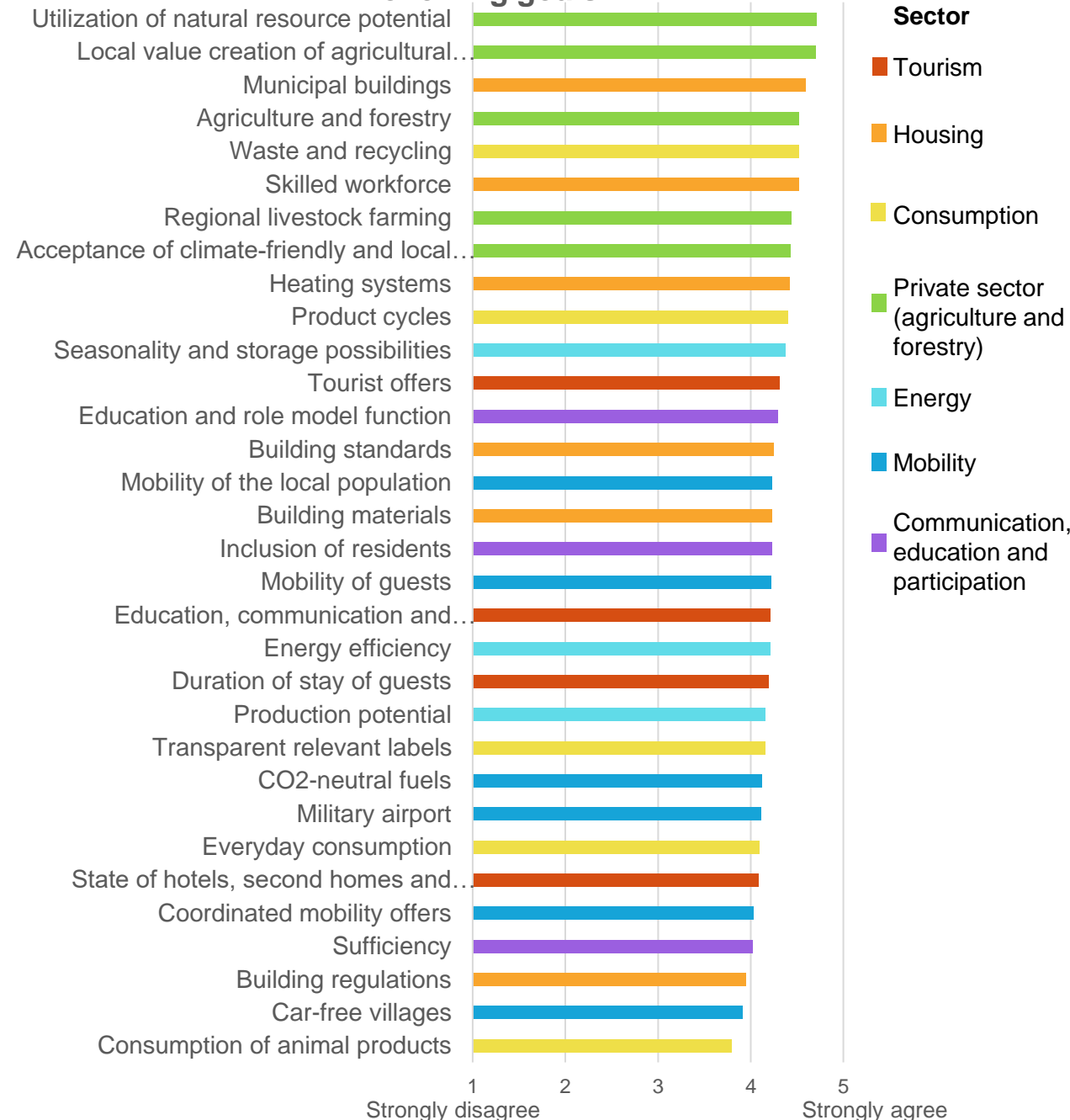
How do residents perceive the visioning done by local stakeholders?

