Article

A Framework of Engagement Practices for Stakeholders Collaborating around Complex Social Challenges

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Abstract: South Africa's interventions to address complex social challenges rely on coordination across several sectors and between different levels of government and society. Improved alignment, planning and coordination are needed when addressing the causal factors of these social challenges. These causal factors include the environments in which people live and their behaviours. Furthermore, emphasis is placed on the recurring engagement of civil society, especially of marginalized stakeholders, as participants in the efforts to address the challenges. The study draws from the promise shown by stakeholder networks, termed Innovation Platforms, in other Sub-Saharan Africa countries to address such complex social challenges. The study aimed to improve the understanding of how a stakeholder network's engagement practices impact the effectiveness of the network. To this end, a conceptual framework and management tool for stakeholder engagement in IPs is proposed. The study followed the conceptual framework analysis procedure to develop, evaluate and refine the conceptual framework. The article describes the core research outcomes of the framework development approach, starting with a systematized literature review to identify core concepts, followed by interviews with experts and a case study to refine the framework content. The case study applied the framework to develop recommendations for improved engagement in a stakeholder network which has been established around the challenge of vagrancy in Stellenbosch, South Africa. The result of the approach is a multidimensional framework for conceptualizing stakeholder engagement practices in a variety of contexts. The focus of the framework content remains on the practices of engagement which enable effective and fruitful stakeholder interactions within and around a network. The study delivered valuable insights into the nature of some development initiatives in South Africa and the impact of stakeholder engagement on them.

Keywords: innovation platform; ecosystem; stakeholder engagement; social challenges; framework

1. Introduction

The arrival of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) saw the dawn of a new era for development initiatives as focus fell on addressing the causal factors underlying social challenges [1–3]. These causal factors stem from an individual's social and economic environment (e.g., income, education level, relationships with family and friends), their physical environment (e.g., healthy living and working spaces, safe water and air) and their personal characteristics and behaviours (e.g., a balanced diet, exercise, smoking and alcohol usage) [4,5].

In South Africa, interventions to address causal factors of social challenges are coordinated across several sectors and intend to improve housing, water and sanitation, access to safe food, help manage alcohol and substance abuse and encourage social cohesion; yet, these issues are exacerbated by an inadequately performing public service delivery system [6–9]. This coordination is necessary due to the inherent interconnections that exist

between these sectors [10]. It has been proposed that South Africa needs alignment of planning and implementation of actions across the levels of government and between sectors, ministries and departments, while consideration must also be given to the suitability of interventions for implementation at different societal levels [6,9,11]. Emphasis is placed on the recurring engagement of civil society to achieve the desired alignment and expand efforts to address complex social challenges [6,10,11].

The study draws a parallel between South Africa's need for sustainable solutions through collaboration to similar social challenges experienced in other Sub-Saharan Africa countries. In these countries, addressing the challenges of low agricultural production and food security have displayed approaches which have shown promise, with many interventions being developed by groups consisting of individuals, organisations and institutions all engaging to identify problems and find solutions. These "networks" of stakeholders of a challenge would often emphasise collaboration and the engagement of civil society. In the South African context, complex social challenges are most apparent in the lives of the large portion of the population who live in poverty [5,10,12]. In this study, we accepted that the engagement of civil society actors refers to those who are commonly marginalised stakeholders (see the definition in Section 3.1).

Research on these stakeholder networks describes these networks as a collection of individuals driving learning and change through a collaborative partnership to address a specific set of challenges—in this study referred to as an "innovation platform" (IP) [13–15]. These networks are also called "innovation networks", "innovation coalitions" and "multi-stakeholder innovation partnerships" [13]; however, and as seen in the review of the literature, the term "innovation platform" has been adopted by researchers to describe the phenomenon when used in development contexts where grassroots innovations are cooperatively developed and managed to empower a marginalised beneficiary group.

The "platform's participants" have diverse backgrounds and expertise with different, even competing and diverging, interests [15,16]. Despite their differences, a shared goal of addressing a complex social challenge incentivises collaboration [15].

To find solutions to social challenges, it is important to appropriately analyse the challenges and their context of existence—the same context around which IPs are organised. The innovation ecosystem perspective provides a lens for investigating the relationships between the participants of change and the evolutionary nature of the networks between them [17,18].

The research aimed to answer the question, how can engagement practices in innovation platforms (IPs) enhance their collaborative efforts to address complex social challenges in the South African context?

The study investigated the existing body of IP literature to inform its findings and refined these findings for the South African context by means of evaluative expert interviews and a case study. The study proposed a framework for the development and management of IPs. By means of a rigorous conceptual framework development process [19], key concepts of IPs were identified and named through a coding process and synthesized into a preliminary framework. The framework was refined using semi-structured interviews with subject matter experts to supplement the findings of the systematized review, assess the relevance of the core framework concepts and the credibility and confirmability of the framework. An instrumental case study further refined the theory and proved the framework's relevance for use in the South African context.

The study highlighted interesting findings on engagement practices and stakeholder networks, including on the sometimes divergent views on stakeholder participation seen in research and practice. The final contribution of the study is a framework to formulate recommendations and a course of action to address issues that may impact stakeholder engagement in IPs. We thus provide a taxonomy for researchers, policymakers and network champions to characterise key strategic features of evolving IPs. It provides, amongst other things, a basis for generating and guiding policy considerations.

The conceptual framework analysis approach is an iterative and complex approach. Section 2 presents the phased research approach followed. Subsequent sections provide the key value contributions of each phase of the research to the evolution of the conceptual framework: in Section 3, we present the results of the systematized literature review; in Section 4, we discuss the preliminary framework. In Section 5, we discuss the results of the interviews, present the case study and continue discussing how these insights shaped the framework. Finally, in Section 6, we conclude by presenting the enhanced framework and management tool and offer suggestions for future research.

2. Materials and Methods

The objective of the study was to develop a conceptual framework and a management tool for stakeholder engagement in IPs. The intention of the research to prioritise empowerment of the marginalised communities through the appropriate participation of the necessary stakeholders in the IP required an especially robust research approach.

Jabareen [19] proposed an eight-phase conceptual framework analysis (CFA) procedure for the development and evaluation of conceptual frameworks. This approach relies on an iterative and recursive approach whereby data acquisition and data analysis occur in tandem, the one informing the other. The CFA procedure provided the necessary structure for a robust research approach while allowing the researchers sufficient freedom in applying the phases in the manner most appropriate to the research; the phases were approached in a constantly comparative way to refine and organise the data and concepts until the conceptual framework was compiled. A three-part research approach was followed. Figure 1 is a high-level summary of how the CFA phases were utilised in each part.
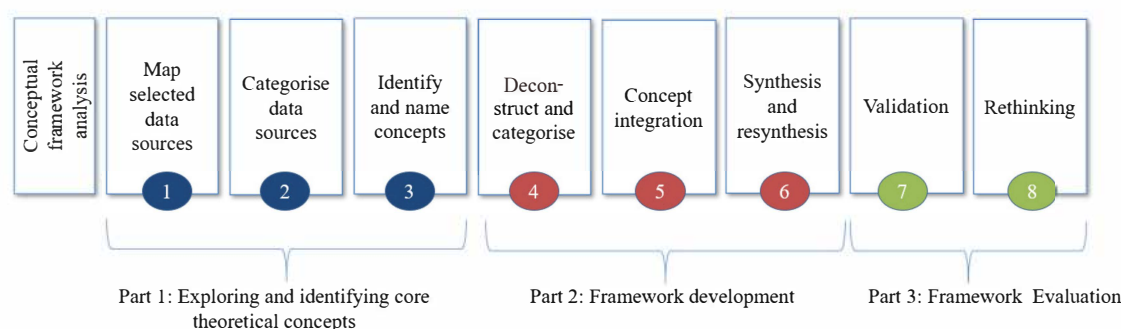

Figure 1. Eight phases of the conceptual framework analysis (CFA) process.

The research employed a progressive evaluation approach to evaluate and enhance the research output in stages rather than a post-hoc validation. The progressive approach used triangulation to reinforce validity and reliability.

2.1. Part 1: Exploring and Identifying the Core Theoretical Concepts

In Part 1, relevant data sources were mapped and selected using a systematized literature review (SLR) [19]. The review sought to identify the literature from several disciplines and geographical contexts. Appendix A contains the search terms used in the SLR. A search for peer-reviewed literature in the Scopus database was performed for the search terms appearing in document titles, abstracts or keywords. The search results were screened using a set of inclusion criteria (the studies relating to innovation platforms or aspects of them and including perspectives on the participation of non-traditional stakeholders (e.g., representatives of vulnerable groups) [20]) to identify the most appropriate studies for inclusion in the dataset [19]. Additional grey literature documents were identified using these search terms to promote a multidisciplinary dataset and limit publication bias. Figure 2 offers a visual representation of the process.
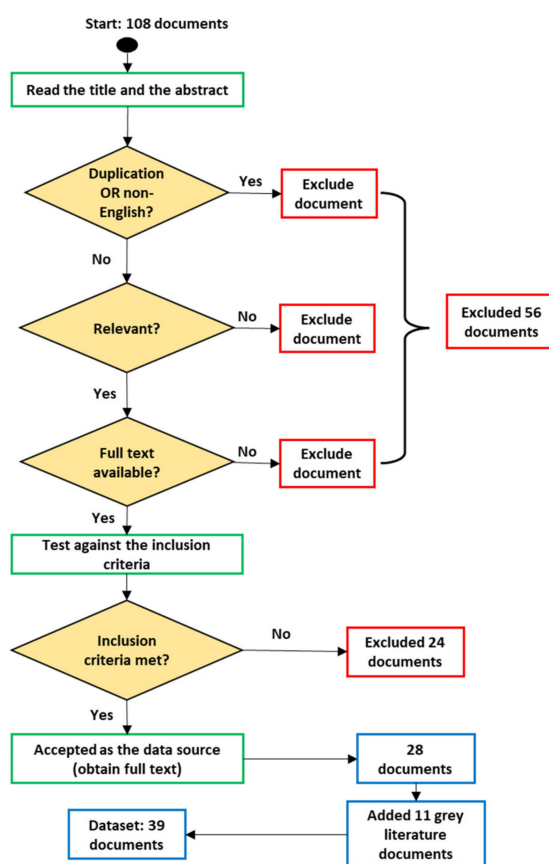
Start: 108 documents

Read the title and the abstract

Duplication OR non-English? — Yes → **Exclude document**

No

Relevant? — No → **Exclude document**

Yes

Full text available? — No → **Exclude document**

Excluded 56 documents

Yes

Test against the inclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria met? — No → **Excluded 24 documents**

Yes

Accepted as the data source (obtain full text) → **28 documents**

Added 11 grey literature documents

Dataset: 39 documents

Figure 2. Systematized screening and literature selection process.

A documentary analysis of the dataset publications followed. The process was systematized to ensure the rigorous and repeatable identification of the relevant information [21]. The process included mapping the data using Atlas.ti (a powerful computer software program designed for the analysis of qualitative data [22]) and a preselected set of codes relating to the type, discipline, year of publication and geographical focus of literature sources to gain a rich understanding of the existing body of knowledge.

2.2. Part 2: Framework Development: The Preliminary Framework

Part 2 comprised an in-depth analysis of the content whereby concepts were identified from the literature and named according to their characteristics. The analysis identified 16 fundamental concepts of engagement present in IPs. They are called "practices of engagement" (PoE) in our article.

