

Believing in Urban Neighbourhoods

Faith Based Organisations & Social Cohesion in Spangen

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Preface

This thesis is made as a completion of the master programme Urban and Cultural Geography at the Radboud University Nijmegen. This product is the last part of my study in Human Geography. The decision for this thesis subject has been motivated by my personal interests. Three years ago I did some voluntary work for the organisation 'London City Mission' in urban less developed neighbourhoods. Walking through those neighbourhoods, I became more and more interested in the effects of Faith Based Organisations. With this thesis I was able to combine my personal interests with all the theories, techniques and knowledge that I acquired during my study.

I want to thank several people that have supported me in writing this thesis. First I would like to thank my supervisor Rianne van Melik of the Radboud University. She supported me to write my thesis about a subject that had personal relevance for me. I also would like to thank her for her time and valuable input. Furthermore I would like to thank Kees Koster of the IZB for his help during this entire process and for coordinating my internship. I also would like to thank Nico van Splunter for his support and advise when researching 'his' project in Spangen. During the internship I did many participative observations and I would like to thank all participants of 'Geloven in Spangen' for allowing me to be part of their group for some months. I am also thankful for the respondents. Their identities cannot be disclosed, but I really have appreciated their time and the information they gave me.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Research field

1.1.1 State policy and social cohesion

In the state-policies of the last ten years, much attention has been given to urban neighbourhoods that are dominated by low-income households (Tweede Kamerfracties van CDA, PvdA en ChristenUnie, 2007). These neighbourhoods often have a low amount of social cohesion. Figure 1 represents the amount of social cohesion in the Netherlands per municipality. The orange and red colours on the map represent areas which have a medium and low rate of social cohesion. Remarkable is that the red areas on the map are the same as urban areas. In

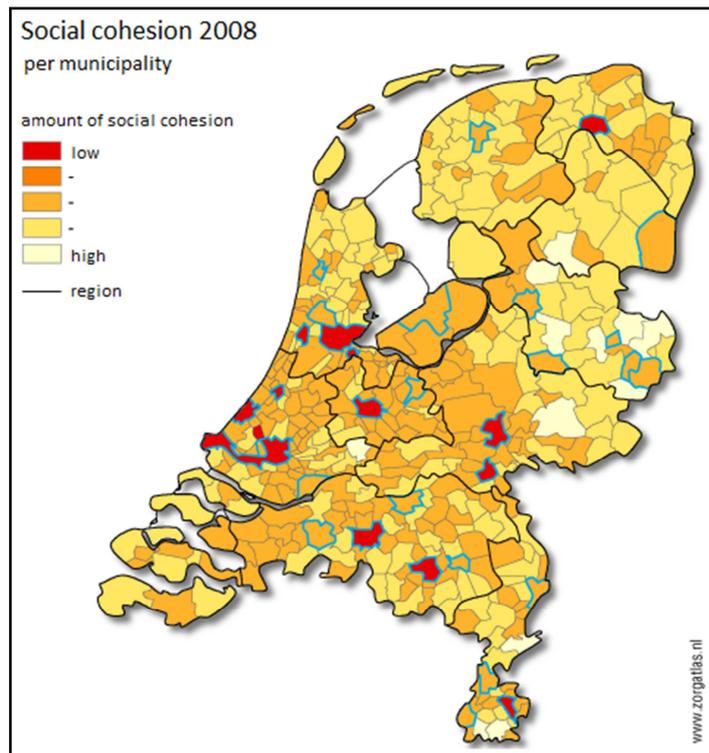


Figure 1 Social Cohesion in the Netherlands 2008 (Deuning, 2009)

urbanised areas, there is less social

cohesion than in non-urbanised areas. Especially the four largest cities of the Netherlands have significantly less social cohesion than the rest of the Netherlands. The less people live near each other, the more they are connected to each other (Vermeij & Mollenhorst, 2008). Social cohesion is seen as a requirement for a liveable neighbourhood, which can be concluded from the attention that social cohesion had in state-policies and local government objectives (Permentier, Kullberg, & van Noije, 2013). According to the state-policy of 2007, the quality of society is determined by mutual relations and it is unacceptable that people are not included in society (Tweede Kamerfracties van CDA, PvdA en ChristenUnie, 2007). Special attention is needed for communities that have many problems. These problems can be solved with the enlargement of social cohesion.

1.1.2 Corporate actors and social cohesion

Many corporate actors can play a role in the process of enlarging social cohesion in urban neighbourhoods. These actors vary from state to local organisations. Studies have shown that the best results can be achieved by combining both top-down approaches and bottom-up approaches. For the improvement of neighbourhoods these approaches can be found in the use of external (local) organisations such as sport initiatives, community centres, art and Faith Based Organisations (Saris, et al., 2011). These groups are in the middle of communities and know what the neighbourhood needs. For many problems and solutions a good coordination is necessary and this can be seen in the actions of local organisations trying to do what is required for the neighbourhood.

This study will further elaborate on the Faith Based Organisations. These are religious groups, sometimes connected to a church, that try to help the community because of their religious beliefs. Faith Based Organisations and churches are not the same. Churches have religious services as main activity (and as first objective) and everything is centralised around the religious service. Going to church is most important and therefore churches are mostly visited by believers. Faith Based Organisations function differently: their second objective is to help others. Faith Based Organisations usually organise all kind of activities that are accessible for all neighbourhood inhabitants. By doing so they try to connect people. It seems paradoxical in this time of secularisation, to say that religion can play a role in neighbourhood improvements and the increasing of social cohesion. However, secularisation does not solely mean that religion is disappearing, but it means that religion has a new role. In this study, the focus will be on the influences of faith based organisation, with initiatives for changing the neighbourhood and creating social cohesion between the residents of the neighbourhoods (Flint, Atkinson, & Kearns, 2002). As can be read in the following quotation, Faith Based Organisations can play a significant role in communities:

The contribution that faith communities can make to regeneration is significant. They can help regeneration partnerships to understand the needs and concerns of people living in particular areas, or groups of people with particular needs.... In terms of their active membership, churches, mosques, temples, synagogues and gurdwaras are often among the most substantial community-based organisations within an area. They have as much right to contribute to discussions concerning regeneration as residents' or tenants' organisations. (Furbey & Macey, 2005, p. 98)

Faith Based Organisations have a large potential, as has been made clear in the quote of Furbey and Macey (2005). FBOs have the ability to know more of the neighbourhood than other organisations

do, due to the motivation from which the religious organisations work. Therefore they can help the neighbourhood as is mentioned in the quotation because they have two important elements which are lacking by many other organisations: they understand the needs and concerns of people and second, FBO's are very active organisations. Faith Based Organisations act out of a Biblical principle of helping each other and by helping each other, people get connected and this can possibly lead to the enlargement of social cohesion.

1.2 Research question

The goal of this study is to determine whether activities of Faith Based Organisations will lead to changes in the amount of social cohesion in Dutch urban less developed neighbourhoods. In order to investigate this, the following question will be used: *What role do Faith Based Organisations and their participants play in order to enlarge social cohesion in urban less developed neighbourhoods?*

1.2.1 Research model

For answering this question, several elements will be explored. A model (Figure 2) has been created in which the relation between these elements is discussed. In figure 2 a large circle displays the neighbourhood, in which multiple organisations can be found. In figure 2 the organisations are displayed by large dots and one of these dots is the Faith Based Organisation (FBO). Other large dots can be the local government or voluntary organisations (e.g. sport groups, culinary groups). In the neighbourhood also many little dots are displayed. These little dots depict the inhabitants of the neighbourhood. Around the FBO, there are also multiple little dots. These inhabitants are participants of the activities organised by the FBO. Through the dots of the participants there is a black circle. This circle illustrates the relationship between the participants. There are also several arrows depicted in figure 2. The arrows from the FBO towards the participants display the actions of the FBO (including the organised activities). The arrows from the participants towards the FBO illustrate the experience of the activities by the participants. There is also an arrow from the FBO to some little dots outside the big circle → the neighbourhood. It also sometimes occurs that people from outside the neighbourhood participate in the activities because they are somehow acquainted to the FBO. Another group of arrows leads from the dots that depict the participants towards dots that depict the inhabitants. These arrows show the social cohesion that occurs between the participants and the neighbourhood inhabitants.

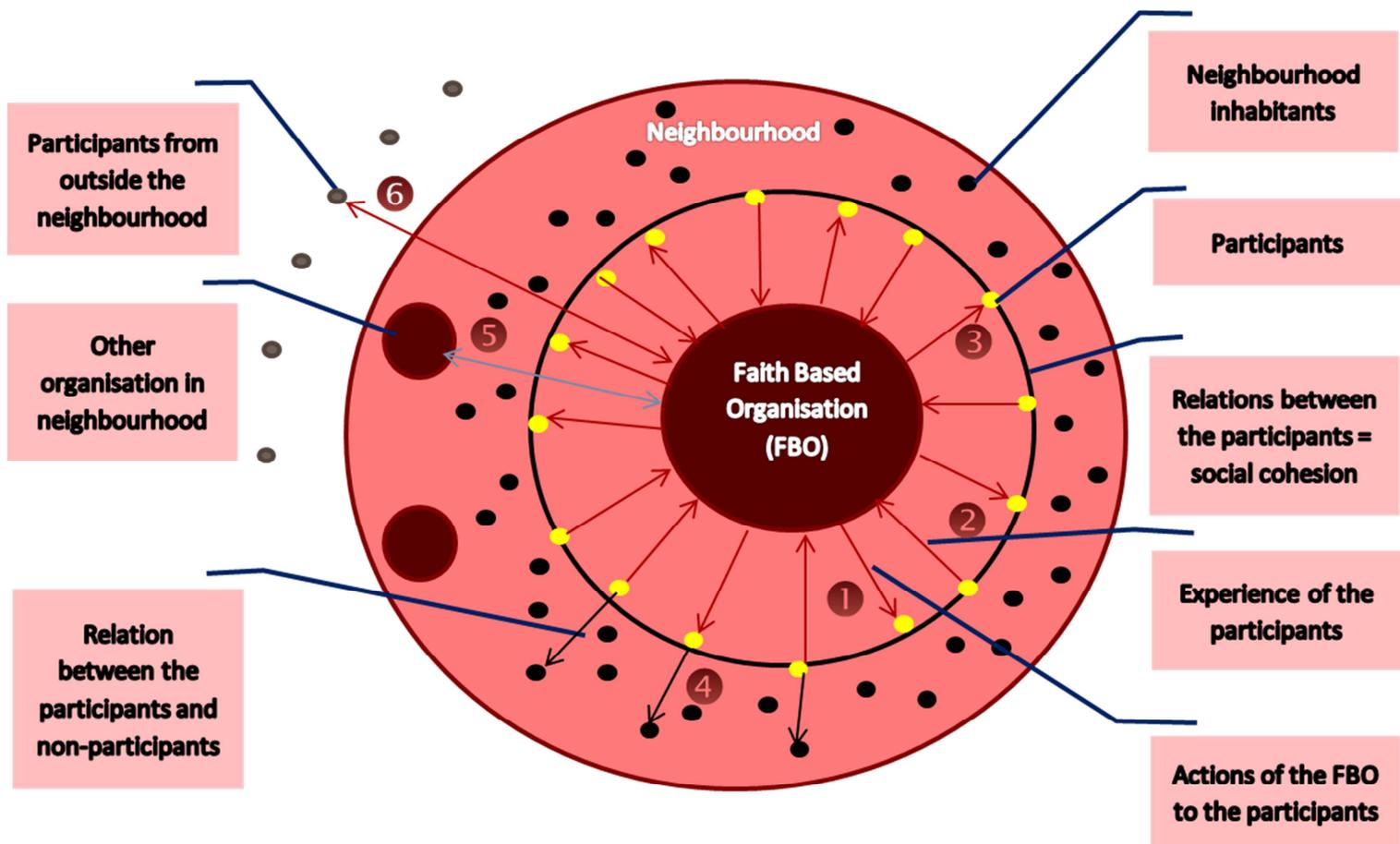


Figure 2 Relations between the actors (Heij, 2013)

1.2.2 Research topics

From figure 2 the following topics can be derived:

1. The kind of activities that Faith Based Organisations organise in order to contribute to social cohesion

The relevance of this topic can be seen in the role of the Faith Based Organisations. Which activities do Faith Based Organisations organise, and what is the objective of the activities?