- All visions were positively evaluated
- Visions from private sector (agriculture & forestry) were supported most
- Visions from mobility often less supported

Heating systems

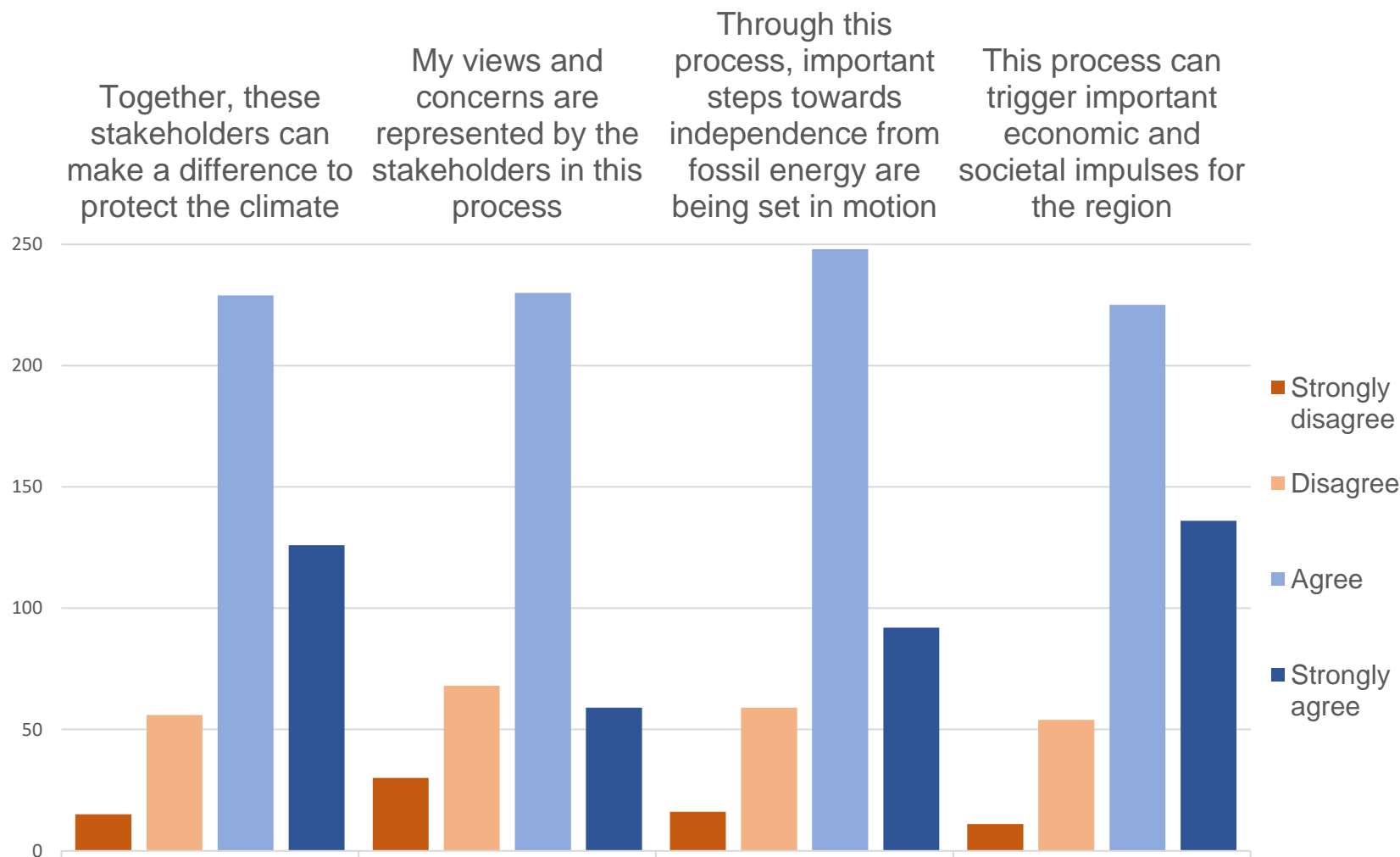
Fossil-fueled heating systems are replaced with systems based on regional renewable energy. The required energy is produced by the building's own facilities as much as possible.

How strongly would you support or oppose the following goals?

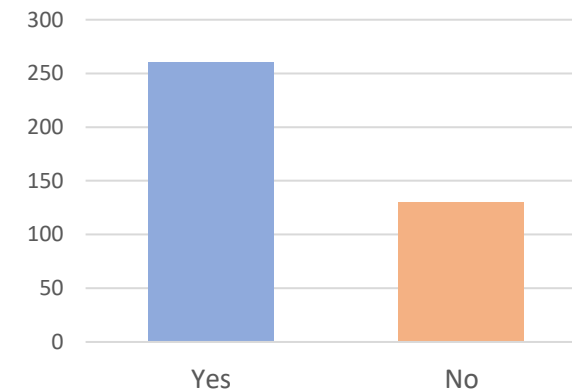


Results

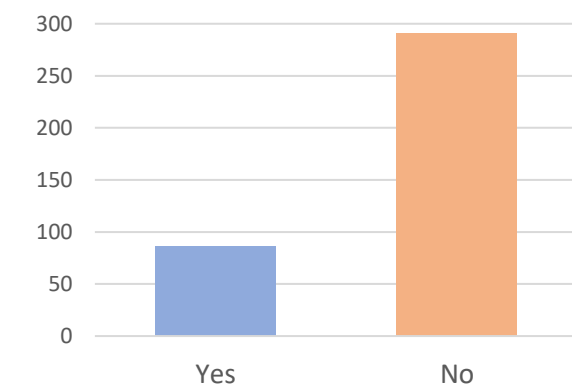
How do residents evaluate the transition process?