After identifying the PoE themes, Part 2 continued to deconstruct and analyse the respective themes by collecting the engagement mechanisms appropriate to each, as described in the literature, to better understand them. They became the theoretical foundation upon which the framework would evolve.

2.3. Part 3: Framework Evaluation: Towards an Enhanced Framework

In Part 3, the reliability and validity of the research output was addressed with a phased evaluation approach. With each phase, the researchers reconsidered the concepts and their interrelationships to compile a robust framework.

A first-pass semi-structured interview and later more semi-structured interviews with subject matter experts were conducted. A description of the profile of each interview participant is provided in Appendix B. Creswell's [23] approach for semi-structured interviews focuses on data collection in the interview and was adapted for use in this research. In semi-structured interviews, purposively open-ended questions prompted the interviewees

to describe their perceptions of social phenomena within their stakeholder networks and how they make sense of them [24]. Researchers are able to learn what the interviewee deems important from their explanations of their understanding of these social phenomena [25]. This is a key benefit of semi-structured interviews, yet discussion guidelines allow for consistency in the interview style since multiple interviews were conducted [25,26].

Focus areas of the interviewees related to the outcomes of the SLR. The focus of the first-pass interview was on the broader PoE themes and their relevance to the South African context. A discussion guideline was developed, which used open-ended questions to allow the relevance of the PoE themes to emerge from the discussion. This first interview focused on one programme benefitting marginalised population groups in South Africa, coordinated by a stakeholder network in which the interviewee participated.

Later, another round of interviews was conducted, this time presenting the interviewees with the preliminary framework. Here, the framework items were exposed to scrutiny. The interviews sought to establish which individuals and organisations the interviewee views as stakeholders in their network and whether a need for a stakeholder engagement framework exists. Presenting the interviewee with the framework also acted as a probing mechanism for the interviewees to discuss points that they may not yet had thought of. The interview discussions were later analysed to evaluate the content and structure of the preliminary framework. The following key questions were incorporated in the discussion guideline:

1. Who are the target beneficiaries and who do you partner with?
2. Is there a need for guidelines or frameworks to assist in managing stakeholder relationships, and do they exist?
3. What are important considerations for managing stakeholder relationships in a stakeholder network?
4. Do you agree with the stakeholder engagement themes and the principles contained in the framework?
5. Are they appropriate to your context?

The phased evaluation approach went on to illustrate the use of the framework by applying the research output to an instrumental case study of an existing IP in South Africa. An instrumental case study was chosen to refine the theory and to understand its application in a particular situation [27]. Therefore, the case was not the main focus but played a supportive role in facilitating an improved understanding of the stakeholder engagement phenomenon in the context of the case [28]. Data gathering for the case study included a workshop with the IP's network champion, interviews with representatives of the stakeholders participating in the IP, and a feedback session with the network champion.

The next sections proceed to discuss the key outcomes of the framework evolution: from concept identification in the documentary analysis of the IP literature to the construction of the preliminary framework, followed by the results of the interviews and case study and, importantly, how they informed the framework's refinement, and finally to the final framework and the management tool.

3. Literature Review (Part 1): Exploring and Identifying the Core Theoretical Concepts

A discussion of the results of a conceptual review of IPs provides the context needed to understand IPs as used in this study and of their potential to address complex social challenges. The results of the systematized review are then presented, including the concepts identified in the literature which were later used in compiling the framework.

3.1. Conceptual Review of Innovation Platforms

We find IPs situated within the body of knowledge of multi-stakeholder approaches for innovation. A recent review identified 24 distinct examples of multi-stakeholder partnerships (the term "partnerships" should be regarded as synonymous to a "network" (as used in Section 1) and in this study refers to a collection of individuals and/or organisations and institutions working together); though this review focused on applications in the

context of health care, the typologies remain relevant to this study [29]. These typologies include traditional IPs, multi-stakeholder platforms, collaborative research networks, living laboratories and more [29]. The fundamental practices of the different partnerships may be similar, but their purposes and goals are quite different [15,29,30]. The building blocks of each are influenced by the context within which the partnership exists. The term "innovation platform" was adopted in this study and refers to a space where stakeholder groups with different interests can collaboratively define and redefine problems, learn together and develop and scale actionable solutions to these problems [13,31,32].

Stakeholders participating in IPs depend on the platform's purpose—that is, the challenges it works to address—and the societal level at which it is established [13,15] and may include community members, policymakers, government officials, researchers, field experts and practitioners. Participants are representatives of their home organisations, each having different goals [15,16]. Therefore, each participant's perspective is likely influenced by the priorities of their home organisation, which in turn influences problem identification and goal setting within the platform [33]. The IPs set goals which align in some way with the needs and interests of its participants and the organisations or communities which they represent. It is widely accepted that IPs have significant potential in development contexts [13].

Researchers have adopted several perspectives when investigating IPs. The innovation systems perspective remains one of the most common, especially the agricultural innovation systems perspective, likely because of the popularity of IPs in various smallholder agriculture settings in Africa [34–36]. Studies have also employed a value chains perspective to investigate the formation and functioning of IPs in health care [37–39]. Recently, the innovation ecosystem perspective has gained traction among researchers of IPs [17,40–42]. This is because it offers unique opportunities for investigating the dynamics of these innovation architectures, particularly with regard to the interconnected nature of stakeholders of innovation and the evolutionary nature of these stakeholder networks [17,18,43–45]. This is of relevance to the proposed research because of the evolution observed in IPs, which has practical implications regarding platform governance, facilitation, focus and participating actors [13,15,16,46]. Research must be sensitive to this evolutionary nature of IPs.

Before continuing, we must briefly consider the idea of marginalised stakeholders—those persons who are commonly overlooked. We acknowledge that its interpretation depends on the context, but in the developing world, marginalised stakeholders are often those groups at the "base of the pyramid" (BOP) [47]. The BOP represents the society's poorest socioeconomic group (based on Prahalad and Hart's [48] threshold of \$4 per day [47,49]) [47]; an estimated 40% of South Africa's population in 2015 [50]. That is equivalent to 22.12 million people. It is these people who face several complex social challenges on a daily basis because of the causal factors introduced in Section 1.

Returning to our discussion on IPs, their nature as defined in this study provides the opportunity for innovation to be codirected by stakeholders who are commonly overlooked in the traditional innovation architectures of developed markets by offering these stakeholders a seat at the table. These traditional innovation architectures often associate innovation with pioneering technologies, goods and services targeted at high-income consumers [51]. Traditional views further associate development with economic growth and social development as merely a by-product [51].

Recent years have seen the view that development should balance economic factors, and social factors are gaining traction [51,52]. Development should then consider the social and economic inclusion of marginalised low-income consumers. The result is an innovation philosophy—referred to here as innovation for inclusive development (I4ID)—which aims to include economically marginalised groups and individuals in the development of new goods and services to drive development towards technologies that incorporate the needs and interests of these groups [51].

However, innovation for inclusive development is a philosophy that goes beyond seeing the low-income populations of developing countries as an "accessible mass market" [51] for the sale of goods and services [48,52]. True inclusion of marginalised groups and individuals must incorporate their participation in approaches for innovative solutions to complex social challenges and should thus empower those who usually find themselves on the sidelines of development and decision-making processes [15,52]. Inclusion is often erroneously used to describe what is essentially mere representation of the marginalised, but I4ID must consider these stakeholders as participants in the innovation process, sufficiently elevating their social status. Ultimately, innovation for inclusive development seeks to instil a sense of dignity and self-worth in these participants. To this end, appropriate participation techniques must be used, which will allow these participants the necessary level of participation and influence [53,54].

The relevance of the I4ID philosophy to this study is that it can underpin the formation of various innovation architectures, including IPs [17,31,32]. This philosophy allows for the challenges to be properly defined, considering the context of emergence of the challenges. This is encouraged by including the economically marginalised groups and individuals as participants in the IP because low-income groups and individuals experience challenges that are very difficult to comprehend if one lives outside of their context [13,16]. Without considering the context of emergence of the challenge, any solutions proposed by the IP risk dealing with the superficial symptoms of the challenge alone and not the root cause [55]. As a result, the solution may not be effective. After all, novel ideas, improvements and solutions to challenges can only be regarded as innovation if they have been implemented and prove to be beneficial [46].

3.2. Concepts from the Systematized Literature Review: Towards a Preliminary Framework

The review set the trajectory of the research as follows [56]: The significant portion of publications positioned in the innovation systems (IS) paradigm (with agricultural innovation systems (AIS) being the most prominent) encouraged the adoption of the innovation ecosystem perspective as a novel application in IP research. The innovation ecosystem perspective builds on traditional IS perspectives [57] and is useful for investigating stakeholder relations in IPs, emphasising the interconnected nature of stakeholders of innovation processes [17,18]. It underscores the evolutionary nature of stakeholder networks [17,18]. Since only two publications considered IPs in the context of health care, this research contributes to the existing IP body of knowledge by broadening its multidisciplinary scope. Finally, the publications do not focus on the stakeholder engagement practices present in IPs, alluding to a need for a clearer understanding of the concepts related to stakeholder engagement within this context.

We thus conclude from the review of the primary publications that little to no attention is given to stakeholder engagement in IPs in the existing IP literature. Yet it may be accepted that dysfunctional engagement between platform's stakeholders would result in an ineffective IP at best. However, the review did find that the literature contained the key clues, ideas and procedures that may successfully direct stakeholder engagement in IPs. They have been labelled by the authors as "practices of engagement" (PoE) and formed the central focus of the review and our efforts to answer the research question.

The 16 PoE themes identified in the systematized literature review are summarised in Table 1. They were expanded into the "inventory of concepts" that makes up the preliminary framework described in Section 4. Using the unique contexts and perspectives of the primary authors, each PoE is shortly introduced below to understand its potential and impact on stakeholder engagement and innovation cocreation.

Table 1. Descriptions and citations of the practices of engagement (PoE) themes.