2. The experience of the activities by the participants

This type of cohesion is called 'vertical cohesion', because it is about the interaction between the corporate actor (the FBO) and the participants (Van Marissing, 2008). This type of social cohesion is relevant to investigate because results will show what the participants think and feel about the presence of the Faith Based Organisations. If the group does not like the activities and is not (often) attending, it is likely that the social cohesion will not enlarge. The main question in this topic therefore is: 'how do they value the presence of Faith Based Organisations?'

3. Relations between the participants

This topic will look into the connection between the participants. As will be further elaborated on in chapter 2, this connection is social cohesion. Social cohesion can further defined in different types of social cohesion and this is 'horizontal cohesion' (Van Marissing, 2008). From this topic can be concluded whether the participants form relations.

4. The relationship between the participants and the non-participants (the other inhabitants of the neighbourhood).

This topic also concerns the social cohesion, but further elaborates on the mutual relations between the participants and non-participants. Are the participants of the FBO trying to create more relations with the other inhabitants of the neighbourhood? This is also a type of horizontal cohesion. Another part of this topic concerns the question 'who are the participants?'. It is relevant to know the demographics of the neighbourhood and the demographics of the participants to be able to see whether a specific group of people from the neighbourhoods joins the activity. This might possibly lead to more solidarity towards each other or that the activity is attended by a mixed group of the community.

There are two arrows (number 5 and 6) in figure 2 that will not be further explained in this study. Arrow number 5 is about the connection between the Faith Based Organisation and other organisations in the neighbourhood. This topic will not be further studied, because the main research question is about whether there is a connection FBO's and social cohesion, and how that connection looks like. Including other types of organisations is not relevant to answer the research question. The second topic that will not be included in this study is arrow number six. The participants of the activities that live outside the neighbourhood will not be further mentioned in this study because this topic does not contribute to the research question. The research question is about the social cohesion in the neighbourhood and when the participants from outside the neighbourhood would be included, this would exceed the study.

1.3 Relevance of the research study

1.3.1 Scientific relevance

According to a report from the Social Cultural Planning association, top-down policies from governments are not successful in increasing social cohesion in less developed urban neighbourhoods (Wittebrood, Permentier, & Pinkster, 2011; Permentier, Kullberg, & van Noije, 2013). Therefore it is relevant to observe the effectiveness of social organisations in neighbourhoods. One of these bottom up initiatives can be a religious organisation. There are several publications that already have researched the phenomenon religion and cohesion in deprived neighbourhoods.

- In a study from Furbey (2008), a connection between faith and participation in communities and civil life is established. However, this study is just about the potential which faith based organisation might have and does not critically look at the effects.
- Another study was commissioned by the Church of Scotland, and concluded that congregations could be of importance to social cohesion (Flint, Atkinson, & Kearns, 2002). However, this is about permanent congregations in all kinds of neighbourhoods and not specifically about Faith Based Organisations in deprived neighbourhoods.
- The Dutch organisation KASKI did research on the value of the church in the Netherlands and their conclusion was that churches and Faith Based Organisations had a social and cultural value (Bernts & Kregting, 2010). The social value was derived from activities that were organised by churches and Faith Based Organisations. But in this research the link between the activities and the enlargement of social cohesion is not mentioned. It is only about the amount of people that is reached by the activities, on a large scale.
- Another study is about the relationship between religion and neighbourhoods and social cohesion (Furbey & Macey, 2005). Their focus is on the identity of projects and how the projects might change when they are included in government policy, however it does not investigate deeply the situation without the government implementation
- An additional study is from Beaumont and Dias (2008). This is a Dutch study that focusses on the shifting role of Faith Based Organisations towards social justice in Dutch cities, and in that process is looking at social distress and the relation to the applying politics. However, although social justice and social cohesion are related, these two concepts are not the same and are just part of each other. Therefore, this study has many interesting ideas to offer but it does not solely answer the question about how Faith Based Organisations lead to social cohesion.

All these studies have a link with social cohesion and 'faith'. However, most of them are theoretical and looking at the possibilities and not always based on empirical research. With this study, a case will be analysed to see the effects. This study can therefore contribute to the theories of the effectiveness of large social institutions like Faith Based Organisations in the enlargement of social cohesion among the residents of neighbourhoods. Is the chance of success in increasing social cohesion among the residents of the community considerably larger with bottom-up policies? A remarkable fact is that most of the research is all originating from the United Kingdom and the United States (Beaumont & Dias, 2008) whereas the same studies would probably lead to completely different results when done in other countries, due to different cultural, economic and social

situations. In this study the focus will be on Dutch urban neighbourhoods, investigating the link between faith and social cohesion in the Netherlands. A weak point of this research study might be that most antecedent studies have focused on Christian Faith Based Organisations, which leaves a deficit in research of Faith Based Organisations in other religions such as Islam. However, Christian organisations are more common in the Netherlands due to the large population of Christians. The existing Faith Based Organisations are also more visibly involved in the areas in which they are settled and they are likely to have more impact on more neighbourhoods than non-Christian Faith Based Organisations which make them more interesting to do research on. Therefore this study will provide more information on the question how Faith Based Organisations stimulate the process of social cohesion.

1.3.2 Social relevance

There are many less developed urban neighbourhoods in the Netherlands, especially in cities, and these areas are often also called problem areas. The government has issued certain policies to improve neighbourhoods. However, evaluation of these policies showed that the efforts to improve the situation in problematic neighbourhoods were not successful and insufficient (Wittebrood, Permentier, & Pinkster, 2011). For example, in the problematic neighbourhoods there is a small decline in the concentration of low income households. However, this same decline occurred in other neighbourhoods without the interventions (Permentier, Kullberg, & van Noije, 2013). Liveability and safety also changed similarly in problematic neighbourhoods and other neighbourhoods. The enlargement of social cohesion was one of the goals of the above mentioned policy; however it was not fully achieved. It is remarkable that social participation in these neighbourhoods has declined, which is the opposite of what was expected. Another method for changing social cohesion in problematic neighbourhoods is necessary. If the Faith Based Organisations can play a role in the enlargement of social cohesion this would be an influential conclusion because in many of these urban less developed neighbourhoods Faith Based Organisations are already present. By creating more social cohesion, the liveability of the neighbourhood can improve as well. This topic is also relevant when it is seen in the light of secularisation. The role of religion in daily life is declining, but there can be a role for the church from another perspective.

1.4 Reading index

This thesis consists of several parts; starting with a basis, followed with the results and analysis of it and last part is the conclusion. The basis starts in chapter one, that mentions the research question,

research topics and the relevance of this study. Chapter two elaborates on the conceptual framework around the concepts of social cohesion and Faith Based Organisations and explains the theory that will be used for the analysis of the study. In chapter three the methodology that has been used in this study, is explained, focusing on why the collected data were necessary for this study and which methods have be used for data collection.

The next part is the analysis of the collected data. Chapter four elaborates on the activities which are organised by Faith Based Organisations and why they have chosen for this. Chapter five focuses on the experiences of participants. In chapter six the results with respect to the relations that participants have with each other are analysed and in chapter seven the results about relations of participants with non-participants are central.

In chapter eight (the conclusion) the analytical results will be explained, a comparison with the theory is made and implications for government and Faith Based Organisations will be described.

2. Conceptual framework

In this chapter, the theory of social cohesion and the concept of Faith Based Organisations will be explained. Several definitions will be compared to find a consensus about indicators for social cohesion. This research study is about the relation between religion and social cohesion, and this chapter will further elaborate on this concept.

2.1 Social Cohesion

2.1.1 The history of social cohesion

The interest for social cohesion can be traced back to the 19th century when the sociologist Emile Durkheim was wondering what kept society together in a time with large and fundamental changes from an agricultural society towards an industrial society (Pahl, 1991). Durkheim analysed social cohesion in terms of social integration, stability and disintegration (Chan, To, & Chan, 2006). Together with the change towards an industrial society, urbanisation started. In 1938, Louis Wirth, a sociologist of the Chicago School, who was fascinated by the differences between urban and rural societies, did research on the kind of individuals living in urban and rural societies (Wirth, 1938). His conclusion was that rural inhabitants still lived in a traditional society with high standards of norms and values and were part of small-scale relations (Forrest & Kearns, 2001). However, inhabitants of urban areas were rational, isolated, anonymous and had impersonal, temporary and superficial contacts with others (Van Marissing, 2008). Social (community) cohesion became less and the sense of community declined. In a society that has very weak social cohesion, individuals only care for their own good and do not want to sacrifice their own ideas. This is what Durkheim called 'Anomie': the breakdown of the ability of a society to regulate the natural drives of individuals in the face of rapid social change (Merton, 2002). Later research showed that urban inhabitants also had intensive relations and many contacts, however, they were able to choose the kind of relation they preferred (Van Marissing, 2008). This freedom of choice was made possible by the diversity of social worlds and groups in cities. Social cohesion did not disappear completely but became less. What Durkheim observed at the end of the 19th century, a same fundamental change occurred at the end of the 20th century. In the 19th century it was the shift towards industrialisation and in the 20th century, technology changed society. People became dependent of technology and (digital) sharing of information. This resulted in declining social cohesion because the necessity to meet people disappeared and the role of communities became less important (Hariche, Loiseau, & Mac Erlaine, 2011). However, research shows that a high degree of social cohesion leads to an economically stable situation, to a healthy society and to a safe environment (van der Graaf & Duyvendak, 2009).

This makes it a relevant and influential concept, which will be further elaborated on in the next paragraph.

2.1.2 The concept

The term 'social cohesion' has been used several times but in this paragraph, it will be made clear what social cohesion is and why there are several dimensions to the concept. Contemporary research shows social cohesion as a multidimensional phenomenon (Friedkin, 2004), for example community level versus individual. Some people understand the term social cohesion as a synonym for solidarity and trust, others connect the term to concepts like social capital and poverty and a last possibility is the link towards social integration (Chan, To, & Chan, 2006). Many authors writing about social cohesion forget an explanation about the concept of social cohesion or label it social cohesion while focussing on other terms like social exclusion or integration (Chan, To, & Chan, 2006).

