



BEHAVIOURAL GAMES

The purpose of the methodology, what it is about and its relevance to IN-HABIT.

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Common-pool resources are natural or man-made resources that are finite, but of which it is difficult to limit use. This means they can easily become depleted, such as in the case of fishing grounds, forests, or clean air (Ostrom 2006). In the absence of formal or informal institutions to regulate the use of common-pool resources, individuals may harvest more than the resources can sustain, leading to their exhaustion for everyone. This is what is known as **“the tragedy of the commons”**.

In IN-HABIT, **health and well-being are viewed as common-pool resources** that each city will improve via actions on particular dimensions (food, culture, human-animal bonds, art and environment).




Behavioural games are simulations of real world environments in which scenarios and incentives can be manipulated and choices can be observed. In IN-HABIT, we will deploy common-pool resources (CPR) games to fulfil two purposes.

Firstly, we will design games that will support the establishment of inclusive rules and institutions to overcome the tragedy of the commons and efficiently manage each city’s newly created resource. As very different groups are involved in the co-design, understanding their respective motivations is essential for cooperation. Behavioural games will reveal these motivations.



In the latter stages of IN-HABIT, **behavioural games will help to support and maintain change among the communities.** They will contribute to solidifying the new institutions and rules created in order to sustainably manage each city's new common-pool resources. Based on understanding a “day in the life” of local inhabitants, **behavioural games will test solutions, which may take the form of nudges or reminders, for promoting the adoption of sustainable lifestyles.**



The on-going pandemic exemplifies every day that **health is a common-pool resource.** When people get vaccinated, they not only improve their chances of avoiding being infected but also raise everyone else's chances of avoiding infection. Similar externalities exist for well-being, as we are affected by the mental health and average well-being levels of the communities we live in. As IN-HABIT's ultimate goal is to improve health and well-being, behavioural games fit perfectly in helping stakeholders reach a common ground to sustainably manage the new solutions implemented.

Behavioural games constitute a logistical challenge in normal times, but the pandemic increases the usual difficulties tenfold. In IN-HABIT, stakeholders are solicited for so many activities that it can be hard to find a moment for them to participate in behavioural games, but overall, everyone is putting in a lot of effort to drive the project's success.



We hope that behavioural games will help to build strong and lasting institutions to manage the new commons created by IN-HABIT. Everyone is so committed to their particular solutions that we believe they will use behavioural games to their full extent.

References:

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