PoE Theme	Description	References
Action	The culmination of various planning activities in functional activities of practical value. Action gives the IP something to show for its efforts.	[13,14,58–67]
Alignment	Developing needs-driven platform's objectives which are rooted in the interests and needs of the platform's participants, coordination of the activities, expectations, interests and knowledge of the platform's participants towards realising the platform's objectives.	[13,14,16,34–36,58–66,68–78]
Championing	The role taken up by platform's stakeholders to perform the critical platform's activities with outstanding vigour. Champions are motivated by their eagerness to see the platform operate successfully and to see the platform's objectives realised.	[34–36,58,59,61,63,66,70,71,79,80]
Communication	The articulation of information. Communication is critical to establish and maintain stakeholder relationships. Communication is the power source to any partnership [72]. Includes both formal and informal channels of communication. A broad range of communication practices using different types of media is included.	[13,16,58–68,70–74,76,79]
Conflict management	The mitigation of potential misunderstandings and issues which may lead to conflicts between stakeholders. Conflicts are addressed immediately. The objectives of conflict management include maintaining collaboration and alignment amongst stakeholders.	[13,16,58,60–62,65,68]
Facilitation	The process of maintaining a healthy platform through mediation. Facilitation oversees the implementation of the other PoE concepts. Facilitation is often an assigned role in the platform.	[13,16,34,36,59,61,62,66–70,72,74–76,79,81,82]
Gender dynamics	Deals with ensuring that inclusivity among gender roles is achieved. The interests of women are represented, and women have a voice in the platform. Requires an understanding of cultural norms.	[82]
Managing power dynamics	The equity among platform's stakeholders is maintained by managing power dynamics. This serves to counter the effects of self-interest and competitiveness among stakeholders. Weaker platform's participants are empowered.	[13,16,35,58,61–66,72,75,81,83]
Monitoring evaluation and feedback	The processes and techniques coupled to the continuous tracking of platform's activities, the appraisal of these activities and reporting the outcomes. Allows for problems to be identified and improvements to be implemented. The participants who are responsible for various platform's activities are held accountable.	[16,34–36,58–68,70,72–76,84]
Participation	The engagement of stakeholders with various platform's activities. Stakeholders contribute their knowledge and skillsets towards realising the platform's objectives through participation. Participation is required for real inclusion to be realised [52].	[13,34,59–66,68,70,75,83]
Resources and capacity	Considers the physical, financial and human resources which are critical to a platform's functioning. Additionally, considers the existing capacities of the platform's stakeholders and how these capacities are to be leveraged and further developed towards increasing the platform's own capacity.	[13–16,34,35,58–68,70–73,80,85,86]

Table 1. *Cont.*

PoE Theme	Description	References
Shared learning	Refers to the effects of the continuous flow of information within and across platform's boundaries. Includes the sharing of knowledge between platform's stakeholders. The partnership approach of the platform encourages the sharing of new ideas and the development of improved solutions. The consequence of shared learning is the increase in the capacity of stakeholders.	[13,35,58–60,63–66,70,71,80,81,86,87]
Strategic representation	Linking diverse stakeholders to form the platform. Careful consideration is given to which stakeholder groups should be represented in the platform. Strategic representation empowers I4ID. Desirable stakeholders should be strategically identified using stakeholder analysis techniques.	[34,35,58–66,68–70,72–75,80,83,86]
Transparency	The free flow of information across platform's borders. Transparency includes honest and accurate reporting on the implementation of platform's activities and the consequences thereof. Transparency also relates to the interactions of platform's stakeholders. Nothing that is of relevance to the platform and its stakeholders is withheld.	[35,36,60–64,66,70,72,73]
Trust building	Efforts made to develop and maintain relationships of trust among platform's stakeholders, as well as to develop and maintain a feeling of trust in the platform and its intentions. Trust influences a person's willingness to be honest and cooperate. In a partnership approach, trust is both the glue that holds the partnership together and the lubricant that allows it to operate effectively [60,67,76,77].	[13,35,36,58,60–64,66–69,71,73,76–78,88]
Visioning and planning	The development of a "roadmap" [63,64] of what the platform is looking to achieve and how. Visioning is followed by the planning of executable activities towards realising the vision. If visioning and planning are not followed by action, the platform has little to show for its efforts.	[13,61–64,66,83]

4. Preliminary Framework (Part 2): An Inventory of Implementation Principles

Effective stakeholder engagement accepts that all stakeholders are assigned an appropriate level of participation and that interactions between stakeholders are constructive so the IP can function well and meet its goals of empowerment [52,89,90]. In addition to the 16 PoE themes which emerged in the documentary analysis of the literature, several core ideas and principles of engagement were mapped in the literature as they relate to the PoE themes. These mapped items were to become the content of the framework.

The framework items are called implementation principles. The principle format lends the framework the desired flexibility [19] as principles can be used to inform one's conceptualisation of stakeholder engagement in IPs by introducing those principles that should be in place. A framework of principles can be useful as an assessment tool to assess the current state of stakeholder engagement in an existing IP by investigating the extent to which the principles are realised. Such a framework may also be a useful guide for establishing a new stakeholder network and developing an IP. Thus, a framework of actionable principles is not only useful for improved understanding, but may be useful for planning, monitoring and evaluation.

When translating the items mapped in the literature implementation principles, careful consideration was given to the purpose of each item in the context of the IP. This was to mitigate the risk of an item's significance being lost in translation. To this end, special attention was given to the language used when developing each principle item for the framework.

The first iteration of the stakeholder engagement framework (see Appendix C) did not display the interrelationships shared by the various PoE themes. These interrelationships emerged from the evaluation of the framework, as described in the subsequent sections. Still, the implementation principles of the preliminary framework, grouped according to the engagement theme which they support, incorporate many nuanced expressions of other engagement themes.

5. Results and Discussion (Part 3): Evaluation and Evolution of the Framework

5.1. Insights from the Interviews

One benefit of the first iteration of the framework lay in its clear and simple display of the content, allowing the interview participants to easily understand the content and provide insights.

5.1.1. Stakeholders Present in South Africa's Initiatives to Empower the Marginalised

All the interview participants had experience working in development initiatives aimed at empowering socially and economically marginalised groups in South Africa. Though the interviewees by no means represented the full spectrum of efforts to address complex social challenges in South Africa, exploring the stakeholders included in their networks lent insight into the playing field of partnerships for inclusive development.

Within the context of health research in some of the country's most marginalised communities, innovative participatory research methods have proven beneficial to both the researchers and the community members, and we see the collaboration of universities and research organisations, corporate partners and government (local, provincial and national) come to the foreground. Elsewhere, a network for incentivised volunteering in a marginalised community involved corporate partners, the public, local small business owners, local farmers and established NPOs from the community. In another IP working to provide holistic support to a community's homeless population, participants include several NPOs offering different and complementary services, the public, local businesses owners and the local government.

Diverse stakeholders may be present in these networks. We see stakeholders operating at different societal levels, from the community level all the way to the national level, together forming the platform for innovation and change around specific challenges.

The beneficiaries themselves are often important stakeholders. The marginalised depend on the context under observation, and in South Africa, the marginalised are often members of township and informal settlement communities. Within these communities, projects have been targeted at disenfranchised youth, informal traders and the like.

5.1.2. The Evolutionary Nature of Development Initiatives

Insights gained around the lifecycles of development initiatives reveal that their initial implementation strategies likely evolve over time. This is because there is always something to learn from the initial implementation outcomes and adjustments should be made as necessary, informed by an improved understanding of the challenge and the developing capabilities of the platform's participants. IPs would do well to evaluate their implementation strategies often and evolve towards the best approach to a solution. However, this does not negate the need to begin with a clear understanding of the challenge before developing a solution. Finally, the IP is itself evolutionary as participants are able to join and leave the network, and as a result, the combined capacity and resources of the IP change with time.

5.1.3. Relative Importance of Engagement Practices

It is apparent that engagement of stakeholders, particularly the beneficiaries of an intervention, may be perceived as the most important aspect of the overall success of implementing initiatives. However, the interviewees admit that this is often a neglected aspect, likely because of the difficulty to be executed properly [89]. Interestingly, time

constraints for programme implementation and funder demands (where applicable) were cited as significant hurdles to proper engagement, especially at the community level.

The idea that functional relationships must exist between stakeholders within a network for it to operate effectively was unanimous; not only with stakeholders at the community level and the beneficiaries of the interventions, but also with other partners. One interviewee admitted that they themselves were not doing enough to maintain healthy relationships with network participants, pointing to several other managerial considerations being prioritised over stakeholder relationships.

5.1.4. Stakeholder Identification Practice

Formalised processes for stakeholder identification and stakeholder analysis techniques are well-supported in the IP literature (refer again to "strategic representation" in Table 1 for references). However, these processes and techniques seem to be disregarded in practice when well-established stakeholder networks rely on the network when looking to expand or establish entirely new networks; participants rely on one another's links outside of the current network to gain exposure. Some interviewees believe the use of formalised stakeholder identification processes must depend on the specific project and setting; for example, at the community level, when a network's initiatives are known to have merit, stakeholder identification often resorts to the word-of-mouth and engaging interesting parties in community forums and community groups.

However, for networks not yet known and only just beginning to develop an interest base, a considerable amount of effort goes into identifying stakeholders who can be early adopters of a vision towards establishing a network. Interviewees admit that even here, standardised processes are often not leveraged to aid the process, casting a contrast between research and practice.

5.1.5. The Content of the Framework

Here follows a discussion which focuses on the content of the framework, how this was confirmed and where gaps were identified during the analysis of the interview data. How this insight was incorporated in the framework evolution is discussed later.

All the areas addressed in the framework, that is, every PoE theme, proved relevant during the interview discussions. Strategic representation enjoyed the most attention from interviewees, hinting again at its relative importance as an engagement practice. This importance is captured in the framework as strategic representation has the second-highest number of implementation principles listed in the framework.

Participation enjoyed a significant amount of attention during the interviews. However, the discussions show that this is an area where research and practice are not well-aligned as the discussions contained insights not apparent from the IP literature and thus not present in the preliminary framework. Notable gaps were the framework's omission of the benefits of incentives for participation and the need for people-centric participatory approaches which empower participants by, for example, giving stakeholders a sense of ownership over initiatives. Considering how stakeholders participate, the insights emphasise that it is the participants who govern the dissemination of information within a network and to external parties. Practitioners are well-rehearsed in the challenges of participation and their consequences and may have ways to address them, but there remains a void in the understanding of what participation is and how to apply it in different contexts—something this study may assist to improve.

Expanding on the discussion about the evolution of the stakeholder network, the departure of stakeholders from a network and even the disbanding of the network are important considerations. These are the key events in the lifecycle of an IP that, if not pre-empted and planned for, may leave a vacuum, undermining the objectives of the IP. This would be detrimental to the beneficiaries of its interventions, especially in the case of marginalised communities.

Communication as a PoE, almost surprisingly, did not enjoy much attention compared to other PoE themes. Rather than assuming this undermines the importance of communication as an engagement practice, the study posits that the role of communication in engagement practices is so obvious and so engrained in engagement principles that this leads to its not being mentioned more explicitly. After all, the literature describes communication as "the electricity that powers the platform" [72].

5.2. Practical Application: The Case Study

A suitable case for further evaluating the research output should allow sufficient access to the resources needed to develop a sufficient understanding of the case. The research objectives required the investigation of a case where the addressing of social challenges and their causal factors was a clear goal of the IP. The case of an active IP was particularly appealing, where its current innovation pathways and implementation strategies could be seen in practice.

A case meeting the requirements was found in an IP formed to alleviate vagrancy in the University town of Stellenbosch, in South Africa's Western Cape. The researchers could access several platform's participants for interviews and observe the platform's interventions. The IP's goals included coordinating efforts to support and uplift vagrants and to raise public awareness around the concept of "responsible giving" to break the income chains which give vagrants access to the harmful habits that help to keep them in a cycle of poverty and homelessness.

For several years, different NPOs' efforts to support and empower vagrants were detached and often duplicated as there was no collaboration around this challenge. Some of these organisations have been around for decades and prefer continuing doing things their own way. Furthermore, these NPOs often compete for the same funding, which has cultivated an air of competitiveness, restricting the positive impact envisioned by the NPOs through their individual efforts. Despite this, many attempts have been made to bring various NPOs and local government around the table, fuelled by the many social challenges faced in Stellenbosch, but most of these engagements failed to deliver any value.