Definitions

There are many different views on the concept of social cohesion. The most influential or most used definitions will be explained in this paragraph. The first definition that will be explained is that of Lockwood. This definition looks at the strength and weaknesses of primary social relations. Social cohesion thus means the 'state of strong primary networks at a community level' (Jensen, Mapping social cohesion: the state of canadian research, 1998; Mukherjee & Saraswati, 2011). Primary networks are considered to be family relations, local community or voluntary organisations. Social cohesion is part of social integration, and the relationship between actors can be conflicting or positive. According to Lockwood, high levels of civic corruption lead to a negative effect on social cohesion. He also said that there is a boundary between civic integration and social cohesion, namely secondary organisations (such as voluntary organisations, churches, trade unions or political parties) that play an intermediary role (Berman & Phillips, 2004). When applying this definition to this study, it can be concluded that intermediaries are necessary for the creating of social cohesion, and FBO's are one kind of intermediaries.

The second definition that will be discussed can be found in a paper of Jensen (1998) about defining social cohesion. Jensen uses five different dimensions. The first dimension is **belonging**, which refers to the presence or absence of shared norms and values and a collective identity (Chan, To, & Chan, 2006). A cohesive society is a society in which people share values and feel committed to be part of the same community. This would imply that the participants of activities organised by the FBO have shared norms and values and a collective identity. However, people can also feel committed to a group, but do not have the same background (identity). This is not mentioned by Jensen (1998). The second dimension of social cohesion according to Jensen is **inclusion**, which is the

equality of opportunity among citizens on the market (Chan, To, & Chan, 2006, p. 289). Social cohesion is linked to economic institutions to which some people have access (included) and some people do not have access (excluded). Equal access for all is important to have a cohesive community and have less exclusion. For the neighbourhood in which the FBO is localised, it would mean that the activities are accessible for everybody. The third dimension is **participation**, because for social cohesion people have to be involved with each other. With this involvement relationships grow stronger and people will increase their responsibility (Jensen, Mapping social cohesion: the state of canadian research, 1998, p. 16). For a project of an FBO, it means that the participants should not just be followers, but they should actively be involved in the activities of the FBO. However, not solely this, but the next step is active involvement in the neighbourhood. The fourth dimension is **recognition** vs. rejection, which is concerned with respect for alteration or tolerance of diversity (Chan, To, & Chan, 2006). People with other beliefs, norms and values should live together in peace. Resources and power should be equally distributed and to continue social cohesion, recognition of differences should be stimulated. When this dimension of the theory is combined with the concept of the Faith Based Organisation, the conclusion can be drawn that for FBO it is not an obvious choice to respect all differences, because of the strong norms and values that they have, which are mainly based on religious grounds. This can be difficult when the activities are accessible for all people from the neighbourhood. The last dimension mentioned by Jensen is **legitimacy**. Social cohesion is a 'collective construction' which cannot be achieved solely by individual actions. The community and voluntary organisations help to establish connections between the individuals. Thus, mediators are necessary to help with establishing connections and maintaining the spaces where the connecting takes place. Illegitimacy occurs when the mediating organisations and institutions are highly criticised and not taken seriously. This last dimension is a very important one, because it suggests that social cohesion is a result of collective actions. People that are working together are also having a stronger relationship with each other, which is social cohesion. An FBO can help to organise these collective actions and stimulate the creating of new connections and thus plays an intermediary role. These five dimensions form one definition of social cohesion, but are on its own also of great value. For example, when a certain area has a high level of participation, this will eventually lead to stronger relationships. However, in this same area people absolutely do not share the same ideas. But clearly this does not matter for the way they live, because from the participation view people are involved any way. This makes a definition with different dimensions confusing, because for concluding whether there is a high level of social cohesion, the results can be interpreted in several ways.

Jensen who formulated the above mentioned dimension wrote another paper on the mapping of social cohesion with Beauvais (Beauvais & Jensen, 2002), in which they identified another

five dimensions of social cohesion which are also used by Kearns and Forrest (2000). However, Kearns and Forrest say that the five dimensions have to be combined to form the concept of social cohesion. There has to be one starting point and that starting point has consequences for the framework to analyse the concept of social cohesion. Beauvais and Jensen (2002), even so, argue (which is actually the reversed of the definition of Jensen (1998)) that the five dimensions can be free standing and thus are different definitions of social cohesion. The first definition about **common values and civic culture** is thus: *“a socially cohesive society is one in which the members share common values which enables them to identify common aims and objectives and share a common set of moral principles and codes of behaviour through which to conduct their relations with one another”* (Kearns & Forrest, 2000, p. 997). To analyse the cohesiveness, the common values have to be researched and for a strong cohesiveness, promotion of common values essential. This dimension matches the fourth dimension ‘recognition’ of Jensen (1998), however in this wording it is possible to have cohesion between people with different norms and values. It is not just about background, but also about moral principles and codes of behaviour. People from different cultural background might share moral principles and behaviour. The second definition about **social order and social control** is: *“social cohesion is the absence of a general conflict within society and of any serious challenge to the existing order and system”* (Kearns & Forrest, 2000, p. 998). This definition leads to completely different results, looking at social exclusion and social groups that challenge the legitimacy of something in the neighbourhood. The third definition about **social solidarity and reductions in wealth disparities** is: *“social cohesion within a society refers to the harmonious development of society and its constituent groups towards common economic, social and environmental standards. This may be achieved through the solidaristic redistribution of finances and opportunities between groups and places”* (Kearns & Forrest, 2000, p. 999). Unemployment, poverty, income inequality, social in- and exclusion are all threats to social cohesion. If these treats are under control, there is a higher cohesive communion / society. Another meaning to the concept of social cohesion is given by definition four about **social networks and social capital**: *“there is acceptance of a long-standing belief that a cohesive society contains a high degree of social interaction within communities and families”* (Kearns & Forrest, 2000, p. 999). And the last definition (5) about **territorial belonging and identity** explains *“notions of belonging, place attachment and spatial mobility. It is general presumed that a strong attachment to place, and the intertwining of people’s identities with that of places, contributes to social cohesion. The danger is that people may come to exist in small worlds”* (Kearns & Forrest, 2000, p. 1001). Social cohesion is indissoluble connected with the concept of belonging (to a group, neighbourhood, and family). But people should belong to several groups and this should be encouraged. As mentioned earlier, Beauvais and Jensen (2002) are of the opinion that all the

dimensions are definitions standing on its own. All the different dimensions have different results in the analysis and the recommendations that may be retrieved (Beauvais & Jensen, 2002). Although the phrasing of the dimensions might be different from the definition of social cohesion by Jensen (1998), the content hardly differs. The dimensions are more specific and have been more defined.

Also trying to define social cohesion are Chan, To and Chan (2006). They say: *“Social cohesion is a state of affairs concerning both the vertical and horizontal interactions among members of society as characterised by a set of attitudes and norms that includes trust, a sense of belonging and the willingness to participate and help, as well as their behavioural manifestations”* (Chan, To, & Chan, 2006). This definition lacks the specification which can be found in the definitions of Jensen (1998), Beauvais and Jensen (2002) and Kearns and Forrest (2000). However, according to Chan, To and Chan (2006) social cohesion is involved with vertical and horizontal interactions between participants of a group or society. This is a new remark about social cohesion, which is especially important when the object of research is an organisation and all the links that exist with that organisation. The relationships between participants and between participants and the organisation thus occurs on a vertical and on a horizontal level. Furthermore, the interactions and relationships are categorised by attitudes, norms and values and among them are sense of belonging, willingness to participate, trust and behaviour. These specificities can be found in all the definitions mentioned above (Beauvais & Jensen, 2002).

The last definition that will be discussed is a definition of Flint and Robinson (2008, pp. 3-4). They use 5 statements (dimensions) to determine the level of cohesion:

- 1) *“There is a clearly defined and widely shared sense of the contribution of different individuals and different communities to a future vision for a neighbourhood (or other area);*
- 2) *There is a strong sense of an individual’s rights and responsibilities when living in a particular place – people know what everyone expects of them, and what they can expect in turn;*
- 3) *Those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities, access to services and treatment;*
- 4) *There is a strong recognition of the contribution of both those who have newly arrived and those who already have deep attachments to a particular place, with a focus on what they have in common;*
- 5) *There are strong and positive relationships between people from different background in the workplace, in schools and other institutions (like FBO’s) within neighbourhoods.”*

The first dimension of Flint and Robinson (2008) should be seen within the framework of neighbourhood improvement. People should all have the same vision of the future of the neighbourhood and work as a team for improvements. It indeed leads to a higher level of cohesiveness when all neighbourhood inhabitants aim at the same thing. However, there can also be cohesion when these visions of the future do not completely match. Nevertheless it is important that all individuals know their rights and responsibilities, which Flint and Robinson do with dimension two. In their third dimension they talk about the accessibility of services for everybody. This does have an effect on social cohesion, because when people are excluded from opportunities due to their cultural background problems arise such as envy and quarrels. Especially in urban less developed neighbourhoods it is important that organisations are accessible for all people. This might be difficult for FBO's because they are based on a specific religion and might naturally exclude people from other religion. The fourth dimension Flint and Robinson (2008) use is that there should be respect from new inhabitants for the older residents of the neighbourhood. Doing so, new people and new organisations can create support for themselves which makes it a part of social cohesion. As last dimension, Flint and Robinson say that people should blend in the neighbourhood, having relationships with people from other backgrounds.

Terms that are used to characterise social cohesion are solidarity, trust, participation and shared norms and values. Shared norms and values can lead to more trust, and more participation can lead to solidarity between people. Solidarity can also result in social control when common norms and values are not followed. It is possible that one neighbourhood is very cohesive due to strong norms and values while another neighbourhood has a high level of participation.

Conclusion

There are plenty of other definitions of social cohesion, but from the above mentioned definitions the conclusion can be drawn that social cohesion deals with relations between individuals and groups. In a cohesive society, there should be respect for all individuals and ethnic groups and full participation of all citizens in society. Testing the effects of the group environment on the behaviour of individuals is one part of doing research on social cohesion, but it should be noted that the individual influences the group level conditions as well. Thus it can be concluded that a part of social cohesion means *“the causal mechanisms in groups that reciprocally link individuals' attitudes and behaviours with the group level conditions in which they are situated”* (Friedkin, 2004, p. 410).

Lockwood	Jensen	Kearns & Forrest	Chan, To & Chan	Flint & Robinson
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social cohesion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belonging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common values & civic cultures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vertical interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared sense of combined contributions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civic integration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion • Participation • Recognition • Legitimacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social order & social control • Social solidarity • Social networks and social capital • Territorial belonging & identity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horizontal interactions • Set of attitudes and norms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared sense of rights and responsibilities • Equality and fair treatment • Respect for everything that has been achieved • Strong and positive relationships

Table 1 Overview of the definitions of social cohesion

In table 1 all the dimensions of the different definitions are summarised. The concept of social cohesion is therefore concerned with the interaction between individuals and between individual and groups. It is about the level in which people express their behaviour and how they experience different societal settings like personal life and society (Forrest & Kearns, 2001). The structures of groups and conditions are under the influence of behaviour. When the behaviour of the individual is positive, the group-level conditions leads to a positive membership attitude and when the individual acts for the benefit of the group, it can be said that a group is cohesive (Friedkin, 2004). To describe the bond in the social systems, the term social cohesion is used. This term cannot be used for describing individual characterises because it is about a group or system. Social cohesion happens on different levels and systems such as a city, region, neighbourhood or street (Forrest & Kearns, 2001). It is possible that there is strong social cohesion on one level, while the social cohesion on the other level is weak. Social cohesion can lead to separation between people. An example is separation between the people that belong to a group and the people that do not belong to that specific group.

