

Impact case study (REF3b)

Institution: The University of Manchester	
Unit of Assessment: 16 (Architecture, Built Environment and Planning)	
Title of case study: Ketso: Creative Engagement and Participatory Planning	
1. Short summary of the impact	
<p>Ketso is a social business, selling and renting a hands-on kit for creative engagement that provides table-top tools to record and display ideas, enhancing group productivity and creativity. Ketso is the only documented spin-off company from ESRC funded research, which was conducted at the University of Manchester (UoM). Ketso has been taken up by over 50% of UK universities, is used in 27 countries and boasts over 300 unique customers. Ketso has demonstrated clear social and economic impacts in: community/environmental planning, health/wellbeing, enterprise development and pedagogy. Ketso works at scales from the very local to national, allowing the synthesis of multiple voices in a process of knowledge co-production. Practitioners recognise that its use in data gathering enhances the impact of research, engagement and change management.</p>	
2. Underpinning research	
<p>Ketso is a 'workshop in a bag', representing the embodiment, in a physical product, of key ideas emerging from research with multiple stakeholders. It offers a structured way to run a workshop or meeting using re-useable coloured shapes ('leaves') to capture everyone's ideas. Participants share ideas by placing leaves on a felt table-top workspace and organising them around 'branches', which provide themes. The different colours of the leaves are used to ask different types of question, with icons used to highlight priorities and make links. Ideas can be organised into action plans on grid workspaces.</p>	
<p>Ketso emerged from two projects at UoM led by Dr Joanne Tippett (Lecturer in Spatial Planning, 2005-) 'A Participatory Protocol for Ecologically Informed Design' (ESRC CASE PhD with the Mersey Basin Campaign, 2000-2004) – and an ESRC Postdoctoral Fellowship (2004-2005) (£26,456). Active partners included: Irk Valley Project, NWDA, Forestry Commission and GroundWork. The aim of the doctoral research was to develop a systems-based toolkit for participation in integrated catchment planning [A][E]. The conceptual framework synthesised design theory, participatory planning, landscape ecology and ecological design, using 'systems thinking' for integration [D]. The research cycled between developing theoretical insights and testing them in practice, working with a wide range of partners in the public, private and civic sectors [C]. This active interface between theory and scholarly development through practice has contributed to the research's impact and originality. Data sources included: 'before and after' interviews; participants' reflective journals; participant observation and interviews with 19 key decision makers in the region. Visioning workshops, held over several months, allowed the toolkit to be refined in response to emergent findings [C].</p>	
<p>Each component of Ketso was designed to embody a key principle of community engagement or creative thinking, identified from action research (with 51 stakeholders/residents). Uniquely, the toolkit guides the facilitator via its physical components, such as the different coloured leaves; a recognition of the value of metaphors in encouraging different ways of thinking. The research showed that the tactile and visual nature of the toolkit was important in enabling participants to build a shared picture of their thinking, and to see their ideas from different perspectives, leading to creative solutions and a shared ownership of ideas. Using a hands-on approach with stakeholders served as 'proof of principle', and was viewed as a major factor in the project's success, with local citizens able to engage effectively with the planning process [C]. A key finding was that the physical form of the toolkit might enable non-professional facilitators to employ the process trialled in the research. In subsequent research with the Environment Agency and Manchester City Council (2005) (£14,250), novice facilitators delivered a 'Green City Network' launch event for over 100 people, with data about the role of Ketso in enabling this process collected, including: participant feedback, interviews with the facilitators and participant observation [B]. The principles underlying the toolkit were made explicit, demonstrating that it can be used by non-professional facilitators to implement learning from the original research.</p>	