The emergence of a network champion who recognised the potential of collaboration finally resulted in the establishment of a network focused specifically on addressing the issue of vagrancy. The network champion understood that individual NPOs offered distinct but complimentary services targeting vagrants, and through collaboration would offer holistic support to the beneficiaries and minimize duplicated effort. Who the stakeholders were was already clear; there were no formalised stakeholder identification practices used as no perceived need for them existed (we later discuss how this may have led to a weakness in the IPs functioning).

The network champion's approach to foster collaboration between the NGOs was different from the previous attempts to do the same because they focused on the strengths of each NGO's existing processes and interventions for working with vagrants and even went as far as suggesting the initial solution themselves. Though this may be interpreted as a hindrance to innovation, given the history of resistance by the stakeholders against collaboration, that the initial solution was proposed by an interested party outside of the existing context of competitiveness made each organisation more eager to be involved. However, once the collaboration had been kickstarted, innovation could occur as the network progressed to implementing the solution, leveraging their well-established connections with business and the community, and mould the implementation strategies over time to better play to each organisation's strengths.

Innovation still occurs in a centralised fashion, with the network champion driving the evolution of the platform's implementation strategies and facilitating interactions between stakeholders. Of course, all of this would mean nothing without the NGOs who are responsible for implementing the interventions.

Focusing on the solution to the problem of irresponsible giving (irresponsible giving refers here to the giving of cash, food and clothing to those who beg for these items; the

influx of cash and non-cash items on the streets increases the recipients' access to alcohol and drugs, in some cases fuelling habits that are detrimental to their well-being [91,92]), the IP's primary intervention is a coupon system which offers the public an alternative to giving cash, food and clothing to those begging in Stellenbosch. Giving a coupon fosters mutual respect and dignity during interactions between the public and the beneficiaries. Coupon recipients have access to a holistic portfolio of support services from the participating organisations.

Discussions with several platform's participants identified the stakeholders external to the IP. The study posits that these stakeholders make up an "ecosystem"; placing the IP at the centre of the ecosystem, stakeholders in the immediate vicinity of the IP are organisations and institutions (not including the NGOs already participating in the IP) that work with vagrants, and they include social service actors, academia, churches and law enforcement. On the periphery of the ecosystem are the stakeholders who interact with the beneficiaries and are the targets of begging. They include the public, tourists and local shops and restaurants.

5.2.1. Results from the Case Study

The framework was used in the case study to develop recommendations for improved engagement between the network stakeholders. Firstly, potential issues around stakeholder engagement were identified following interviews with several stakeholders. Secondly, the conceptual framework was applied in a systematized fashion to formulate recommendations for addressing these issues. This served to verify the suitability and relevance of the framework and guide the development of a management tool. Finally, the recommendations were presented to the IP's network champion for scrutiny and feedback. The case observations are summarised below.

Issue 1: Formal Versus Informal Network Processes

One interview participant expressed their need for more formalised network processes while other network stakeholders did not have this need. The network champion had previously acknowledged that a more formalised network may have its benefits. It is recommended that an approach for more formalised engagements be considered while not overlooking the role of informal interactions in stakeholder networks.

Issue 2: Lack of Skills Necessary to Market the IP's Interventions

Several interview participants mentioned a lack of public awareness of the IP's interventions. Some attributed the limited awareness to insufficient marketing skills necessary to achieve greater dissemination of information and adoption of the interventions. It is recommended that an additional participant be added to the IP; an appropriate individual/organisation with the skills and resources necessary to champion the marketing of the intervention.

Issue 3: Avoiding the Duplication of Efforts

Valuable resources are wasted when different stakeholders offer the same service to the same beneficiary. It also creates an opportunity for vagrants to take advantage of the system and access the same services at multiple points. One interviewee acknowledged that the stakeholders are very strict about not having the services duplicated. However, as each organisation evolves, their service offerings evolve, and the risk of duplication increases. It is recommended that opportunities are created for engagement and coordination between the stakeholders to avoid the duplication of efforts.

Issue 4: Stakeholders' Expectations Are Mismatched

The case interviews revealed that misalignment of expectations among the stakeholders exists, specifically where certain stakeholders underestimate what other stakeholders

are working to achieve. It seems that this has not yet had any visible negative effects on the collaborative mood; however, it remains a risk to be addressed.

5.2.2. Recommendations for Improved Engagement Developed from the Framework

To develop recommendations for improved stakeholder engagement within this IP, the authors drew from elements of the conceptual framework to better understand the root cause of the issues identified and how they might be addressed. The framework was the source of insights and ideas as the case study evaluated its suitability as a stakeholder management tool. Here, we discuss our findings for each issue (statements and points taken from the framework are indicated with italics).

Recommendation for Issue 1: Formalising the Network without Disregarding the Value of Informal Processes

Formalised engagements offer an opportunity for improved alignment and shared learning between stakeholders because a culture of exchanging knowledge and experience can be cultivated. Formalised interactions can be effective if they are properly facilitated. Ideally, a facilitator must not be a stakeholder of the challenge landscape, but rather a neutral and respectful party who is not perceived as a threat by the other stakeholders so that they may be an appropriate mediator of the interactions. A good facilitator might focus on managing aspects of communication to ensure constructive discussions. Conflict management is an important consideration, while formalised engagements enable the environment for addressing misunderstandings and resolving concerns. Some stakeholders may be more prone to competition and less so to collaboration, and formalised engagements must focus on managing the power dynamics of a stakeholder group to prevent power plays and promote a non-threatening environment. They culminate in the development of trust.

Recommendation for Issue 2: Identify and Integrate a "Marketing Champion"

The network might focus on the area of championing; identifying stakeholders who can and will take initiative and leverage their own capacity and resources alongside those of the other network stakeholders. The addition of stakeholders to a network should be a strategic consideration (strategic representation). Several formalised stakeholder identification procedures are available; however, the network's current informal nature may require a similarly informal approach to stakeholder identification. It is common to look to existing relationships with stakeholders from different networks for potential participants.

It remains important to focus on the implementation of interventions, where to focus on the issue to gain the most traction as early as possible. One interview participant alluded to the importance of informing tourists who visit Stellenbosch daily and, being uninformed although well-intentioned, enforce the cycle of irresponsible giving. The tourism industry is likely the most viable audience for the campaign. Visioning and planning are a strategy to better understand the need at hand. They are appropriate to investigate the resources and skills required and thus help to identify a potential participant with the necessary capabilities.

Stakeholders should be engaged following the appropriate procedures, especially in the absence of a pre-existing relationship, highlighting the importance of communication. It is necessary to establish, build and maintain trust relationships with stakeholders who are to become participants in the network. Credibility and a clear vision play an important role in earning a stakeholder's trust.

Recommendation for issue 3: Improved coordination of activities: This issue identifies a need for improved resource mobilisation and capacity development; coordinating activities (rather than duplicating efforts) strengthens the collective resource position of the stakeholder network. Resources are better dispensed and utilised when they can service coordinated activities. Through coordinating different activities, stakeholders have greater capacity to focus on other areas for intervention. Visioning and planning, as well as

planning activities enable improved coordination; as stakeholders share their approach to addressing the challenge landscape, other stakeholders would do well to listen and identify potential opportunities for coordination. A space for stakeholders to offer feedback on their performance may assist in identifying areas for improvement. Feedback of coordinated activities allows for improvement of these activities.

Recommendation for issue 4: Greater focus on alignment: The main concern revolves around a lack of alignment of stakeholders. Benefits of alignment are that all stakeholders understand what is expected of them and what should be expected from the other stakeholders, clarifying the role that each stakeholder has in the IP and the value that they contribute. Facilitation is an important tool that may encourage stakeholders to engage appropriately. The necessary conversations around stakeholders' expectations may be probed by a facilitator, where previously these conversations may have been overlooked. The risk of misunderstandings and communication gaps increases when stakeholders' expectations are misaligned, highlighting a need to focus on communication. Communication channels must be "opened" and directed to allow each stakeholder's vision and what they expect from other stakeholders to be known. Each stakeholder should be clear on what can be expected of them. A focus on conflict management, transparency and trust building as engagement activities is recommended.

5.2.3. Reflections from the Case Study

Without the intervention of the network champion, the IP may not have been formed. The case interviews made it clear that the ecosystem became more functional once the IP was established, and the role of the network champion is well-recognised by the participating stakeholders. This is an example of where an overlap in the visions of different stakeholders is not necessarily sufficient to move them to collaborative action, which in our case was hindered by a history of resistance to change and a competitive atmosphere between the NGOs; a champion of the vision—someone who is able to see beyond these challenges and keep the goal front-of-mind—is often a necessary component for kickstarting an IP.

It became clear from the case that there is a need for stakeholders to acknowledge that they are part of an ecosystem, they are not operating alone but are inherently linked with the other stakeholders of the challenge. If stakeholders fail to acknowledge this, their independent interventions may be detrimental to the efforts of other stakeholders and, ultimately, to the beneficiaries. It is thus worth knowing who the stakeholders are so that an ecosystem can be understood and potentially managed.

Finally, the IP's collective vision must work towards goals that are attractive to each of the participating stakeholders; it should contribute to their individual visions and goals. Thus, though the finer details of each stakeholder's vision may differ, the IP's interventions must sufficiently capture aspects of all the visions as it works towards a common goal.

Reflecting on the innovation platform: The stakeholder network at the centre of the ecosystem reflects an innovation platform (IP) in that diverse stakeholders participate in a collaborative network around a specific challenge. The network is the "platform" for value-creating interactions between NPOs and local government, together seeking opportunities to address challenges and achieve a shared objective.

An important characteristic of IPs is that they drive learning and change [13–15]. The network intervention and the distribution of coupons is complemented by posters advertising the intervention and newspaper articles describing how it works, in this way informing the public of the risks of irresponsible aid. The network encourages responsible giving to empower vagrants in Stellenbosch and potentially have a lasting socioeconomic impact on their lives. It remains important that IP's goals are aligned with the needs of all stakeholders of the challenge landscape [15]. The network aligns the visions of its stakeholders to address the beneficiaries' needs through the services offered by the participating NPOs and assists the public in interacting with the beneficiaries through the coupon system.

The I4ID philosophy calls for innovation and intervention that considers the interests and addresses the needs of often overlooked, or marginalised, stakeholders [15,52]. Indeed, this is true of this IP. Now, the I4ID philosophy encourages the inclusion of marginalised stakeholders as participants in the innovation development process [15,52], affording them an appropriate level of influence in the IP's functioning [53,54]. The benefits may include a more comprehensive understanding of the challenge landscape, its context of emergence and the development of appropriate solutions while affording the beneficiaries empowerment through a sense of ownership of interventions [13,16,54,55,93]. The case reveals a different scenario in those members of the vagrant population who, being the main beneficiaries of IP's interventions, are in fact not participants in the functioning of the network. Though this stands in stark contrast to the literature (see also [5,10]), this study posited that there exist exceptions to the rule of beneficiaries as participants. In this case, it is the poor psychological condition of the beneficiaries, brought on by substance abuse and social rejection, which makes them unfit to take on an active role in innovation creation and the functioning of the network. There needs to be an appreciation for the state in which the beneficiaries find themselves given the social challenges they face.

Even so, case interviews further revealed that for some IP's participants, the participation of the beneficiaries in planning and decision-making activities has been a topic of much deliberation. However, none have adopted this. The stakeholders believe that until the beneficiary has been successfully reintegrated into a community and no longer relies on the systems of support for vagrants, they may not present an objective contribution to discussions, one where they shed light on the issues contributing to vagrancy and the interventions needed to address them.