Social cohesion thus has many dimensions but most researchers use a definition with dimensions that includes the following three elements:

1. Social participation (behaviour): social cohesion is not an end product. It is a process to achieve sociability and harmony between group members. The decisions of the individual influence the group for example strengthen or weaken the group. Social cohesion can be determined by looking at how behaviour and feelings are translated into autonomous action for the common good (Heuser, 2005). Social cohesion is not only about feelings of people or psychological ideas but it is about real actions and behaviour.
2. Shared ideas (norms and values, identity): for social cohesion it is essential to have universal values, respect for each other and a common identity of group members. Social control plays a role in maintaining the common identity. This asks for active engagement of group members because they have to feel committed enough to act if the norms and values are threatened.
3. Identification with the group (experience): it is necessary for social cohesion to share goals and responsibilities as a group. The attitude of group member should show the desire or intention to be part of a group, the willingness to cooperate, identification with a group and some feelings for the group (solidarity). Members also have the feeling that they can trust their fellow members, and help others (or cooperate). The dimensions for this element are: trust, help and cooperation. These indicators have a direct consequence for cohesiveness.

These topics will be elaborated on in the following paragraphs. It should be noticed that the topics and dimension have a strong consistency. For example, it is possible that people have a high share of norms and values, but do not experience high solidarity to each other. Still it can be experienced as strong social cohesion.

2.1.3 Applied to this study

Social participation (behaviour)

By encouraging people to participate in activities, they can get access to help and gain skills that they might need to handle problems in the community. When there is less participation in a community, the quality of the community is lower (Reid, 2000). To make the neighbourhood a better place, the residents have to participate themselves. It is not the job of voluntary organisations to make things happen in the neighbourhood, but the residents of the neighbourhood should be involved and make things happen for themselves (Wood, 2002). Voluntary organisations can help in this process. This described phenomenon is also the difference between bottom-up and top-down policies. All actions

of individuals are influencing the neighbourhood and when being part of a group, it is likely that individuals try to act in a way that can lead to autonomous action for mutual benefits (Heuser, 2005).

Faith Based Organisations, youth groups, sports groups and various other organisations are examples of voluntary organisations (non-governmental organisations). Those voluntary organisations have the incentive to connect people with each other and thus to increase the connectedness (Heuser, 2005). Most voluntary organisations are accessible for all who want to join them and by connecting people they create solidarity between themselves but also between themselves and other organisations or groups. Solidarity is a term that can be applied to many situations: helping a neighbour carrying something heavy, babysitting or helping with the groceries. Solidarity is also doing something for someone, but not expecting to receive something back (immediately) (Van Marissing, 2008).

However, to increase the social cohesion, active participation is absolutely necessary (Putnam, 2002) and it is important that relationships are developed between the members. If this is successful, a community grows. It is important that people share norms and values for social cohesion and Faith Based Organisations have strong ideals and values (Putnam, 2002). Groups or organisations should be careful not to lose the relation with other groups by improving the 'us' feeling (Dukes & Musterd, 2012).

Shared ideas (norms and values)

The dimension of norms and values is about ideas of desirable and undesirable behaviour of community residents. Social norms are common expectations of group members in a community and are the standards of right and wrong. Norms and values have three functions (Bicchieri & Muldoon, 2011): (1) they control behaviour. Norms are guidelines of how to act right and when used often they become the standard for everyone. Many norms and values are unwritten and common knowledge such as 'say hello to someone' or 'dispose of rubbish / garbage bags'. When it is a standard people have to act accordingly, otherwise they can be reprimanded. (2) They try to make society more harmonious. If all people in the neighbourhood agree on such norms and values it has a positive effect on the liveability of the community. However, it is possible for norms and values to change. For example, values about loyalty, friendliness, sense of truth, trustworthiness and honesty have changed over time. The content is still the same, but the way in which these values are practised has become more difficult. When newcomers enter the neighbourhood it is difficult for them to get acquainted with the unwritten norms and values of the new community and the established residents will see the new people as intruders that violate the rules. (3) They create order. Norms and values have a controlling function. The newcomers will have to face that because they are not

aware of the rules of their new community. Order can only be established in a community that has systematic behaviour. It is possible that when people are more involved in the neighbourhood and are part of groups or organisations, there will be more shared norms and the level of trust can increase.

Norms and values are also different between different groups such as youngsters, elderly people, natives, immigrants, singles, families, low or high income households (Ruijsbroek & Verweij, 2009). In many urban less developed neighbourhoods there is a large mutation of residents. People who receive a better financial or social situation leave the neighbourhood to live in a better place, which might result in a neighbourhood with high diversity and with diverse norms and values. It is probable that this results in tensions. People sharing the same norms and values are likely to form a group and have solidarity towards each other. However, this is no guarantee for strong social cohesion; the group can have a high or low cohesiveness.

Part of the dimension of norms and values is social control. One of the conditions for social cohesion is being able to recognise one another without really knowing each other. This is a form of social order and control (which is a part of social cohesion): how much influence do the residents or group members have on each other. If there is much influence, it will influence the shared norms and values in a neighbourhood because there is a certain level of control between the residents. When people trust one another it is possible to create a willingness to search for solutions for collective problems (Hart, Knol, Maas-de Waal, & Roes, 2002). When norms and values influence the liveability of the neighbourhood, there will be more social control with a tendency towards real control of the ideas and behaviour of the residents. Because social cohesion influences the neighbourhood, social cohesion can be used as a referee for liveability in a certain area or neighbourhood according to the Dutch government (Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2012).

Identification with the group (experience)

Terms that are used when people talk about social cohesion are: sense of belonging, attachment to the group, willingness to participate and to share outcomes (Markus, 2012). In these terms, it becomes clear that the concept 'group' is inevitable to address when talking about social cohesion. The causal mechanisms in groups are important because they link the attitudes and behaviour of the individuals to the conditions of the group they try to be part of (Friedkin, 2004). The term that is used to refer to the degree of all the efforts of the group members to remain part of the group is group cohesiveness. It is the bond which holds the group together. A high level of cohesiveness means that people are more concerned about one another and also have a greater desire to do something which might have a positive effect on the group or the environment. A group

is more cohesive when the group level conditions are leading towards a positive membership attitude and behaviour and when all the group members try to act in such a way that they do not harm the group and that the group conditions can be maintained (Friedkin, 2004). The behaviour of the individuals is thus of major importance, because the individual behaviour is shaping the cohesiveness of the group. However, it is not just the individual, there are also external forces in order for influencing the social cohesion. For example, attractiveness and image of a group is important for the decision of an individual to desire being part of the group. To discover the degree of cohesiveness, it is important to study the attitudes of all individuals towards the group and see how much effort they do for the group (Wood, 2002).

For increasing social cohesion, people should share the same norms and values, principles and ways of behaving. It is also possible to increase cohesion because there is a strong feeling about a certain place (feeling safe because of ethnic concentration or same identity) (Heuser, 2005)

2.2 Faith Based Organisations

The basic question of this paragraph is: what is a Faith Based Organisation? It is a term that will be used quite often in this study. The term 'faith based organisation', often abbreviated as FBO, refers to religious organisations and charity organisations affiliated with a religion. A faith based organisation is not the same as a church (Fritz, n.d.). Using the term 'Church-based organisations' therefore would cause problems, because a church is often connected to the Christian faith, and it refers to the physical places of worship. However, besides 'churches' there are also temples, mosques, synagogues and other religious buildings. Another term that could be used is 'congregation-based'. Congregations have regular religious services and an ordained minister. However, this term also does not fit the content, because many organisations that act on a religious base are non-congregational organisations (Vidal, 2001). Therefore, the term faith-based organisation is most correct. The churches and congregations can be part of Faith Based Organisations, but in this research the term FBO will be explained as a 'freestanding religious organisation' (Vidal, 2001).

A Faith Based Organisation takes religion and faith seriously and religion is the motivation why they exist and act, how they act and what they do. An FBO is an organisation or a project that is supported by religious organisation. The FBO itself is a non-profit organisation, initiated by a religious congregation or a religious board and the FBO has a clear mission statement showing that it is a religious motivated institution (UNFPA, 2009; Center for Faith and Service, n.d.). Faith Based Organisations can have many aims and are involved in many activities besides worship, such as providing social services, community development, helping addicts and religious counselling and

training (Beaumont & Dias, 2008). Although all the activities are organised with a religious motivation, the activities are accessible to everyone, and help is offered to anyone who asks for. Many types of help are offered without referring to religion, because it is not necessary for the delivered service to be religious or the religion organisation has the aspiration to help and serve people whether they are religious or not (Fritz, n.d.). Faith Based Organisations are often active in areas and neighbourhoods that struggle with a certain problem, because FBO's see it as their mission to make changes in those areas (Beaumont & Dias, 2008). FBO's organise activities in the deprived urban areas and among other groups that are tough to be reached. Another point of interest is that most FBO's have active members that come from deprived urban areas and therefore feel affiliation with the other inhabitants.

Faith Based Organisations operate in spaces, which contain different levels. The FBO acts in a different way on all those levels. There are also relations between the different levels and those relations and levels are connected to the broader social context. The spatial context and the social context are connected, and there is a reciprocal dependency between the social and space. This leads again to the question of how the FBO tries to enlarge social cohesion in an urban deprived neighbourhood.

2.3 Religion and social cohesion

Worldwide there are many religious people, or people who believe in a higher power (Furbey, 2008). Those people do not all attribute their lives to religion, or practise religion in a personal or social way, but they assign themselves to religious categories. For many religions it is important to act in a good way by showing mercy to others. Most religious people are very active in communities and social cohesion can be achieved in many different ways. Religious communities offer places for worship, education, recreation, community service and by doing and organising all these activities Faith Based Organisations offer a place where social cohesion and commitment can grow (Furbey, 2008). The experience that members get is important for the individual. It leads to social responsibility and consciousness about the impact of our actions on others (Kearns & Forrest, 2000; Furbey, 2008). This leads to active individuals (instead of passive members) and very connected people. Churches and Faith Based Organisations also provide many social services (Putnam, 2002). It has been argued that with the decline of organised Christianity in the 60s and 70s social cohesion declined. This led to the conclusion that it is more important to work for a tolerant and cohesive society, which shows the role of Faith Based Organisations. In the same way as organised religion did, they lead to a tolerant community (Kearns & Forrest, 2000) and to increased social responsibility.