3. References to the research (all references available upon request - AUR)

- [A] (2010) Tippet, J. "Going beyond the Metaphor of the Machine" in de Roo, G. & Silva, E. A. (eds.) *A Planner's Meeting with Complexity* (Aldershot: Ashgate) 237-262 (REF 2014) (AUR)
- [B] (2007) Tippet, J. & Griffiths, E. "New Approaches to Flood Risk Management – Implications for Capacity-building" in Ashley, R. et al (eds.) *Advances in Urban Flood Management* (London: Taylor & Francis) 383-413 (AUR)
- [C] (2007) Tippet, J., Handley, J. F. & Ravetz, J. "Meeting the Challenges of Sustainable Development – A Conceptual Appraisal of a New Methodology for Participatory Ecological Planning" *Progress in Planning* 67(1) 1-98 (RAE 2008) doi:10.1016/j.progress.2006.12.001
- [D] (2005) Tippet, J. "The Value of Combining a Systems View of Sustainability with a Participatory Protocol for Ecologically Informed Design in River Basins" *Journal of Environmental Modelling and Software* 20(2): 119-139 doi:10.1016/j.envsoft.2003.12.016
- [E] (2005) Tippet, J. "Think like an Ecosystem' – Embedding a Living System Paradigm into Participatory Planning" *Systemic Practice and Action Research* 17(6): 603-622 doi: 10.1007/s11213-005-1232-y

4. Details of the Impact

Pathways to Impact: As noted, the underpinning research *itself* had a direct impact in the participating community, with Moston Vale transformed into a country park (with £1.7m funding from Newlands programme) based on the plan developed with residents. Following the primary research, more organisations requested workshops with the toolkit, providing the impetus to set up a social business to extend the impact of the research. Three grants from the UoM Sustainable Consumption Institute (2008-2010, £316,451), looking to embed sustainability skills and knowledge in the workplace, enabled further refinement through engaging with 250 Tesco staff. The Head of Pay and Rewards at Tesco commented: *"This is the sort of tool that Tesco employees really like to use - hands on, visual and it lets everyone shape the outcomes"* [1][2].

Scope: The impacts from Ketso's use in environmental planning have been followed with impacts around community planning, enterprise, health and wellbeing, social inclusion and pedagogy, with >100 case studies documented [1]. In an anonymous survey of customers (2012), 88% of users cited substantive benefits, with Ketso seen as more inclusive than traditional methods. Comments included: *"It helped create a warm collaborative atmosphere, excellent debate, clear priorities and an excellent record of the process and results; and "It's more inclusive and helps people to communicate, take in one another's ideas, see connections"*. The form of the kit was important: *"More engaging - easy to distinguish between different ideas/themes with the different leaves"*; indeed, if not for Ketso 62% said they would use flip charts and post-it notes, and 38% would use traditional meetings and workshops, or dialogue techniques such as world café. Comments on the value of the toolkit for facilitators included: *"It combines the principles behind parallel thinking (six hats), appreciative enquiry, etc. in one simple, accessible and low-tech process"*; and *"Ketso is unique, it's easy to explain how it works and what people have to do"* [3]. Similarly, a recent public sector and NGO workshop produced a *"shared agreement that Ketso is unique in its ability to not only surface new thoughts but also to provide a credible and traceable evidence base for recommendations that emerge from consultation"* [5]; and the Social Marketing Officer from South Lanarkshire Community Links stated that: *"Using the Ketso toolkit gives those using it a 'voice' and the leaves acts like giving each participant a 'microphone' to use as a platform for discussion"* [1].

Range: Ketso is used in 27 countries, including: Peru, Cameroon, Russia, Australia, USA and Germany [1]. Over 300 customers use 530 kits, in high-profile organisations such as Merseycare NHS and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA). Equality Network In total, >8,000 people have used Ketso, including 3325 participants in 125 events run by the Ketso team. Over 65 universities use Ketso in research, staff development and teaching, with Dr. Tippet awarded a 2011 AESOP Teaching Excellence Prize in part due to the innovation of Ketso in teaching [4].

Ketso has changed professional practice, with independent survey respondents confirming this: *"We have used it to change the way we run certain meetings" and "Outside partners have described our meetings as fun and highly productive."* Changes cited as a result of using Ketso include: *"Effectively re-balanced workload between team members; resulted in problem areas rising to the surface"; "An ineffective Student Council has transformed itself and is now very active"*

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and engaged!”; *“It helped to invigorate and re-develop a scrutiny liaison committee that serves a number of councils”*; *“Generated a new policy around PhD examination. Altered policy and practice on plagiarism for PGT”*; and *“Process review and enhancement of university administrative processes”* [3]. In all cases users indicated Ketso was chosen because it enables groups to work together to achieve better shared outcomes, and in less time than traditional approaches. For instance, a National School of Government event (Civil Service Live) in 2011 involved two hundred civil servants in discussions on the future of learning in the public sector. The subsequent report referenced the key role of Ketso, highlighting its basis in research [4].