It would thus appear that participation is not a "silver bullet" since it may be appropriate in some contexts but not in others. This echoes the opinions of several researchers in the field of stakeholder participation [94–96]. However, an even better sense of the complexities of the challenge of vagrancy and irresponsible giving may be gained by including the other stakeholders in the ecosystem in discussions to gain exposure to a diverse range of perspectives, experiences and conceptualisations of the issue. It may be appropriate to include representatives of the stakeholders at the periphery of the ecosystem (the public, tourists and local businesses) in discussions around the issue.

Reflecting on the ecosystem: Ecosystem boundaries are important when looking to understand the complexities of an ecosystem. In this case, it is logical to delimit the ecosystem to the stakeholders operating in Stellenbosch and the surrounding areas. In the functioning of this ecosystem, the peripheral stakeholders engage with vagrants, and this greatly impacts the immediate stakeholders. These engagements are perceived to be either constructive, as is the case with responsible giving, or destructive, as is the case with irresponsible giving, and thus either support or undermine the efforts of the immediate stakeholders.

Vagrancy is not an issue unique to Stellenbosch, and this ecosystem is not independent, but rather a "system within a system". Thus, an intervention that influences this ecosystem will surely influence the larger ecosystem, too. Consider, for example, that houses are given to all homeless persons in Stellenbosch. The case study participants posit that an increase in homelessness would then be seen as homeless people in the larger ecosystem would perceive Stellenbosch as a hub to receive housing, and an influx of "new" vagrants would likely result.

Reflecting on the significance of stakeholders' visions in an IP: The case study revealed that the issue of individual stakeholders' visions and finding commonality amongst them is complex. The case interviews revealed that stakeholder visions are unlikely to be a perfect match, but they may be complementary. It is in recognising when and how independent visions may contribute to a collective vision that collaboration may become a reality and stakeholder networks or structures, like an IP, may be established.

Interviewees recalled the culture of competitiveness between NPOs operating in Stellenbosch and how a meeting of the stakeholders of vagrancy in Stellenbosch served as

the turning point and the birth of a more collaborative mood between them. Though the visions and goals shared by each stakeholder were noticeably different, they managed to identify something common to each; a shared vision for a "safer Stellenbosch" provided the catalyst for these different stakeholders to acknowledge their role in a system larger than themselves and welcome opportunities for cooperation rather than competition. This may be a display of the benefits of leveraging aspects of commonality of ecosystem stakeholders rather than focusing on discords.

It was apparent that stakeholders have short-, medium- and long-term visions. For the stakeholders participating in the IP, it seems that their short-term visions all incorporate providing the stakeholders at the periphery of the ecosystem with a means to interact with individuals begging in the streets (the coupons). Another collective vision is fostering a culture of responsible giving in Stellenbosch, which may be a medium-term vision for the stakeholders. These common visions thus contribute to the IP's vision as it aligns with the needs of its participants and the beneficiaries of its interventions.

What is interesting is that the long-term visions of the IP's participants were less aligned. From this analysis, we might assume that the collaborative mood between stakeholders is more dependent on the alignment of their short- and medium-term visions and less dependent on the alignment of long-term visions. As visions change and the IP progresses towards the "long-term" vision, it is likely that the stakeholders represented in the IP will change as well.

5.3. Framework Evolution: Addressing the Gaps

The addition of new framework items improved the objectivity of the research as different perspectives shed new light on the topic of study. Improvements made to the structure and vocabulary of several individual framework items further mitigated the presence of biases contained in the framework items.

Item additions: Table 2 contains the item additions made to the framework according to the relevant framework category. Some terms used for the PoE categories were adjusted: "action" became "implementation" and "gender dynamics" was expanded to "gender and racial dynamics". A new category, "rolldown of participation", was added.

Improving the framework logic and item vocabulary: The interview discussions and an improved understanding of the research topic highlighted weaknesses in the framework's display of the content. Upon scrutinising the framework content, some items were found to be repetitive while other items were verbose. There were also instances where framework items were incorrectly categorised.

Furthermore, a new dimension in the complexity of stakeholder engagement emerged. That the PoE themes should not be regarded as standalone became apparent; they are interconnected, and any single instance of engagement of any form has several engagement themes subtly at work in the background. A simple example is the important role of communication to manage and prevent conflicts in a network (conflict management). Another example of these interrelationships is shown in Figure 3.

Table 2. Items added to the framework according to framework categories.

Category	Item
Implementation	Intended beneficiaries and/or users are sufficiently aware of intervention activities Stakeholders clearly understand the purpose and benefits of intervention activities Stakeholders clearly understand how intervention activities work
Alignment	Stakeholder visions and directions coexist cooperatively
Championing	Champions provide an entry point to local communities
Conflict management	Stakeholders make their expectations known Stakeholders can communicate their concerns, e.g., the presence of a facilitator Acknowledge that conflict will happen and must be managed
Facilitation	A facilitator is accessible to stakeholders A facilitator is culturally relevant to the context of the challenge landscape
Gender and racial dynamics	Awareness of dynamics existing between stakeholders of different races Stakeholders' cultural norms are understood and respected
Managing power dynamics	Stakeholders value the expertise of other stakeholders Shared information is not obscured to the benefit of specific stakeholders Conflicts of interest are identified and managed Pre-empt and mitigate effects of factors which increase participant vulnerabilities Mechanisms of resistance are recognised and managed
Participation	Approaches to encourage involvement in interventions are in place, e.g., incentives for participation Stakeholders (including the beneficiaries) take ownership of the initiatives Participatory approach is people-centric to empower participants Improved understanding of lifestyle challenges experienced by the commonly marginalised communities Stakeholders govern the dissemination of information to external parties
Resources and capacity	Help stakeholders identify what challenges are present in their context Existing knowledge and resources are acknowledged and used
Strategic representation	Potential champions are identified and are the first to be engaged Existing stakeholder networks are leveraged in stakeholder identification
Transparency	Stakeholders are fully informed with accurate information
Trust building	Visible signs of interest in the activities of stakeholders even outside of the context of the IP Engage stakeholders in a sincere and respectful manner Credibility is necessary when engaging participants Vision and direction are important when engaging stakeholders
Visioning and planning	Challenges present in the contexts for interventions are understood Long-term goals are established and recognisable Vision coexists with and supports stakeholders' visions
Rolldown of participation	Keep stakeholders informed about progress and achievements of initiatives Acknowledge stakeholders for their contributions once their participation has concluded

This newfound insight guided the vetting of inventory items for their value contribution to refine the content of the framework.

Improvements to the framework's structure through recategorising the necessary items were carried out concurrently with the evaluation of the items. To address instances of repetition, some items had to be removed or combined with others. Finally, grammatical enhancements included limiting each item to 10 words, the use of informal language to increase the framework's audience base and ensuring consistent use of terminology throughout the framework.
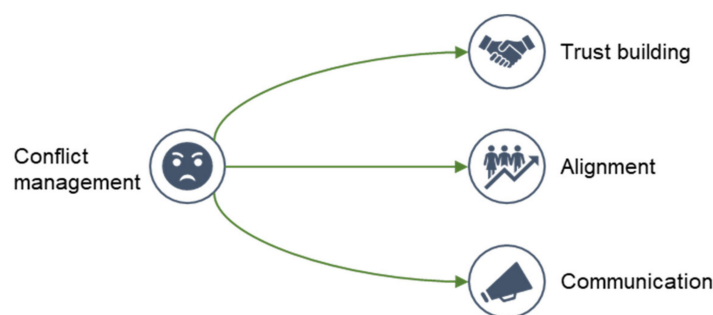
Figure 3. Conflict management supporting trust building, alignment and communication.

New dimensions added to the framework: The addition of a classification of the 17 PoE themes in the framework provides additional handles to understand the complex interconnected nature of the PoE themes. As a high-level description of the framework content, it serves as a starting point as users seek to understand the details in the framework content. From the recommendations made in the case study, we noticed three categories emerge as specific PoE themes were contextualised. Each recommendation focused on a desired outcome, a goal which, if achieved, should address a specific issue or challenge experienced by the platform. From the case study, we saw such themes as shared learning, alignment, implementation of interventions, participation and resource mobilisation and capacity development as the "desired outcomes".

The case study showed that to achieve the desired outcomes, the platform must use specific engagement activities for the engagement of stakeholders, including at the interpersonal level. The recommendations highlight the themes of communication, conflict management, managing power dynamics, transparency and trust building as important "engagement activities".

Another very important category of PoE themes can be seen from the recommendations. We refer to them as enablers. Enablers bridge the gap between the engagement activities and the desired outcomes. This category contains the PoE themes that, if leveraged correctly, may achieve the IP-specific goals. The recommendations made use of such themes as facilitation, strategic representation, monitoring, evaluation and feedback and visioning and planning as enablers for overcoming the IP's challenges.

The PoE themes are interconnected, and each theme may influence the presence of several other engagement themes in an IP. Visual cues are effective in representing this interconnected nature between PoE themes of different categories. Figure 4 emphasises the visual cues as used in the framework management tool (see Section 6.1). The use of two horizontal arrows pointing in opposite directions represents the interplay between the engagement activities and the enablers. These two categories are placed in a rectangle. Together, they contribute to the desired outcomes, as represented by the horizontal chevron markings pointing to the right.

These improvements to the framework content and logic culminated in an enhanced framework and the proposal of a management tool for stakeholder engagement as the final research output. This is addressed next.
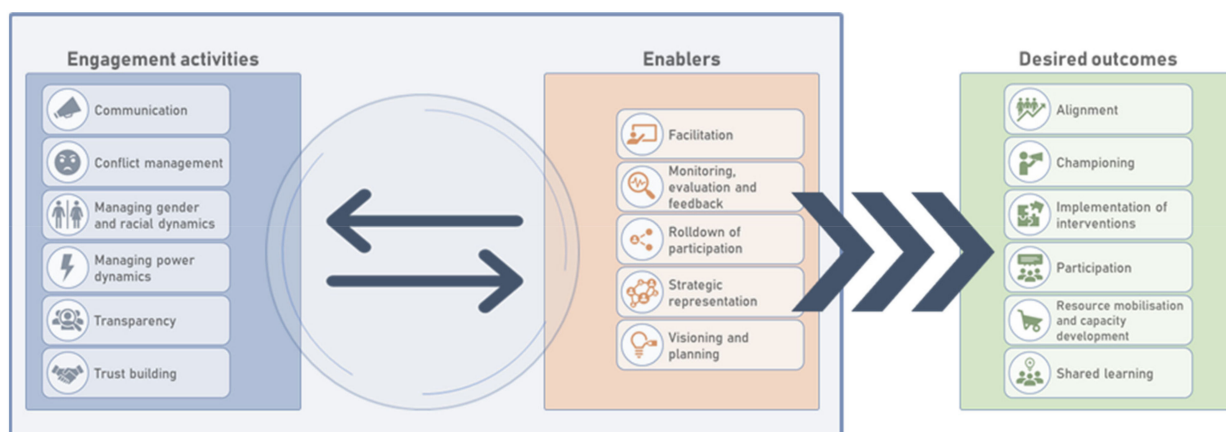
Figure 4. Emphasising the visual cues used in the framework overview canvas.