When speaking of cohesion related to religion, the following definition is used: cohesion is being a member of a religious community and following the implemented norms and rules which leads to a religious group (Mol, 1970). There are many different religions communities and corresponding Faith Based

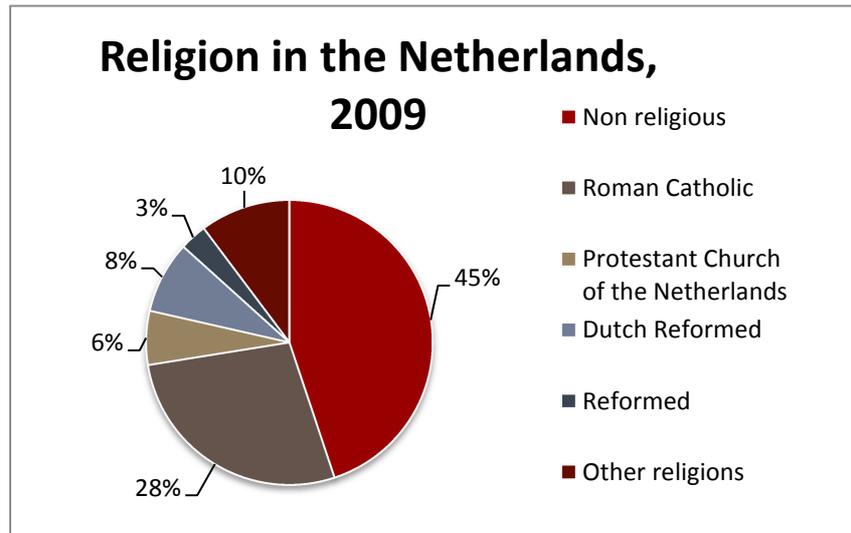


Figure 3 Religion in the Netherlands 2009 (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2012)

Organisations in the Netherlands. In figure 3, there is an overview of the percentages per religious group. There are several groups (Protestant Church of the Netherlands, Roman Catholic, Dutch Reformed and Reformed) that all share the same faith and are therefore part of Christianity. Together they form the largest religious group of the Netherlands, as can be seen in figure 3. There is also a group called 'other religions' which among others includes Judaism, Islam and Hinduism. Looking at the percentages, it can be concluded that Christianity is the largest religion and the most influential one in the Netherlands. Therefore, this study will focus on the group that adhere to the Christian faith. Part of the Christian religion is to take care about one another and for social cohesion active participation and the need for human connectedness (social cohesion) is necessary (Cohen, 2004). However, this study is not about social cohesion in churches, but it is about the role of religion in increasing social cohesion in neighbourhoods. The role of religion can be found in Faith Based Organisations.

2.3.1 Secularisation and the shift of religion

When Faith Based Organisations are institutionalised and the role of religion declines, cohesion can get less or even disappear (Boef, 2004). This is also called the process of secularisation. Secularisation is the process whereby the influence of religious institutions decreases in society. Secularisation began with changes inside the church which lead to a loss of authority (Martin, 2005). Although the Netherlands are regarded as the most secularised country of Europe, religion and Christian FBO's are entrenched in the Dutch culture and welfare provision. In history, Christianity was the driving force behind a variety of activities such as Christian trade unions, Christian television broadcasting companies, Christian political parties and several Christian newspapers, schools and

hospitals. These activities or groups were also specified per religious group: Roman Catholic or Protestant. For the remaining population of the Netherlands there always have been secular alternatives. For profiting of government measures, it was absolutely necessary to belong to a political party such as the Christian party. The secularisation (the decline of religion) in the Netherlands led to a decline of the influence that the Christian groups had (Beaumont & Dias, 2008). Many of the Christian facilities remained, but they also opened their doors to people that were not part of the specific denomination. Due to this change, the government started to play a financial role which led to less independent Faith Based Organisations, although this was not the case for all FBO's in the Netherlands. The FBO's had a charity role in society and they took care of most welfare and social work until the 1960s when the state developed a welfare system (Davelaar, van den Toorn, de Witte, Beaumont, & Kuiper, 2011). Parts of the FBO's remained, but these FBO's did not receive sufficient government funding and needed public funding to survive. Due to a change of the welfare system in the Netherland in the 2000s, private organisation regained their functions. When there were major budget cuts to all government funded organisation, the FBO's with private funding remained and took over the role of the government funded organisations (Davelaar, van den Toorn, de Witte, Beaumont, & Kuiper, 2011).

Therefore, religion did not disappear but its place in society shifted: from a traditional religion with a fixed building, towards young vibrant communities without a fixed church. The focus of churches has shifted again to serving people in the place where they need it. Religion can be a force to increase social cohesion because it can function as a binding agent between people and groups (Boef, 2004). Adherents of religion or full churches mean that the awareness of norms and values is larger. Therefore churches have an important function in society (Boef, 2004). 'Religion' for improving communities is a relatively new development. This has much to do with secularisation, as will be explained in the next paragraph.

2.3.2 Positive elements of religion in society

Religion has changed, and can therefore be used in other roles. Many see religion as something which has to remain private and should not be visible in public space (Labuschagne, 2004). However, a separation of religion and government does not imply that the government has to ignore religion (Bijsterveld, 2004). Religion can contribute to the government objectives to increase social cohesion and improve the liveability in neighbourhoods. Religion is indispensable for society, because it is a way to create a common identity and to think about share norms and values (Labuschagne, 2004). Neighbourhoods in the Netherlands often include many churches and Faith Based Organisations that have a mission to preach the Gospel. But many of these organisations also

have the wish to improve neighbourhoods surrounding the churches and FBO's and they have the potential to make changes. Churches and FBO's organise several social activities: they give pastoral care, youth activities, activities to increase social cohesion in the neighbourhoods, education and help with the upbringing of children or the care for elderly (Bernts & Kregting, 2010; Davelaar, van den Toorn, de Witte, Beaumont, & Kuiper, 2011). These activities are not just for the members of the religious group but also for the residents of the neighbourhood in which the church or FBO is located. In that way, the FBO realises the physical needs of the communities (Heuser, 2005). Religious communities can act as a social safety net (Cohen, 2004).

Religion in communities is important for the creation of identity and the feeling of belonging to a certain neighbourhood (Flint, Atkinson, & Kearns, 2002). Being part of a neighbourhood is essential for the existence of social cohesion. The creation of social cohesion is difficult in areas that are very diverse and have multicultural residents. However, Faith Based Organisations sometimes provide facilities for ethnic minorities, are available for all ethnic groups and, moreover, try to engage in the debate between ethnic minorities and the local community for the creation of trust, reciprocity and collective capacity. Solidarity between all groups is very important (Jensen, 2002). One reason why churches still play a role in the creation of cohesion is that even in economic crises, religion (either as church or as faith based organisation) remains visible in neighbourhoods while other organisations disappear. Another reason is that when people are true believers they are often involved in activities in their neighbourhood (Flint, Atkinson, & Kearns, 2002). Religion commands some standards and to be part of the religious group, some standards have to be accepted. If someone feels unable to accept the standards, the person is free to leave the group. The underlying principle is based on the values of religion to help one another and therefore many Faith Based Organisations offer charity and are of help to the community. This can be a great help to the improvement of communities and the increasing of social cohesion. According to Durkheim, one of the functions of religion is to create social cohesion. Other functions described by Durkheim are disciplinary, vitalizing and euphoric (Bancroft, Rogers, & Stapley, 2010). For Christians, religion is all about believing in a higher power, but it can have another part as well in the route to social cohesion, harmony and solidarity.

2.4 Conclusion

2.4.1 Conceptual model

In the previous paragraphs the concept of social cohesion and the concept of Faith Based Organisations have been discussed. Many dimensions of social cohesion and the roles of FBO's have been mentioned and in this paragraph, all those elements will be visualised. The first model (figure 4) shows how the horizontal and vertical cohesion works when applied to FBOs. The second model (figure 5) is the conceptual model. There are three categories in the conceptual model. The first is about the Faith Based Organisation and the type of activities that they organise. The second category shows what kind of social cohesion can be the result of the activities of the FBO. The third category is more specified and shows the dimensions of social cohesion and the connected elements. The three dimensions are also the directory for the interviews with participants.

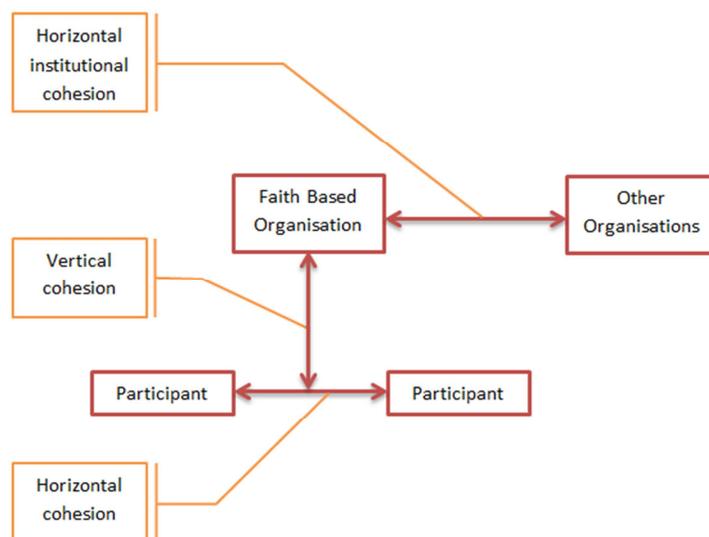


Figure 4 Different types of social cohesion (Heij, 2013)

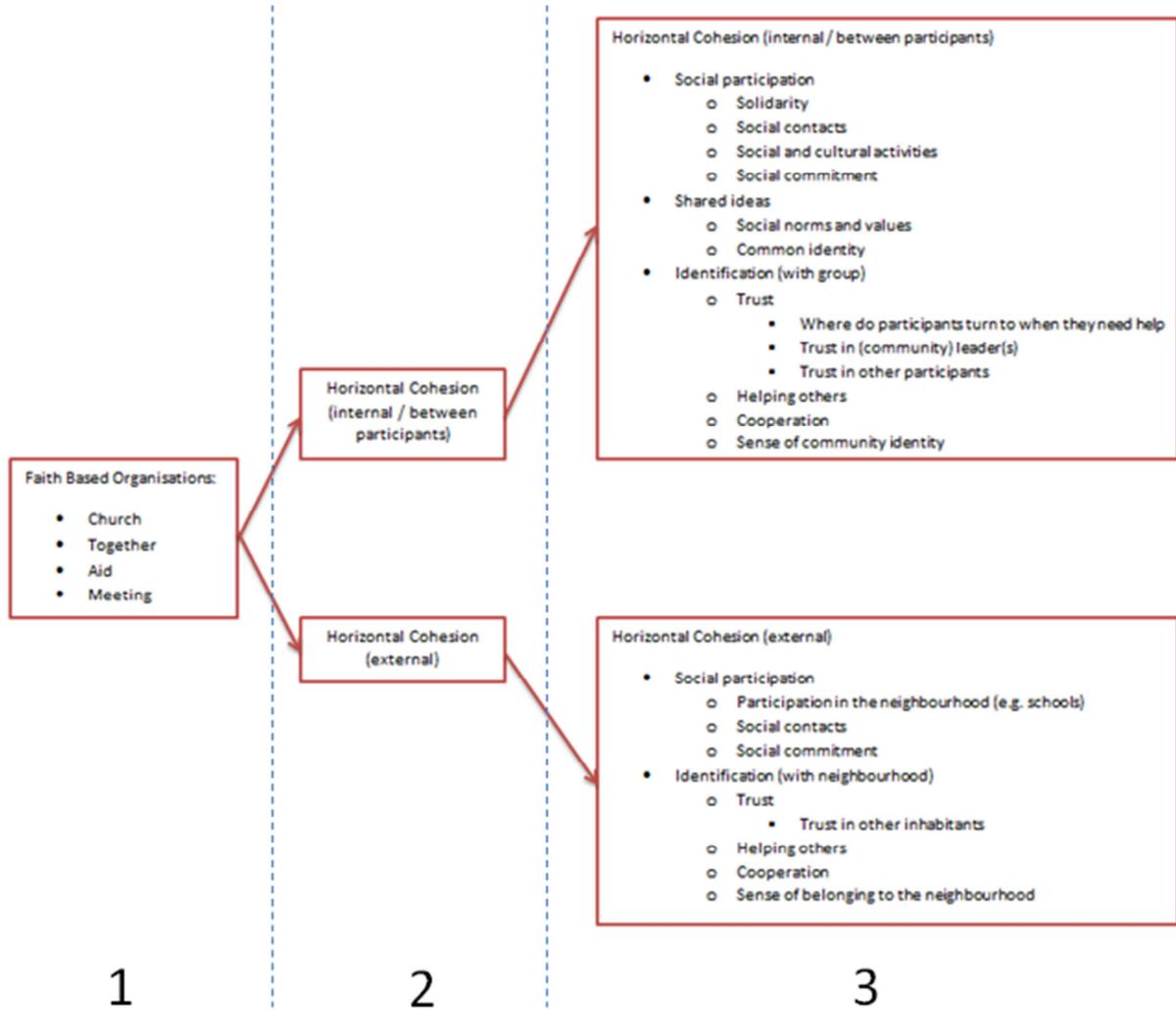


Figure 5 Conceptual model (Heij, 2013)

3. Methodology and research design

In this chapter, the methods of research will be further explained. The choices and decisions with regard to certain methods will be justified.

