

# Understanding the social-psychological aspects of collective neighbourhood initiatives in the energy transition

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**Understanding the social-psychological aspects of collective neighbourhood initiatives in the energy transition.**

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Behavior is an important topic to study if we want to accelerate the energy transition. Research on behaviour in the energy transition often focuses on the individual level or the societal level. Less scientific attention goes to the group level (de Vries et al., 2021). Because of the lack of scientific attention to the impact of group behaviour in the energy transition, it is for instance unknown how bottom-up energy initiatives “function and sustain” (Steg et al., 2021, p.5). This white spot is unfortunate because groups can significantly impact the energy transition, for instance by producing and using local renewable energy, raising environmental awareness (Lupi et al., 2021), or founding a social norm that could eventually lead to a social tipping point (Stadelmann-Steffen et al., 2021).

The scope of this research is on bottom-up neighbourhood initiatives that center around sustainable energy and/or mobility technology. To understand the relevance of neighbourhood groups on the energy transition and effectively use this knowledge to develop technology and policy, we need to investigate the underlying social-psychological processes. Insight into the dynamics of neighbourhood initiatives could illustrate interaction patterns within the group and the social-psychological influences that spur individuals’ acceptance and use of sustainable technology. Social-psychological processes relate to group dynamics, but also to individual factors, such as personal motivation for participation in a community project (Sloot et al., 2019).

Our research investigates how neighborhood initiatives impact the energy transition by collectively using sustainable energy and mobility technology, and which underlying social-psychological processes determine social group dynamics. We will first present a typology of interactions collective neighbourhood initiatives have with (different) sustainable energy and mobility technologies. Second, we will present a conceptual model illustrating the most influential social-psychological factors determining social group dynamics.

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