6. Conclusions

6.1. Enhanced Framework and Management Tool

Guided by the application of the conceptual framework in the case study, the management tool was compiled. The management tool comprises two elements to be used in conjunction: (1) the framework overview canvas (see Figure 5 below) and (2) the enhanced conceptual framework (see Table A4 in Appendix D). The framework contains 17 PoE themes, now in three categories: (1) engagement activities, (2) enablers and (3) desired outcomes.
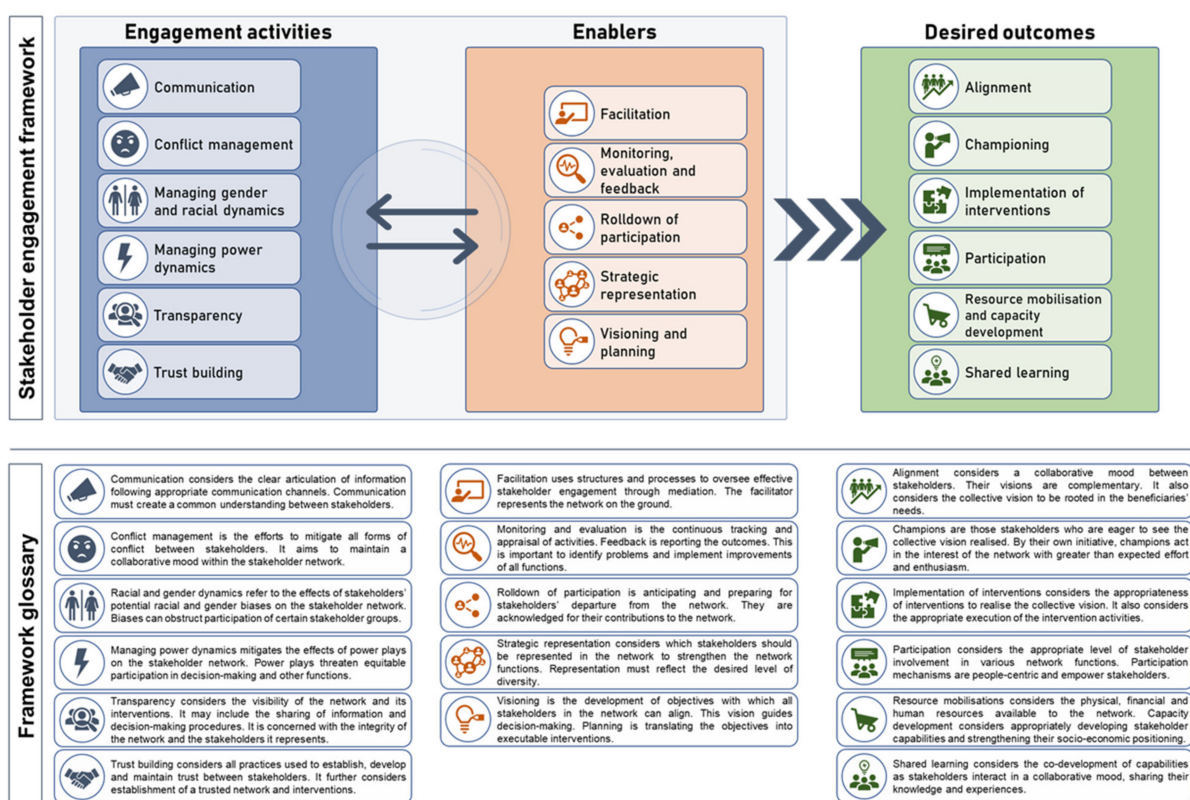

Figure 5. Framework overview canvas.

A process for using the management tool is proposed in Figure 6. Arrows direct the user's attention from one category to the next, alternating between the framework overview canvas and the framework.
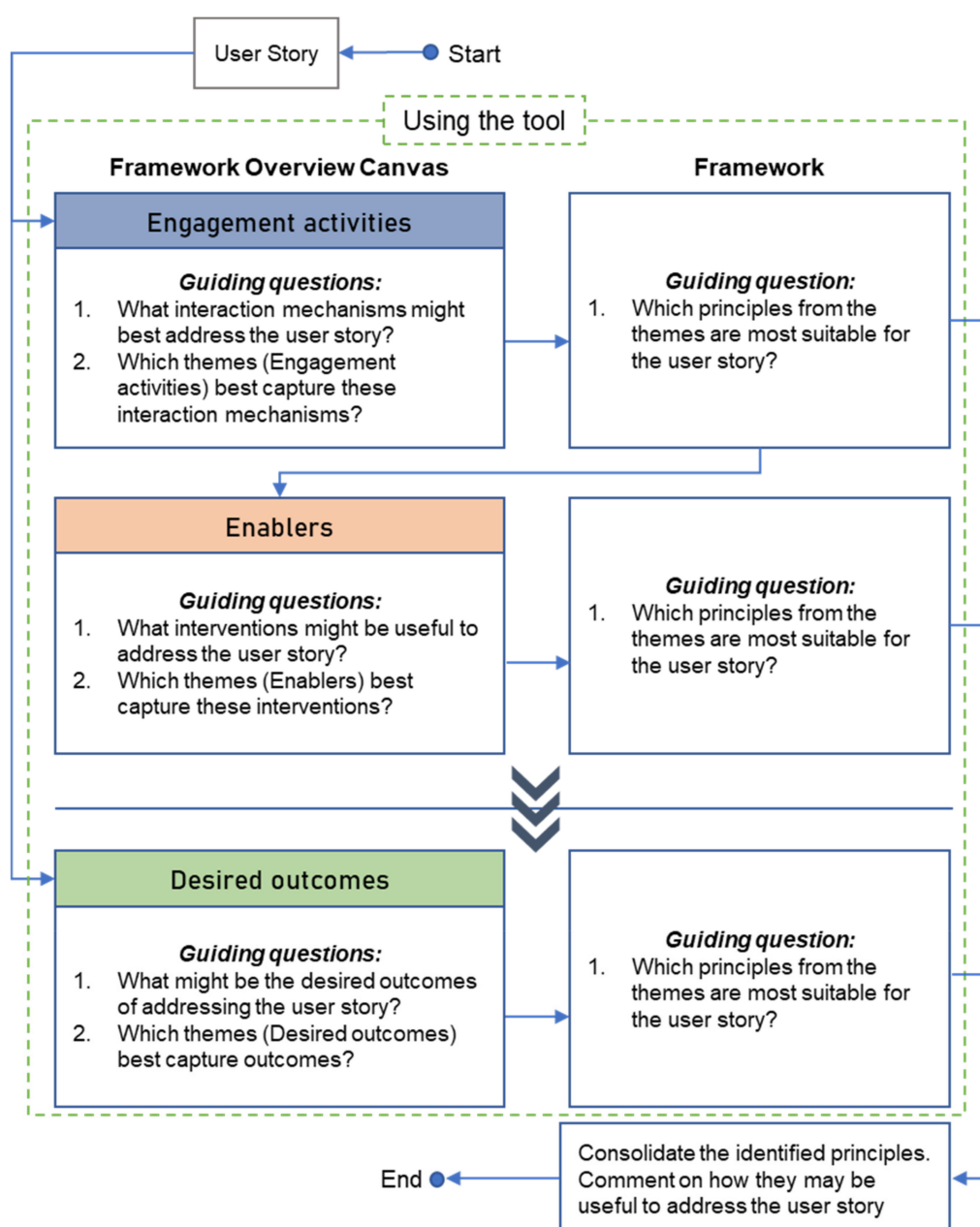
Figure 6. Procedure for using the conceptual framework and the framework overview canvas.

The process begins with a scenario that the user wishes to address or achieve called a "user story". An example of a user story is "We want to increase the public's awareness of the platform's interventions." The user follows a process of considering which engagement activities may address the user story and what the desired outcomes might be. The enablers that would support the achievement of the desired outcomes are then considered. Within each of these categories, guiding questions prompt the user to identify the PoE themes most relevant to the story, and the implementation principles associated with each theme are consulted to formulate a course of action.

The appropriateness of the recommendations to the user story depends on how well the user manages to contextualise the application of the tool to the challenges they wish to address. The user story should be understood properly as the application of the framework requires the user to consider the past, current and future impacts of the story on aspects of an IP's engagements. The procedure in Figure 6 offers guidance to applying the framework's content to practice; however, users should move iteratively between

the different stages and parts of the framework as they deem necessary to accurately contextualise the application of the management tool.

In the case study, the framework was applied to make recommendations for improved stakeholder engagements in the IP. Several diverse engagement issues were addressed, and the tool was appropriate for each. This verifies the transferability of the research output as the framework content can appropriately contribute to the context of the case despite being developed using multidisciplinary sources. The transferability of the research output is another important consideration for valid and reliable research [97,98].

The credibility of the framework and its overview canvas as a tool for managing stakeholder engagements in an IP context was verified in the case study. These components may benefit from exposure to additional case studies and pilot studies to further refine the tool's content and structure [99,100] and possibly adapt it further for use in other contexts.

In the case study, recommendations were directed at the network champion, but the management tool maintains its potential for a much broader target audience, including researchers and practitioners. In practice, it may be applied by network champions, facilitators, external consultants and the like, and may also be useful in group settings. The management tool was used here to formulate recommendations and a course of action when addressing issues impacting stakeholder engagement in IPs. However, other areas of application include the establishment of new stakeholder networks.

6.2. Concluding Remarks

IPs as spaces for inclusive context-specific innovation creation are well-suited to address the complex social challenges faced in resource-limited settings so well-known in South Africa. Proper stakeholder engagement is a necessity for any IP to function properly and, importantly, to appropriately integrate marginalised stakeholders in a manner that empowers them and effects a tangible change to their situations.

The study drew from an extensive review of the literature, expert interviews and a case study to investigate the need for effective, fruitful engagement between stakeholders to address the causal factors of complex social challenges. Without it, collaboration is not likely to occur. Individuals, organisations and institutions are then left to work towards their goals of addressing social challenges on their own, impeding their progress and resulting in duplicated efforts. The review of the IP literature identified the core concepts of engagement in IPs. The study posits that understanding how these concepts integrate into and impact engagement spaces, also considering stakeholder networks like IPs, is fundamental to achieving the desired outcomes of collaboration.

To this end, the conceptual framework and management tool for stakeholder engagement offers valuable insight into the complex phenomenon that is stakeholder engagement. It further offers handles for contextualising stakeholder engagement and its role to properly address social challenges through a collaborative network of stakeholders. It may address the needs of researchers and practitioners who want to set up a new IP, identify areas for improvement in existing IPs or identify reasons for an IP's failure and the lessons to learn.

Several promising opportunities for further investigation and paths for future research were identified as the research progressed, including:

1. A more thorough investigation of the common barriers to stakeholder engagement and how to overcome them would benefit the research domain. It may inform the appropriate additions to the conceptual framework for stakeholder engagement in IPs.
2. The final conceptual framework and the overall management tool for stakeholder engagement in IPs may be improved by including recommendations for "how" its implementation principles may be addressed.
3. Future research might consider when to engage stakeholders. This may require an investigation into the different IP lifecycle phases and the needs of the IP at these different stages. This may be a complex investigation as IPs are diverse and may have several lifecycle phases.