3.1 Research strategy and methods

The best way to answer the research question “What role do Faith Based Organisations play in order to enlarge social cohesion in urban less developed neighbourhoods” is to use a qualitative method. The goal of qualitative research is to describe, interpret and explain behaviour and experiences of the research subject without disturbing the natural setting. In this study the central research objects are the participants and the faith based organisation. To answer this research question in a qualitative way, a case study has been used. A case study is a method to investigate a certain phenomenon in its own context (the natural setting). The phenomenon can be a program, activity or problem; in this study the phenomena are the activities and processes organised by churches and Faith Based Organisations. The context is the setting in which the phenomenon appears. It is important to include the context in the study because the context often influences the phenomenon or there is no clear separation between the context and the phenomenon. In this study, the context is the environment, the space, in which all the activities occur (Creswell J. W., 2007; Yin, 1994).

In a case study and in-depth research, it is possible to use a whole range of data collection methods, such as (participant) observation, interviews, reports and documents (Boeije, 't Hart, & Hox, 2009). A case study also offers the opportunity for bottom-up research. In this case study one case has been used to obtain a general understanding of the phenomenon that occurs. However, for the topic that is concerned with the kind of activities that Faith Based Organisations organise, other cases have been visited to get a broader knowledge of the actions of Faith Based Organisations. Because the research question is about Faith Based Organisations in cities, the specific case for analysis was in an urban neighbourhood.

The earlier mentioned theories have been used as a starting point, to give direction to the study. They were used in the questions that were asked and were used for analysing the data. Everything that is already known might be relevant in the study and new discoveries can lead to an improved theory.

3.2 Validity, reliability, generalizability

The validity of qualitative research is difficult. It is not easy to iterate measurements because in qualitative research the situation differs from interview to interview. A complete qualitative research study cannot be repeated, but to be as thorough as possible method

triangulation will be used (Creswell J. W., 2007; Boeije, 't Hart, & Hox, 2009). This implies that several methods (such as observation, interviews and documents) will be used to get information about the same topic. In this way the accuracy of the findings can be checked. To be correct about the statements of respondents, the results and findings will be checked with them as much as possible. This is also called member validation (Boeije, 't Hart, & Hox, 2009). Using interviews as data material can lead to problems when the respondents misinterpret the questions or answer in a socially desirable way. Therefore, multiple respondents have been used to increase validity.

The reliability of a qualitative research is connected to the use of the chosen research method: using the same questionnaire, analysing software or topic lists which results in inter-rater reliability. To be as precise as possible, it is necessary for the researcher to write everything down step by step and to assure the reliability, it is necessary that someone else checks the data for inconsistencies (Boeije, 't Hart, & Hox, 2009).

In qualitative research, generalisation is not often used because in most research the goal is limited to certain areas, places, individuals or organisations. It is not the intention to apply the results to a complete different situation. In qualitative research, the strength is that phenomena are examined in their contexts to get a thorough result. However, it is not impossible to generalise. It is possible to develop a broader theory and in other cases the same research can be done (Creswell J. , 2009). The data collection and data analysis should be performed in such a way, and with such a level of standardisation, that it is possible to do the same study in another area of research.

3.3 Data collection

Social cohesion of a group can be studied in different ways, but most common is to look at an individual level by looking at the participation of the individual in an organisation such as a faith based organisation. Also, informal social contacts can be analysed or the rate in which the individual identifies with the group. Another dimension that can be investigated is the degree of trust that people have in others and in institutions. It is important to choose a case in a neighbourhood that has large involvement of a faith based organisation. Large involvement will likely result in more enthusiastic participants that will give more results (a better idea of the activities, more opinions about the activities, and a better indication about giving responsibility to the participants). However, large involvement can also result in subjective data, because very involved participants are most likely positive about the organisation, otherwise they would not be that much involved. This subjectivity is a negative element of interviewing only participants. However, with larger involvement, it is possible to conclude whether the faith based organisation succeed in enlarging social cohesion among this group.

In this case study the data that has been used, has been retrieved by (participating) observations, meetings and by 20 qualitative interviews, as well as analysing relevant documents. The data collection was an iterative process, which means that after receiving the first data, it has immediately been analysed and reflected on which made it possible to improve or alter the research and data collection so that it was as directed as possible (Boeije, 't Hart, & Hox, 2009). With (participating) observation is meant that the researcher will observe, walk along with people, participate in their activities, talk and interview. Of course, the participants have been acquainted with the fact that they are part of a study, because not knowing this would be unethical (Boeije, 't Hart, & Hox, 2009).

The interviews were qualitative, which means that the researcher asks questions about certain social phenomena, while the interviewee answers them. The goal of the interviews was to collect relevant information for the study. The interviews for this study were semi-structured, which means that there is a certain level of standardisation. As framework for this semi-structured interview, a topic list (see chapter 3.6) has been used. Letting them answer several questions and asking for their opinion fits in qualitative research.

3.4 Research approach

In this paragraph, the operating principle will be explained. This will be divided per topic of the research question.

3.4.1 Approach for topic 1: Activities of FBOs

The first topic is about the kind of activities that Faith Based Organisations practise in order to contribute to social cohesion. The first step in this topic was making a list of all the activities that are organised by the Faith Based Organisation in the specific neighbourhood of this study. Then all the activities were visited multiple times, to get a good impression of the activities and also to get to know the participants and organisers. Part of this topic was also to find out whether the activity of the Faith Based Organisation has a specific target, and especially to see whether the activity has been organised to contribute to social cohesion. For this topic also the demographics of the chosen neighbourhood have been analysed, for knowing which group is participating most in the activities. Besides the demographics of the neighbourhood as well as the presence of other organisations in the neighbourhood have been mapped, in order to find out whether there are connections between the Faith Based Organisation and other organisations, such as combined activities. To be able to answer this question, several professionals have been interviewed.

3.4.2 Approach for topic 2: Experience of the activities by the participants

The second topic is about the experience of the activities by the participants. To formulate an answer to this question, it is important to be present during activities. This has been done by participating observations. All activities have been visited multiple times and the interviewer observed, listened, became a part of the group and thus also participated in the activities. During the activities, some comments were made by participants that have been used in the analyses. Remarkable things have been collected in field notes and to get an impression of the atmosphere, photographs have been made. Through these visits, it was possible to get an idea of the atmosphere during the activities and see the behaviour of participants. The next step was to interview the participants and ask for their opinion about the activities as well as to ask for the participant's opinion about the presence of a faith based organisation to see whether it has any value to them. Because this topic is about the participants' experience, another question was whether they think the activities are relevant. At this point, participants were asked to participate in the research study.

3.4.3 Approach for topic 3: Relation between the participants

As a third topic, the relation between the participants has been investigated by asking the participants several questions about the contact they have with the other participants. Do they meet each other on other occasions, in the streets, or did they become very good friends? It is also possible that they only meet during the activities of the Faith Based Organisation. Another question that has been asked to the participants is whether they already knew each other before they went to the activities of the Faith Base Organisation. Also, with observations it was possible to get an idea about the relation between the participants. While conducting the research, it became clear that also social media networks (such as Facebook and Twitter), had to be taken into account, which resulted in also observing the digital group of 'Geloven in Spangen'.

3.4.4 Approach for topic 4: Relation between participants and non-participants.

The fourth topic also deals with relations and contact, but here it is about the relation between the participants and the non-participants (the other inhabitants of the neighbourhood). For this topic, the group of respondents is not extended with non-participants. This might seem strange, because without the group of non-participants it is difficult to speak about relationships between those groups. However, the reason that the group of non-participants is included, is that the main research question investigates how their activities have impact on the social behaviour of participants. The group of non-participants is not influenced by the activities of the Faith Based Organisation. Therefore, non-participants are irrelevant in this study. Nevertheless, this topic is part of the study,

and relevant because this topic investigated whether the activities of the Faith Based Organisation led to a change in social cohesion in the neighbourhood. Questions that were asked were whether the respondents have contacts with other people in the neighbourhood, followed by a question about whether they have more contact with other people than before they went to the activities of the Faith Based Organisation. Another question that was asked was whether the participants are willing to invest more time in relations with other inhabitants. However, whether to ask this question depended on the given answers.

3.5 The respondents

The interviews have mainly been carried out on the participants of the activities because this is the only group able to answer questions about the activities, how they experience the activities and whether it leads to social cohesion in urban less developed neighbourhoods. The participants have been asked questions about their cohesiveness with the other participants and their efforts to increase social cohesion between other residents of the neighbourhood. At the beginning of the research study, all activities were visited multiple times, to get acquainted with the activities but also to get to know the participants. During the research it became clear that there actually were three groups of participants: active and passive participants, and there are incidental visitors (see figure 6). The core group consists of about 30 active participants. The group of passive participants has about 80 participants, and there is also a group of incidental visitors which consists of about 150 people. To get more accurate data, the interviewed participants were active and passive visitors of different activities. The reason for this is that there could be different views about specific activities and by interviewing different groups of participants more information could be collected.

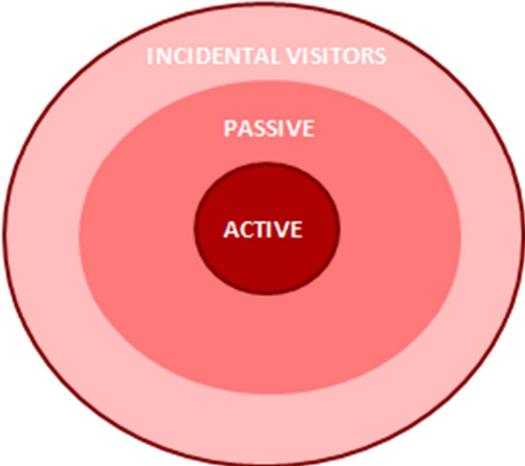


Figure 6 Division of participants (Heij, 2013)

3.5.1 Active participants

The active participants are people who like to help organising things, or even lead one of the activities, while they can also still be participants in another activity. The active participants form the core of the Faith Based Organisation. There are about 30 active participants. Of the group of active participants, the people have been approached individually to participate in this research study and eventually six interviews have been conducted within this group.