A networking event in Scotland with 11 customers identified 50 outcomes or benefits from using Ketso, including improved: research, training, procedures and guidelines, service design and understanding between teams of roles, remits and resources. A specific example was: *“Defined divisional aim; objectives identified to action for upcoming year (it’s a good way to identify that all staff are reaching for the same outcome)”* [1]. The Head of Refugee Integration, Scottish Refugee Council commented, *“Asset based planning has been discussed for many years, and this is one of the few times that I have actually seen it work in practice. I feel strongly that our sector, and others, often focus on vulnerability to the neglect of recognising resilience: this tool provides a safeguard against this trap. [For example] the RiSC thematic working groups, where unexpected opportunities and goals were identified... I believe if that we had not used Ketso as a participation and engagement tool these may not have been identified or been so prominent. I have seen how the kit can help generate innovation, moving people from a position of cynicism to one of fresh thinking and energy... You have a way to manage the dominant voices that is powerful and unusual in my experience of participatory processes”* [5]. A key issue discussed was how Ketso and its spreadsheet allows you to see issues emerging in the data that would not otherwise be visible, enabling identification of patterns, *“surprising themes from the synthesis of participants’ ideas that may run counter to the dominant power structures and perceived wisdom”* [5]. The physicality of Ketso gives everyone a voice, allowing blending of technical and lay information through co-production, which generates innovation and knowledge that ‘sticks’.

Planning: Ketso is featured as a method in the latest edition of the ‘Community Planning Handbook’, and was the key engagement tool in Renfrewshire Council’s Community Planning Conference in 2011, in which 458 community members developed over 2000 ideas for the future plan. A Council Policy Officer confirms this: *“The majority of participants agreed that this workshop format gave everyone a voice and took the pressure off facilitators.”* 98% of participants responded positively to the question: ‘Do you agree that the workshop allowed participants to work together, share ideas and be creative?’ (n=293), with comments such as: *“I found this year’s workshops to be a much better concept, much more involvement from whole group”* [6]. An action plan developed from the outputs was a driver for a ‘Community Plan Review’, and Renfrewshire has since used Ketso with 323 senior managers in their 2012 Managers’ Seminars, and other workshops seeking to implement ideas from the 2011 Conference. In 2012 there were 15 requests from other services and partners to use the Ketso kits owned by the Chief Executive’s Service, with the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) inviting Renfrewshire to discuss Ketso in community planning with 68 public sector delegates [6]. When asked to whom they would recommend Ketso, one survey customer commented *“the whole of Scotland, because it works and it’s brilliant”* [3]. Ketso was also used in RTPI NW CPD with 30 planners, subsequently being awarded a commendation in 2013 from the RTPI NW for its *“contribution towards positive community engagement”* [6].

Vulnerable Communities: The Scottish Government, Scottish Refugee Council and COSLA used Ketso as the key engagement tool for the ‘Refugees in Scotland’s Communities’ project (2012-13) that brought together groups of experts to consider refugee integration [7]. The Scottish Government’s ‘Equality and Diversity’ and ‘National Records’ teams requested training in 2013 to develop the use of Ketso for internal and external engagement. Similarly, Glasgow Refugee, Asylum and Migration Network (GRAMNet) have used Ketso extensively in research and engagement across Scotland, as well as in Russia, Jordan and Gaza. GRAMNet’s co-director comments: *“Most research methods make vulnerable people feel like they are in a deportation interview, but with Ketso people feel they can genuinely explore ideas together”* [7], with the annual

report noting that, *“the research and conception behind Ketso has enabled GRAMNet to devise innovative partnerships and projects and harness the creative capacity of its members”*, leading to £5 million of successful funding bids [7]. Ketso has been widely used in health and social care; such as in 13 NHS Trusts, including Merseyside.