4. The impact of cognitive biases on decision-making and the consequences of unchecked biases on stakeholder engagement need further investigation.
5. The case study did not consider an IP where the marginalised stakeholders and beneficiaries of the intervention are direct participants. Future research should identify case studies where this is the case.
6. Drawing from the previous point, further investigations into the conditions which warrant the exclusion of the beneficiaries as participants in the innovation process are required. They may include considering who makes the decision as to who has the right or possibility to participate.

Appendix A

Table A1. Search terms for the systematized literature review.

	Category	Search Terms		Search Position
Search string 1	Innovation platforms	"innovation platforms"	"multi-stakeholder partnerships"	Title, abstract, keywords
	Developing countries	"developing country"	"developing countries"	Title, abstract, keywords
Search string 2	Innovation platforms	"innovation platforms"	"multi-stakeholder partnerships"	Title, abstract, keywords
	Actor	"actor" "stakeholder"	"participant" "player"	Title, Abstract, Keywords
	Role/responsibility	"role" "task"	"responsibility" "function"	Title, Abstract, Keywords
Search string 3	Innovation platforms	"innovation platforms"	"multi-stakeholder partnerships"	Title, Abstract, Keywords
	Innovation for inclusive development	"innovation for inclusive development" "frugal innovation" "inclusion"	"inclusive innovation" "responsible innovation" "base-of-the-pyramid"	Title, Abstract, Keywords

Note: The Scopus database was used as this was the database which returned the most literature sources for the selected search terms. Other databases contained only repetitions of the Scopus results.

Appendix B

Table A2. Profiles of the subject matter experts.

	Participant Profile	Qualifications and Experience
First-pass interview	The pharmaceutical services manager at a not-for-profit organisation (NPO) specialising in clinical care and treatment services and health and community systems strengthening, the interviewee has over 17 years' experience in South Africa's pharmacy industry. The organisation is a leader in public health innovation and facilitates direct programme implementation and technical assistance for the South African Government and the interviewee manages several of these programmes. They work closely with many stakeholders, including local, regional and national government and local marginalised communities.	The interviewee holds a Bachelor's degree in Pharmacy, a Certificate in Advanced Health Management (Yale University in collaboration with the Foundation for Professional Development's Business School) and a Master of Science degree in Global Health (Northwestern University).
Evaluation interviews	Interviewee 1 is a cofounder and director of a well-established NPO and research organisation conducting innovative research to strengthen public engagement in many of South Africa's health research projects. The interviewee has a passion to see marginalised communities empowered using innovative participatory approaches, including visual participatory methods and action-orientated approaches. They have many years of experience working with over-researched communities and navigating the dynamics that are associated with the participation of marginalised individuals. The interviewee believes that their approach to research should be accessible to others to learn from, improving engagement practices and policy-making.	The interviewee holds a PhD in Immunology and Genetics (University of Cambridge). They have held several research positions both in the United Kingdom and in South Africa.
	Interviewee 2 is an expert in community informatics, specialising in collaborative communities. They have experience in both academic and research and development (R&D) contexts and consult for a variety of communities, organisations and interorganisational networks in both the developing and the developed world. Their services include community visioning and innovation strategy advice, community network mapping, collaborative sense-making and project management. The interviewee adopts an ecosystems perspective coupled with an innovative stakeholder mapping approach to understand the dynamics of stakeholder networks.	The interviewee holds a PhD in Information Management (Tilburg University). They held several research positions in both the academic and the private sector before starting their own business, an applied research consultancy on collaborative communities.
	Interviewee 3 has experience developing volunteer networks in a diverse range of contexts in both the developed and the developing world. They piloted a volunteer platform in a marginalised community in the Western Cape. They have a novel approach to incentivising volunteering to realise tangible community impact and social development. Their passion for people and technology is combined in an innovative way to realise transformative social impact in marginalised communities. The insight they have into the importance of the initial rollout phases of development initiatives and the stakeholder dynamics associated with the early adoption and dissemination of interventions proved very attractive to inform this research.	The interviewee holds qualifications in Computer Science (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) and has founded and cofounded several innovative platforms leveraging technology to relieve social and economic disparity in South Africa.
	Interviewee 4 is an independent consultant and founder and managing director of an NPO with a vision to provide holistic support to the poor by facilitating the collaboration of other NPOs and channelling crowd efforts. Their experience as a champion to facilitate the collaborative efforts of NPOs within a single community places them at the centre of a larger stakeholder network. Their experience managing on-the-ground issues was attractive to inform the research. Their approach to empower a very marginalised part of society, those living at the BOP and suffering from the realities of homelessness provided important insight into the dynamics of participatory mechanisms aimed at these members of society.	The interviewee holds a Bachelor's degree in Industrial Engineering and has industry experience in management consulting and entrepreneurship.

Appendix C

Table A3. Preliminary stakeholder engagement framework.

PoE	Implementation Principles
Action	• IP's activities raise the awareness of challenges faced by the beneficiaries and addressed by the IP and attract interested stakeholders as potential participants in the IP • IP's activities encourage a learn-by-doing approach • IP's activities are not limited to learning experiences; real socioeconomic change is realised • IP's activities display tangible outputs to promote the development of trust in the IP and among stakeholders • IP's activities are executed according to the visioning and planning activities; activities show the effectiveness of the visioning and planning activities
Alignment	• IP's activities progress to meet the needs of the beneficiaries; certain activities target specific needs • Clear links between IP's participant roles and their capabilities; participant capabilities are appropriate for their roles • IP's participants opt to working together, continuously discounting their own self-interests • Power plays are managed and minimised to protect alignment • Clear links between benefits and the interests and needs of IP's participants to promote involvement • Knowledge and information are shared between IP's participants • Displays of trustworthiness among IP's participants are apparent; breakdown of distrust and strengthening of participant relationships • IP's focus is directed by the needs and interests of IP's participants and the needs of the beneficiaries
Championing	• Implementation of IP's activities is strengthened by champions in the IP • Champions inspire other IP's participants to actively participate • Champions participate autonomously in self-identified areas for championing; they choose where best to champion • Champions mobilise their resources and leverage their capacities voluntarily • Champions leverage their capacity to procure resources; champions reduce the demand for external knowledge and resources • Champions link the IP to multiple societal levels (local, regional, provincial, etc.) • Champions raise awareness of the IP's presence using social and political efforts to increase the IP's capacity • Champions are actively involved in the visioning and planning activities to guide innovation pathways
Communication	• IP's participants voice their interests and needs • Alignment of IP's participants with the common goals and objectives is maintained with the appropriate communication methods • Stakeholders' resistance to change is managed by openly sharing information using the appropriate communication methods • Communication gaps are identified and communication is restored to prevent issues • Facilitation of the IP is empowered by directing information to different parts of the platform • Different opinions and perspectives are communicated to balance power asymmetries • Information and results from IP's activities are shared with IP's stakeholders and ecosystem stakeholders • Communication methods are reformulated to develop a common understanding among IP's participants to promote capacity development • IP's participants can exchange knowledge, ideas and experiences • Informal communication channels are present and used • Appropriate interaction methods are used for the initial engagement of stakeholders • Appropriate communication channels are followed for information flow between and across the IP's boundaries • Trust relationships develop as IP's participants interact with other stakeholders in the ecosystem • Decisions made in visioning and planning are accurately communicated to other IP's participants, as well as to the ecosystem stakeholders when necessary

Table A3. *Cont.*

PoE	Implementation Principles
Conflict management	• IP's participants are encouraged to continuously discount self-interests and to focus on collaboration
Facilitation	• Stakeholders' expectations are managed appropriately; risks of not meeting expectations are communicated • IP's vision and goals align with the needs and interests of the IP's participants and the needs of the beneficiaries • All stakeholders buy into the common IP's vision and goals • IP's focus is maintained on the common goal • IP's participants are accountable for their responsibilities • The facilitator(s) is(are) a neutral participant in the IP; the facilitator(s) remain(s) impartial during all interactions in the IP • The facilitator mediates interests as IP's participants negotiate • The facilitator mediates conflicts • The facilitator is sensitive to gender and racial dynamics present in the IP • There is constant awareness of power plays; the facilitator(s) is(are) equipped to diffuse power plays • Stakeholder involvement in IP's activities is equally distributed; involvement of champions and "normal" participants is balanced • Movement of IP's resources is managed • Capacity development of IP's participants is intentional; areas for improvement of IP's participant capabilities are identified and targeted • A non-competitive atmosphere conducive to the sharing of knowledge and experiences is maintained between IP's participants • Interactions (including learning and sharing processes) between IP's participants are facilitated continuously • The facilitator(s) is(are) responsible for expanding the network of stakeholders; the facilitator(s) identify(ies) and link(s) prospective participants to the IP • Healthy levels of trust between IP's participants are maintained
Gender and racial dynamics	• Most suitable stakeholders are selected as IP's participants irrespective of race or gender
Managing power dynamics	• IP's activities are prioritised according to the needs and interests of all stakeholders; prioritisation is not skewed in favour of select stakeholders • Resource allocation is not skewed in favour of select stakeholders and IP's activities; allocation of resources is in accordance with the resource requirements of the prioritised IP's activities • Constant awareness of the existing power dynamics within and around the IP • Risks of conflicts between IP's participants are mitigated • Interventions in favour of the participants perceived to be weaker (including women) are in place to uplift these participants; involvement of the participants perceived to be weaker is not hindered by the presence of strong participants • Differing cultural norms do not hinder the involvement of IP's participants; unique cultural norms are not disregarded • Demands of resource providers (funders, etc.) are treated with the necessary urgency; mandates from resource providers align with the needs of the beneficiaries of the IP's interventions • Level of influence is decoupled from resource richness; a stakeholder's resource richness does not skew their level of power within the IP • Access to resources is balanced • Defensive attitudes of self-interest give way as trust relationships between IP's participants are developed
Monitoring, evaluation and feedback	• IP's activities are continuously monitored; predefined indicators are monitored • Feedback on IP's activities is used to guide the formulation of next steps and activities; new insights and discoveries are implemented, and the IP learns from the mistakes and successes of the IP's activities • Alignment of IP's activities and IP's participants with the platform's goals is monitored • Feedback is used to identify areas where alignment must be restored • Prioritisation of IP's activities is constantly tracked to guard against the effects of power imbalances