3.5.2 Passive participants

For the group of passive participants, the visits of the activities were of major importance to get into contact with them. To conduct interviews with this group, the participants had to be approached carefully. First, it was a general question during an activity: 'who wants to participate'. However, the risk of collecting respondents in this way is that only the enthusiastic participants are interviewed. Therefore, after the activities, I asked people that did not respond, whether they also would like to participate with an interview, or why they did not feel like participating. In many cases, it was because of time limitations, physical barriers and also because they thought of themselves as not relevant for this research study. In many cases, these problems could be solved by conducting the interviews before or after one of the activities, or conducting the activities at their homes. There have been eleven interviews within the group of passive participants.

3.5.3 Children

However, at some activities it was not possible to conduct interviews. These were the activities that involved children. As will be further explained in chapter 5, there are many different activities for children in different age groups. The pre-schoolers were too young for interviewing, but from the observations their opinion about the activity was very clear. The participation of the parents is very low at this activity. The first idea was to talk to parents when they come round for their kids. However, many children were picked up by other relatives which made it difficult to get into contact. It has been tried to reach them at their homes, but the parents were too busy to make time, except for one mother whose children visited the activity. Another activity with children is homework support. At these occasions, there was dinner in the middle of the activity, cooked and prepared by one of the parents who also joined dinner. While eating, some questions have been asked to this parent but not in a formal interview setting.

3.5.4 Professionals

The active and passive participants, who have been interviewed, were all living in the neighbourhood of Spangen. The professionals that have been interviewed can also be categorised in two groups:

related to Spangen, or related to the Faith Based Organisation. The group that is related to Spangen contained four people: the local police officer 'Garry Werners', leader of Thuis op Straat 'Rodney van de Hengel', leader of Welcome to Spangen 'Pamely Tijthoff', and a spokesperson of the local government 'Jose de Reus. With these four people, official interviews have been conducted.

The second group, related to the Faith Based Organisations contained four people, all working for the IZB (the FBO). However, with these four people, there have not been formal interviews. To get more information about the work of Faith Based Organisations, in the beginning there has been contact with multiple projects. One of these projects was also in Rotterdam and the other project was in The Hague. Agaath Palland and Ad Vastenhout are missionary workers in these areas. During these visits, they explained what they organise in their communities, what kind of activities the FBO has, and why they do that. These visits were very informative and resulted in more background information, but they will not be quoted in this study, because their information is less relevant for the chosen case. Also, there have been several meetings with Kees Koster, manager of all missionary projects of the IZB. He has given information on a higher level, about the organisation, the structure of Geloven in Spangen and also about other projects. This information was helpful in writing, but has not been recorded. The last respondent of the group related to the FBO, is Nico van Splunter. He is the leader of Geloven in Spangen, and therefore meetings have been held to talk about Geloven in Spangen, about the activities, about participants, the way things work and many other relevant things. Supervising everything related to Geloven in Spangen, he has been approached many times when information was needed or help with accessing people.

3.5.5 List of respondents

For this study, the names of the active and passive participant respondents are changed, in order to guarantee anonymity. The names that are used still indicate the ethnicity of the respondent.

1. Passive participants

- Priscilia, 47 years, Cape Verdean, female
- Karin, 68 years, Dutch, female
- Halima, +/- 35 years, Moroccan, female
- Trudy, 70 years, Dutch, female
- Almira, 40 years, Spanish, female
- Coby, +/- 80 years, Dutch, female
- Susan, 46 years, Dutch, female
- Cinta, +/- 40 years, Dutch-Indonesian, female

- Marie, 74 years, Indonesian, female
- Jaap, +/- 50 years, Dutch, male
- Lucia, +/- 35 years, Dutch, female

2. Active participants

- Piet, 46 years, Dutch, male
- Deborah, 26 years, Dutch, female
- Johan, +/- 35 years, Dutch, male
- Mila, +/- 55 years, Surinamese, female
- Annemieke +/- 35 years, Dutch, female
- Theresa, 42 years, Cape Verdean, female

3. Professionals

- Garry Werners, local police officer
- Jose de Reus, area manager of Spangen
- Rodney van de Hengel, leader of Thuis op Straat
- Pamelty Tijthoff, leader of Welcome in Spangen
- *Nico van Splunter, leader of Geloven in Spangen*
- *Kees Koster, manager missionary projects of the IZB*
- *Ageeth Palland, leader of an IZB-project in Rotterdam*
- *Ad Vastenhout, leader of an IZB-project in The Hague*
- *Niels de Jong, leader of an IZB-project in Rotterdam*

3.6 Topic list and interview guide

This is the list that has been used during the interviews, to have a semi-structured interview which had the same structure for all interviewees.

3.6.1 General question for interviewees

- Age
- Sex
- Ethnical background
- How long have you been living in this neighbourhood?

- Highest level of education
- Civil registration
- Do you have kids, are they going to school, which school?
- How long have you been connected to GIS?
- Which activities do you participate in?
- Does it matter that GIS is a Christian organisation, connected to a Christian church?
- Are you Christian?

3.6.2 Social participation:

- Do you feel committed to the neighbourhood that you live in? Why yes / no?
- Do the other participants feel committed to the city?
- Do you participate in activities of GIS that are organised in the neighbourhood? Do you also participate in other activities in the neighbourhood?
- How long have you been connected to GIS?
- Why are you (or you children) participating in the activities organised by GIS?
- Do your kids go to school?
- Are you actively involved at your children's school?
- Are you more active at your children's school now? When and how did that happen? Was there any role of GIS in that process?
- What do you think of the activities at the Prinses Margrietschool?
- Do you have many social contacts?
- Do you often have contact with your neighbours?
- Do you have contact with people from another ethnic background? Are these your direct neighbours or do they live further away?

3.6.3 Shared ideas

- Can you describe the group of participants of GIS? What is your position in this social group?
- Can you describe the group of people that participates most in the organised activities (elderly people, children, youngsters, and women)? Why this group?
- Is it important for you to participate in social activities?
- What is your opinion about the activities?
- Do you agree with the ideas of GIS (norms and values)?
- Do the participants have something in common?
- Are there any expectations of the participants?

- Is it important to you to do something for the neighbourhood?
- Are you willing to do something for the neighbourhood or for someone else, without receiving something in return?
- Do you talk to the participants of GIS also when no activities are organised by GIS?
- Do you try to get more social contact with others (e.g. neighbours)?

3.6.4 Identification with group

- Is there a sense of community?
- Do participants identify themselves with the group of participants and with the neighbourhood?
- Do participants trust the other participants and the organisation?
- Did GIS help to regain or increase trust in the neighbourhood?
- Are you (more) willing to help other people?
- Is there honesty in the neighbourhood?
- When you say something, is everybody listening or are there groups or people that have more power?
- Do you feel excluded?
- Do you feel at home?
- Do you share emotional moments with fellow participants or with other people in the neighbourhood?
- Do you have social support?
- Can you imagine yourself living in this neighbourhood in the future?

3.6.5 Question for local government, initiators and leader of the FBO

- Can you tell something about the structure of GIS?
- What were the reasons / motivations for starting GIS?
- Are there connections with other projects / partners in the neighbourhood and how was the decision to connect to some projects and cooperate with them?
- What are the positive points of GIS?
- Are there any problems?
- Is the project of GIS viable?
- Is there support from the local government?
 - o Financially?
 - o Support with human resources

- o Use of government property
- o Access to other partners
- Are there expectations of the participants?

3.7 Data analysis

For the data analysis, the several topics from paragraph 1.2.2 have been used, in combination with the three dimensions of social cohesion from paragraph 2.1.3. This led to the conceptual model (see paragraph 2.3.1) and also to the topic list. The interviews have been transcribed and afterwards put into the Qualitative Data Analysis & Research Software 'Atlas.ti'. First, all the interviews have been coded with a topic-code (e.g. this part of the interview answers a questions that belongs to topic X). To gain a certain overview, this has been done with different colours. The second step was to use the three dimensions (social participation, shared ideas, identification) as a code for all the interviews. Some things that were relatively often mentioned have their own code, although these quotes were most of the times not relevant for answering any questions. To be able to answer the research topics, the codes have been combined which led to the model that can be seen in figure 7. These combinations led to several lists of quotes that gave answer to the different questions. In this study, the chapter are defined per topic (e.g. chapter 6 = topic 2 about the experiences of participants, and chapter 7 = topic 3 etc.). In each chapter, the three dimensions of social cohesion will be used to draw conclusions about social cohesion.

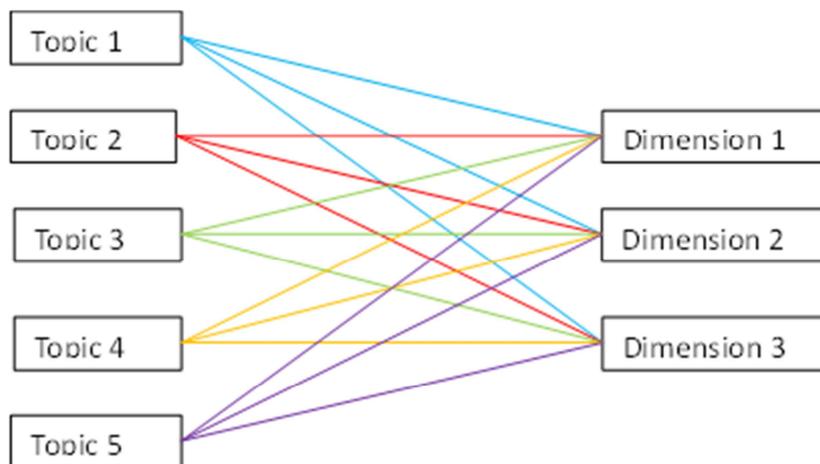


Figure 7 Combination of topics and dimensions for analysis (Heij, 2013)

Because the interviews were held in Dutch, and this research study is written in English, all quotes are carefully and accurately translated into another language. When using a quote in this study, to illustrate or explain something, an English quote will be used. At the end of every quote

there is a tiny number, corresponding with an End-note that contains the original Dutch quote. The End-notes with the original quotes can be found in Appendix 1.