Environmental Management: Countryside has used Ketso to engage with stakeholders, from landscape character assessments to developing a climate change strategy for Manchester [8]. Their Creative Director comments: *“I would estimate that we have run workshops with over 1000 participants with Ketso. We have found that Ketso is a fantastic tool that has greatly improved how we manage workshops, consultations and community planning events... most importantly it produces results that are clear and can be acted upon”* [8]. Using Ketso led to Johannesburg’s Environmental Management Department being awarded a ‘Clean and Green Campaign’ award for the best community development programme in the Gauteng province [1]. Ketso was also seen as central to the success of Wandle River Trust’s catchment planning workshops [8].

Social Business: Ketso was developed as a case study in social enterprise [9] and includes open-source resources to support customers and invite further innovation. Nine training videos have made the rationale behind Ketso more widely available, and four external organisations have made videos about Ketso. Together, these videos have been downloaded 7,990 times since 2010 (www.youtube.com/ketsold). The Ketso website has had 18,677 unique viewers and 27,550 visits (11/2010 - 9/2013, Google Analytics) with the Ketso Twitter account attracting 297 followers (@KetsoLtd, 3/2013-7/2013). Ketso was also showcased at an ‘Enterprise Educators UK Best Practice’ event (2010), and following Ketso’s role in ESRC/EPSC enterprise training, it was used with 100 delegates at the International Enterprise Educators’ Conference (2011) [1]. As a business, Ketso generates revenue and creates employment, locally and internationally (in manufacturing, office-work and training). Turnover for the last four years was £175,000, with components sourced from ethical suppliers in India and Bangladesh. Assembly is undertaken at Paperworks, a sheltered workshop in Leeds, where Ketso has also been used in skills development for employees with learning disabilities. A Paperworks trainee commented: *“We used Ketso to do a trainee lesson, it was fantastic, I did not even lose concentration”* [1]. The Managing Director of Motif (a fair-trade Ketso supplier) confirms: *“We have also used Ketso with partners in Bangladesh, for example with OASIS, an organisation based in Dhaka, which works on issues of human trafficking. They were very impressed at how the kit helped them find direction using everyone’s ideas more readily than previous methods they had used”* [9].

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (all claims referenced in the text)

- [1] **Ketso Website** – www.ketso.com (collated pages)
- [2] **Pathways:** (2008) Newlands ‘Case Study 9: Moston Vale Community Woodland...’; (2010) Tippett, *et al* ‘Improving Sustainability Skills & Knowledge in the Workplace’ (pp.23-29)
- [3] (2013) Lerner, J. ‘HighWire Regional Challenge 2012: Placement Report’ Lancaster Univ.
- [4] **Range/Professional Practice:** (2011) Karpusheff, J. ‘Shift Happens, Co-creating Health Care in MerseyCare NHS’ (p.114); (2011) Tippett, J. *et al* ‘You want me to do what?’ *Journal for Education in the Built Environment* 6(2) (pp.26-53, references AESOP); (2011) Cowen, T. *et al* ‘Sanctuary, Safety & Solidarity: LGBT Asylum Seekers’ Equality Network (p.23); (2011) Ward, N. ‘Learning to Thrive’, Civil Service Live, National School of Government (p.3)
- [5] Testimonial from Head of Refugee Integration, Scottish Refugee Council (4th July 2013)
- [6] **Planning:** Testimonial from Chief Executive’s Office Renfrewshire Council (1st July 2013); (2013) Wates, N. ‘Community Planning Handbook’ (Online, forthcoming as printed book); (2013) PLANET ‘RTPI NW Newsletter – Cunning Plans: Preparing a Sound Local; Email from Hon Secretary, Regional Activities Committee, RTPI (24th July 2013)
- [7] **Vulnerable Communities:** Testimonial from Co-Director, GRAMNet (21st May 2013); (2013) Kay, R. & Morrison, A. ‘Evidencing Social Benefits & Costs of Migration’ (pp. 2,13-15); (2012) Kay, R. *et al* ‘2011-12 GRAMNet Annual Report’ (pp. 22-26)
- [8] **Environmental Management:** Testimonial from Creative Director of Countryside (20th May 2013); (2013) Countryside: Portfolio of Projects (collated pages); (2013) Wandle Catchment Plan Workshops
- [9] **Social Business:** Testimonial from Executive Director, of Motif Fair Trade (May 2013); (2009) Frost, C. ‘A Guide to Social Enterprise for University Staff’ (September) p. 57