Table A3. *Cont.*

PoE	Implementation Principles
	• Feedback of significant successes is shared with external stakeholders to increase the awareness and interest of stakeholders in the IP • Feedback of IP's activities is used as an opportunity to share insights and experiences and to learn • Participatory monitoring, evaluation and feedback activities are used to promote involvement and transparency • Results of monitoring, evaluation and feedback activities are shared with IP's participants and other stakeholders in the ecosystem • Impacts of IP's activities are accurately reported using monitoring and evaluation activities; impacts are communicated to the beneficiaries and other stakeholders • Research studies are used to prove the impacts of the IP's activities; significant insights are published to disseminate the insights and generate income • Accurate accounts of the reports are disseminated to other stakeholders in the ecosystem through feedback activities • Feedback is used to inform the focus of the IP, adjusting the innovation pathways to address emerging trends and needs
Participation	• IP's participants identify potential activities and select the activities for implementation • IP's participants are motivated to participate in the IP and align their resources and capacities • Involvement of IP's participants begins early on and continues throughout the lifecycle of the IP • IP's participants are involved in strategic planning activities which counters their resistance to change • IP's activities rely on the involvement of the IP's participants perceived to be weaker, promoting their societal status, economic positioning and self-esteem; the IP's participants perceived to be weaker are economically active • IP's participants abandon self-interest for the common good of the IP and its stakeholders • IP's participants are actively involved in participatory monitoring, evaluation and feedback activities • IP's participants mobilise their individual resources and capacities and direct them into the platform • IP's participants have access to the IP's common resource pool • IP's participants access opportunities for capacity development; IP's participants gain experience, develop insights and gather information; • Commonly marginalised stakeholders have improved social and economic positioning, and self-esteem; commonly marginalised stakeholders are economically active • IP's participants share their experiences and insights with other IP's participants • IP's participants are involved in the identification of prospective new participants; existing relationships are leveraged to gain new IP's participants
Resources and capacity	• IP's participants' capabilities are developed to match the needs of the IP's activities • IP leverages its capacity to advocate on behalf of its stakeholders (e.g., making policy recommendations) • IP's participants mobilise their individual resources and capacities and direct them into the platform • Resource management procedures used in the IP are transparent and trustworthy
Shared learning	• Capabilities of IP's participants are developed because of shared learning • IP's participants share information, insights and experiences • Improving sense of collaboration and trust between IP's participants • Ideas are translated into executable activities • Improving coordination through joint planning activities
Strategic representation	• IP's participants include representatives of the beneficiaries so that IP's activities address the true needs of the beneficiaries • Technologies and innovations introduced by the IP are appropriate to the context of the need • National-level stakeholders are represented; IP's goals align with the national goals to support government strategies in the specific sector • Stakeholders with the motivation and capacity to serve as innovation champions are represented in the IP

Table A3. *Cont.*

PoE	Implementation Principles
	- The presence of unreasonable stakeholders in the IP is mitigated; selecting IP's participants considers their influence on power dynamics - Representation in the IP is leveraged to obtain information directly from stakeholders who implement and disseminate innovation - Resource positioning of the IP is positively influenced by the represented stakeholders - Capacity of the IP is positively influenced by the represented stakeholders; the IP has increased presence in various economic sectors and at different societal levels; gains legitimacy - Resource potential of stakeholders is established using appropriate stakeholder analysis techniques - Capabilities of stakeholders are established and areas for improvement (capacity development) are identified using appropriate stakeholder analysis techniques - Dissemination of IP's interventions is positively influenced by the represented stakeholders - IP's participants include stakeholders who are willing to contribute to the exchange of knowledge, experiences and insights - IP's participants include those stakeholders who are experts in the necessary sectors - Key stakeholders are represented to promote trust in the platform among the wider ecosystem of stakeholders and encourage involvement in IP's activities
Transparency	- Transparency and honesty underlie all communication functions; information is presented completely and accurately and shared within and across IP's borders - IP's participants share their aspirations, frustrations and self-interest - IP's participants are fully aware of the IP's activities taking place, decisions being made and the reasons for these - The IP's facilitator operates with neutrality and integrity, sharing all necessary information with the IP's participants - Risks are communicated to the necessary stakeholders - IP operates openly within the innovation ecosystem to raise awareness of platform's activities and rally interest from other stakeholders; the IP is visible to external stakeholders - All relevant information to guide the visioning and planning activities is made available
Trust building	- Alignment is strengthened; stakeholders become more willing to compromise and collaborate - Communication channels between stakeholders become more developed; information is shared more easily - Stakeholders become increasingly motivated to contribute from their resource pools - Additional stakeholders are drawn to the IP and willing to contribute from their resource pools - Non-competitive environment allows for shared learning
Visioning and planning	- IP's activities are identified and planned from appropriate planning and visioning activities - IP's activities strategically target areas with the greatest potential for innovation adoption and dissemination; appropriate timing for implementation is considered - IP's activities identified for implementation align with the goals of the platform and the needs of the beneficiaries - IP's activities are planned to incorporate monitorable indicators to allow for monitoring, evaluation and feedback of these activities - Resource requirements (resource types and amounts) are identified using appropriate visioning and planning - Stakeholders' capabilities required for the implementation of IP's activities are identified using appropriate visioning and planning activities - Strategic representation is guided by the planned scale of the IP's activities and the IP's focus - Dynamic representation of IP's participants is strategically guided by the visioning and planning of future activities; the change in representation is pre-empted - Initial IP's activities are realistically achievable to develop confidence in the IP and its participants

Appendix D

Table A4. Conceptual framework.

PoE Theme	Implementation Principles
	Engagement activities
Communication	1. Appropriate communication channels are followed to engage stakeholders 2. Communication gaps are identified and restored 3. Conversations remain constructive 4. IP's participants voice their interests and needs 5. Reformulated communication methods allow a common understanding among stakeholders
Conflict management	1. Acknowledge that conflict will happen and must be managed 2. Risks of not meeting expectations are communicated 3. Stakeholders' expectations are reasonable 4. Stakeholders are encouraged to communicate their concerns 5. Stakeholders make their expectations known
Managing gender and racial dynamics	1. Awareness of the dynamics existing between stakeholders of different races 2. Differing cultural norms do not hinder stakeholder involvement 3. Stakeholders' cultural norms are understood and respected 4. Suitable stakeholders are represented irrespective of race and gender
Managing power dynamics	1. Conflicts of interest are identified and managed 2. Funders' demands are treated with the necessary urgency 3. Mechanisms of resistance are recognised and managed 4. Power and influence are decoupled from resource richness 5. Pre-empt and mitigate effects of factors which increase participant vulnerabilities 6. Consider pre-existing power dynamics in the stakeholder network 7. Priorities do not favour some stakeholders over others 8. Shared information is not obscured to the benefit of specific stakeholders 9. Stakeholders ground themselves as equal participants in a non-competitive environment 10. Stakeholders value the expertise of other stakeholders
Transparency	1. Outcomes of decision-making are communicated to the stakeholders 2. Enablers of the flow of information between stakeholders exist 3. Information is presented completely and accurately 4. IP is visible to external stakeholders 5. Risks are communicated to the necessary stakeholders 6. Stakeholders are fully informed with accurate information 7. Stakeholders are transparent about their own dealings and expectations
Trust building	1. Credibility is necessary when engaging participants 2. Engage stakeholders in a sincere and respectful manner 3. Visible displays of trustworthiness are recognisable 4. Visible signs of interest in the activities of stakeholders even outside of the context of the IP 5. Vision and direction are important when engaging stakeholders
	Enablers
Facilitation	1. The facilitator identifies and connects stakeholders 2. The facilitator is accessible to stakeholders 3. The facilitator is relevant to the context of the challenge landscape 4. The facilitator is neutral and impartial 5. The facilitator is sensitive to gender and racial dynamics present in the IP 6. The facilitator mediates negotiations and conflicts between stakeholders

Table A4. *Cont.*

PoE Theme	Implementation Principles
Engagement activities	
Monitoring, evaluation and feedback	1. Continuously monitor activities using predefined indicators 2. Feedback guides identification, planning and implementation of interventions 3. Feedback is used as an opportunity to learn and improve 4. Feedback of progress and successes is used to engage stakeholders 5. Impacts of interventions are investigated and reported 6. Participatory monitoring, evaluation and feedback of interventions 7. Research studies used to prove the impacts of interventions
Rolldown of participation	1. Acknowledge stakeholders for their contributions once their participation has concluded 2. Conclusion of a stakeholder's participation is pre-empted and planned 3. Keep stakeholders informed about progress and achievements of initiatives
Strategic representation	1. Appropriate stakeholder identification procedures are in use 2. Beneficiaries are represented in the network of stakeholders 3. Capacity and legitimacy of the stakeholder network is strengthened 4. Dissemination of interventions is strengthened by the represented stakeholders 5. Existing stakeholder networks are leveraged in stakeholder identification 6. Key stakeholders represented to promote the network's legitimacy among stakeholders 7. Potential champions are identified and are the first to be engaged 8. Resource positioning is strengthened by the represented stakeholders 9. Stakeholders who are experts in the necessary fields are represented 10. Stakeholders willing to exchange knowledge, experiences and insights are represented 11. Stakeholders with capacities and motivation to champion are represented
Visioning and planning	1. Challenges present in the contexts for interventions are understood 2. Define the stakeholders' capabilities necessary for interventions 3. Improving coordination through joint planning of activities 4. Interventions are realistically achievable 5. Interventions strategically target areas with the greatest impact potential 6. Interventions support the platform's vision and goals 7. Long-term goals are established and recognisable 8. Resource requirements are planned 9. Vision coexists with and supports stakeholders' visions
Desired outcomes	
Alignment	1. Funders' mandates align with the common vision 2. Interests and needs of all stakeholders are considered 3. Intervention activities target stakeholders' needs, including beneficiaries' needs 4. Knowledge and information are shared between IP's participants 5. Stakeholder visions and directions coexist cooperatively 6. Value contribution of stakeholder participation is clear 7. Vision aligns with the goals of local and/or national government
Championing	1. Champions leverage their resources and capacities voluntarily 2. Champions link the IP to multiple societal levels (local, regional, provincial, etc.) 3. Champions provide entry points to local marginalised communities 4. Champions reduce the demand for external knowledge and resources 5. Champions strengthen adoption and dissemination of interventions 6. Champions strengthen the implementation of interventions 7. Champions use social and political efforts to increase awareness of interventions

Table A4. *Cont.*

PoE Theme	Implementation Principles
	Engagement activities
Implementation of interventions	1. Intended beneficiaries and/or users are sufficiently aware of interventions 2. Intervention activities are executed according to a predefined plan 3. Outcomes of intervention activities are visible 4. Intervention activities realise real socioeconomic transformation 5. Stakeholders clearly understand how intervention activities work 6. Stakeholders clearly understand the purpose and benefits of intervention activities
Participation	1. Approaches to encourage involvement in interventions are in place, e.g., incentives for participation 2. Commonly marginalised stakeholders fulfil important roles for implementation of interventions 3. Improved socioeconomic positioning and self-worth for the commonly marginalised stakeholders 4. Improved understanding of lifestyle challenges experienced by the commonly marginalised communities 5. Monitoring, evaluation and feedback are participatory 6. Participation techniques/mechanisms are appropriate to the levels of participation 7. Participatory approach is people-centric to empower participants 8. Stakeholder can access the network's common resource pool 9. Stakeholders' roles and levels of participation are appropriate to their capabilities 10. Stakeholders (including the beneficiaries) take ownership of the initiatives 11. Stakeholders are involved in decision-making around issues that affect them 12. Stakeholders are involved in the identification of prospective new participants 13. Stakeholders can access opportunities for capacity development 14. Stakeholders govern the dissemination of information to external parties 15. Stakeholders mobilise their resources and capacities for the network 16. Stakeholders' participation begins early and is sustained 17. Stakeholders share their experiences and insights within the network
Resources and capacity	1. Existing knowledge and resources are acknowledged and used 2. Help stakeholders identify what challenges are present in their context 3. IP advocates for attention to issues on behalf of its stakeholders 4. Resources are directed at implementation areas with promising potential 5. Stakeholders' capabilities are developed to support interventions 6. Stakeholders mobilise their resources and capacities for the network
Shared learning	1. IP's participants share information, insights, knowledge and experiences 2. Stakeholders' capabilities are developed

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