Would you like to be informed about the survey and the process?



Would you like to actively participate in the process (for example by taking part in future events)?



Results

Use of input from residents in workshop

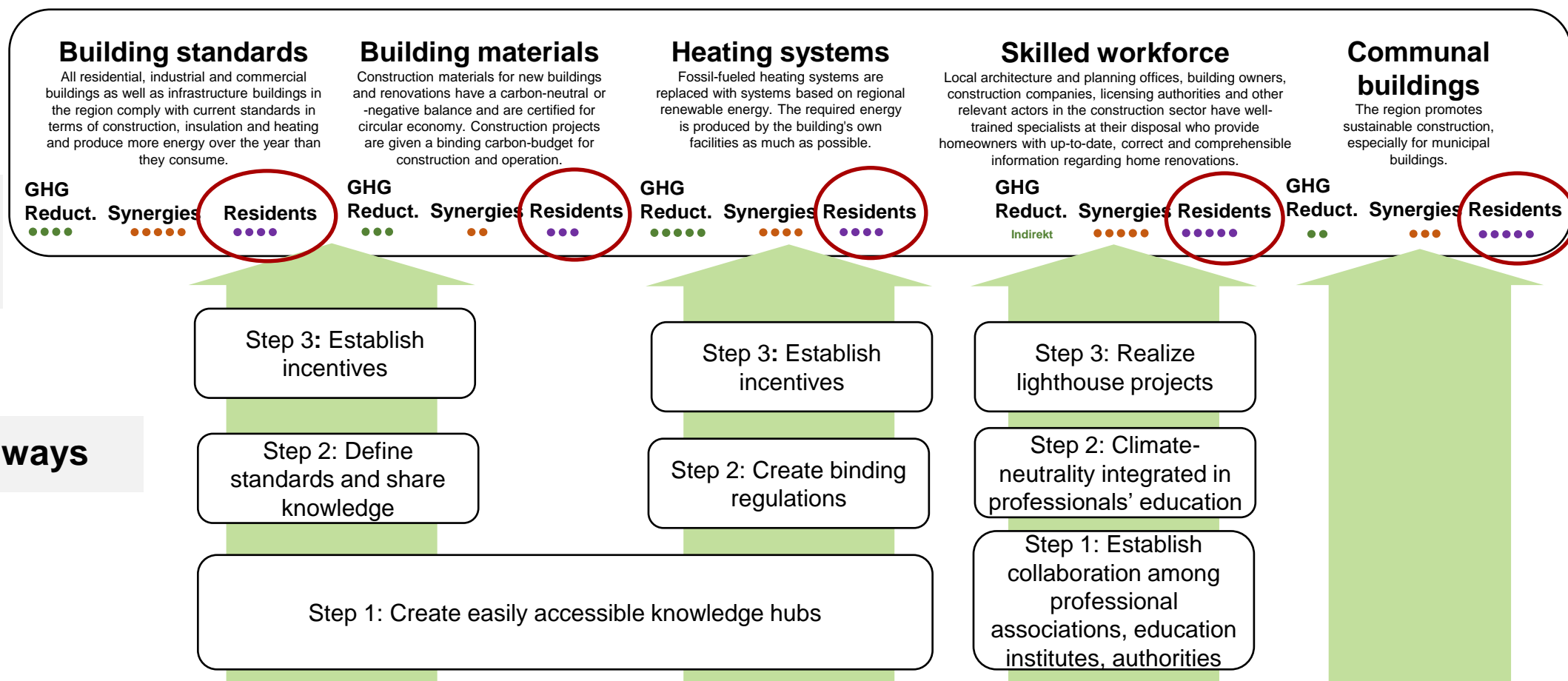
Sector

Housing

Visions

Priorities based on assessment

Transition pathways



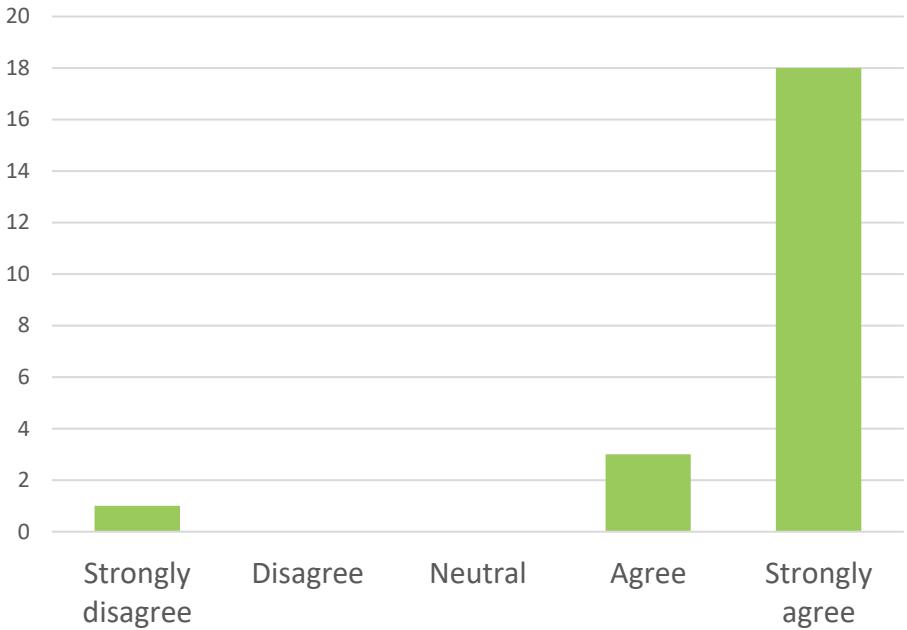
Results

How do local stakeholders perceive the inclusion of residents?

“It was an important input, to see on which issues residents would have a positive attitude towards the implementation.”

“Very important, however more communication has to happen to activate the local population as well, communication, communication, communication.”

I find it important that the opinion of the residents towards the visions, was taken up in the survey



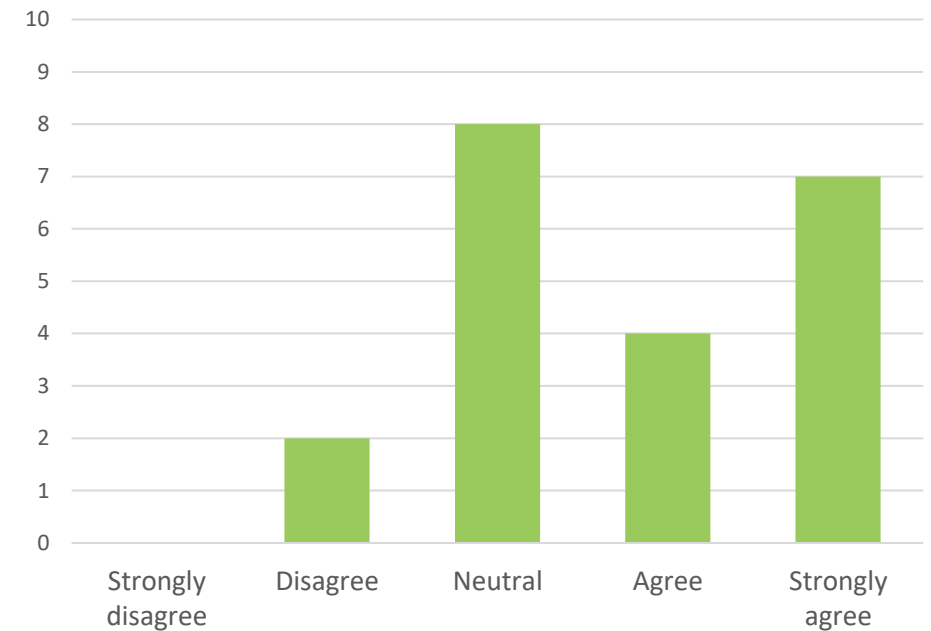
Results

How do local stakeholders use the feedback of the residents?

"Specific link between the group discussions and survey results was sometimes difficult to establish."

"One should always keep public opinion in mind, regarding public appeals or votes, on the other hand, it should not be the main issues during project development."

The results of the survey with residents supported the development of transition pathways.



Discussion

Inclusion of residents in transition management process

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local stakeholders highly valued the involvement of residents → provides direction Residents judged the transition process and visions positively → could enhance legitimacy and transparency Survey can be a tool to make the transition process public and gather support for 'transition networks' (i.e., individuals that want to support the implementation of projects). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local stakeholders found it difficult to use the feedback of the residents → maybe more guidance from researchers is needed. Positive feedback on visions should not be mistaken as support for concrete projects (i.e. the transition experiments). Few residents showed up at subsequent events → more communication necessary

Thank you!

Project website:

https://www.cde.unibe.ch/research/projects/local_energy_transition_experiments_for_a_low_carbon_society/index_eng.html



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Images:

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