3.8 Case description

3.8.1 Particular case

There are several Faith Based Organisations in the Netherlands. In paragraph 2.2 there is an explanation about Faith Based Organisations. For the case study, only the Faith Based Organisations that fit into the profile have been mapped. Therefore, the marks on the map in figure 8 are projects of Faith Based Organisations in cities, of in areas that are less developed. Most organisations do have some projects in cities. Most projects are located In Rotterdam and Amsterdam. To answer the research question, central to this thesis, a particular case should be located in the city, and particularly in an urban less developed neighbourhood. Using a list of the appointed problematic neighbourhoods in 2007 (figure 9), it can be



Figure 8 Map of Faith Based Organisations in the Netherlands (Heij, 2013)

Gemeente	Gebieden
Alkmaar	Overdie
Amersfoort	De Kruiskamp
Amsterdam	Bos en Lommer Amsterdam-Noord Nieuw-West Amsterdam-Oost Bijlmer
Arnhem	Klarendal Presikhaaf Het Arnhemse Broek Malburgen/Immerloo
Den Haag	Stationsbuurt Schilderswijk Den Haag Zuid-West Transvaal
Deventer	Rivierenwijk
Dordrecht	Wielwijk/Crabbehof
Eindhoven	Woensel-West Doornakkers Bennekel
Enschede	Mekkelholt/Deppenbroek
Groningen	Korrewegwijk De Hoogte
Heerlen	Meezenbroek
Leeuwarden	Heechterp/Schieringen
Maastricht	Maastricht Noordoost
Nijmegen	Hatert
Rotterdam	Rotterdam Oud-West Rotterdam Oud-Noord Bergpolder Overschie Oud-Zuid Vreewijk Zuidelijke Tuinsteden
Schiedam	Nieuwland
Utrecht	Kanaleneiland Ondiep Overvecht Zuilen-Oost
Zaanstad	Poelenburg



NRC Handelsblad 220307 / FG, RB / Bron: Ministerie van VROM

Figure 9 Problematic neighbourhoods in the Netherlands (NRC, 2007)

concluded that most neighbourhoods that are less developed can be found in Rotterdam. Therefore, a project and FBO in Rotterdam have been chosen as a case for this study.

To be able to do research on the subject of social cohesion and FBO's, the project that will be used as case has to be active in the neighbourhood and should mention in their mission statement that they would like to do something for the neighbourhood. On the basis of these criteria, the case 'Geloven in Spangen' in Spangen, Rotterdam has been chosen.

3.8.2 Demographics in Rotterdam

In table 2 there is a comparison between the city of Rotterdam, the Delfshaven Township (which consists of 8 neighbourhoods) and the neighbourhood of Spangen (Delfshaven: Deelgemeente Rotterdam, 2010). The red box in table 3 shows that the amount of inhabitants in the neighbourhood was 10.009 in 2010. At that moment, 85% of the inhabitants was of foreign descent. That means that the neighbourhood is multicultural. There amount of inhabitants is growing fast in relation to the growth of the other neighbourhoods of Rotterdam. Another interesting observation typical topic (see the blue box in table 2), is the amount of youngsters in Spangen: 37% of the entire population of Spangen consists of people under 22 years of age (of which 92% are of foreign descent) (Delfshaven: Deelgemeente

Table 2 View on the neighbourhood (Delfshaven: Deelgemeente Rotterdam, 2010)

			Stad	DG	Wijk
Demografie	Bevolking	Opmerking 1-1-2009	587.161	71.201	9.801
		1-1-2010	592.939	72.921	10.009
	Allochtonen	1-1-2010	48%	72%	85%
Jongeren	Jeugd 0 t/m 22	1-1-2010	160.046	22.852	3.685
	Jeugd als % totale bevolking		27%	31%	37%
	Allochtone jeugd	1-1-2010	96.362	18.328	3376
	Allochtone jeugd als % totale jeugd		60%	80%	92%
Onderwijs	VSV	17 t/m 22	16%	16%	17%
	startkwalf.	17 t/m 22	43%	40%	29%
	zonder startkw	17 t/m 22	41%	43%	54%
Wonen	% Huurwoningen	1-1-2010	67	75	74
	% Koopwoningen	1-1-2010	33	25	26
	Gemiddelde WOZ	1-1-2010	€ 163.792	€ 129.901	€ 111.827
	% Bezit OBR/corpo	1-1-2010	48	52	63
	% Part. verhuur	1-1-2010	19	22	11
Indexen	Sociale Index '10		5,8	5,3	5,1
	> aspect capaciteiten		5,1	4,4	4,3
	> thema gezondheid		4,8	4,6	4,5
	> thema inkomen		4,4	3,6	3,4
	> thema taal		4,8	3,6	3,6
	Veiligheidsindex '10	Situatie '09	7	5,9	6,3
	Jeugd VI '10	Score	120,1	163,6	159,4
		Positie	Nvt	2	14
Inkomen	Gemiddeld besteedbaar h.h. inkomen (standaard)3	2007	21.000	18.100	16.700

Rotterdam, 2010). The many migrants in the neighbourhood and the multicultural character of the area also lead to a multi religious neighbourhood with a large group of adherents to the Islamic belief, Roman Catholics, secularised people (mostly the native inhabitants) and even postmodern beliefs can be found (in some youngsters).

In 2012 there was a research in Rotterdam, called the Social Index, which has tried to map the social situation in Rotterdam and in all the individual neighbourhoods. Looking for strengths and weaknesses, plans from local governments and local organisations can be sent in the right direction of filling gaps, or solving problems. Table 3 shows an

Table 3 Index of category scores (Centrum voor Onderzoek en Statistiek Rotterdam, 2012)

Score	Category
3,8 <	Socially very weak
3,9 - 4,9	Problematic
5,0 - 5,9	Vulnerable
6,0 - 7,0	Socially sufficient
7,1 >	Socially strong

explanation of the scores in five colours: green means strong and not problematic, while pink means having problems and being weak. Rotterdam in general shows a score of 5.5, which means that the city is vulnerable. Spangen however, scores 4.9, which means that the neighbourhood is problematic. This can also be seen when looking at the different colours. Figure 11 has more pink elements in the circle than in figure 10, which shows the whole city of Rotterdam. Spangen scores twice in the category 'socially sufficient' with the elements 'social and cultural activities' and 'social commitment'. All the other elements score as vulnerable, problematic or socially very weak. Two elements are very weak: command of a language and sufficient income. The logic explanation for the weak command of language is that 85% of the population is of foreign descent.

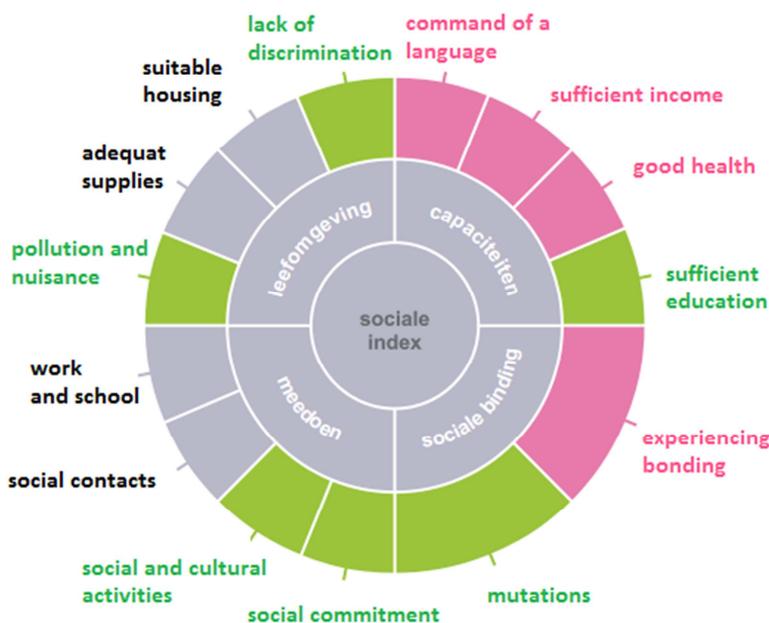


Figure 10 Social Index-score for Rotterdam per theme (Centrum voor Onderzoek en Statistiek Rotterdam, 2012)

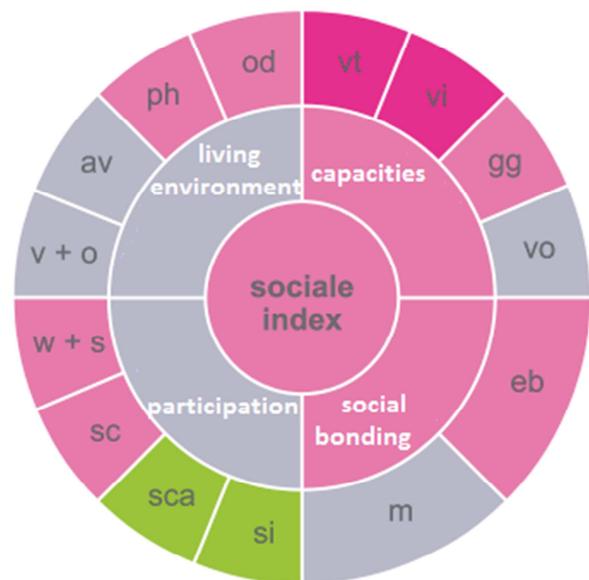


Figure 11 Social Index-score for Spangen per theme (Centrum voor Onderzoek en Statistiek Rotterdam, 2012)

3.8.3 Neighbourhood Spangen

As mentioned earlier, the case for this thesis will be the organisation Geloven in Spangen. Before explaining more about the project, it is necessary to know more about the neighbourhood of Spangen. Spangen is one of the poorest urban neighbourhoods of the Netherlands. In Spangen, 85% of the inhabitants are of foreign descent. The neighbourhood was built in 1913, around the



Figure 12 Design of Spangen by engineer P. Verhagen in 1915 (Steenhuis stedenbouw/landschap, 2009)

stadium of football club Sparta. It was one of the first neighbourhoods where urban planning was used on a large scale. The neighbourhood of Spangen was designed by

building engineer P. Verhagen and consisted of a clear street pattern, symmetry, hierarchy and was a closed area as figure 12 shows (Steenhuis stedenbouw/landschap, 2009). Until the 1960s, Spangen was a prosperous area: when poorer people arrived in the neighbourhood, there was a relief network to help them. However, after the Second World War, there were demographic changes. A new group of inhabitants arrived, who were mostly immigrants. As a result the current group of inhabitants left the neighbourhood. From the beginning of the 1980s, the area was characterised by social housing projects. The families that lived in the neighbourhood were too large for the type of housing that was built during the 1920s. There were many slum landlords and the area started to impoverish. There was a huge drugs problem in the area which eventually resulted in drugs tourism. Another problem was the prostitution area 'Keileweg' at the border of Spangen (Steenhuis stedenbouw/landschap, 2009). The government had plans for improving the neighbourhood, but it was difficult to implement these. Around the year 2000, things were getting worse in the neighbourhood of Spangen. Higher educated people left the area or did not want to live there and as a result the neighbourhood had an extremely high amount of liveability problems and very high unemployment numbers (Marlet & Ponds, 2012; Larsen & Marlet, 2012). From the year 2000, there have been many investments in the neighbourhood of Spangen in several areas such as: physical improvements (demolition of low quality housing, merging houses and giving away houses that have to be improved by the residents), improvements for liveability, social cohesion and social securities. The liveability problems and unemployment number have declined. One of the major reasons for this decline is the closing of prostitution area 'Keileweg' (Marlet & Ponds, 2012). Another reason is the improvement of housing in the neighbourhood, which resulted in an influx of people with higher incomes and higher education (Jochum Deuten Advies & Onderzoek, 2012).

3.8.4 IZB

The Netherlands has an organisation called 'Inwendige Zendingsbond' (Domestic Missionary Organisation), and is often abbreviated as IZB. This is a large Dutch faith based organisation that does missionary work in the Netherlands (see figure 13).

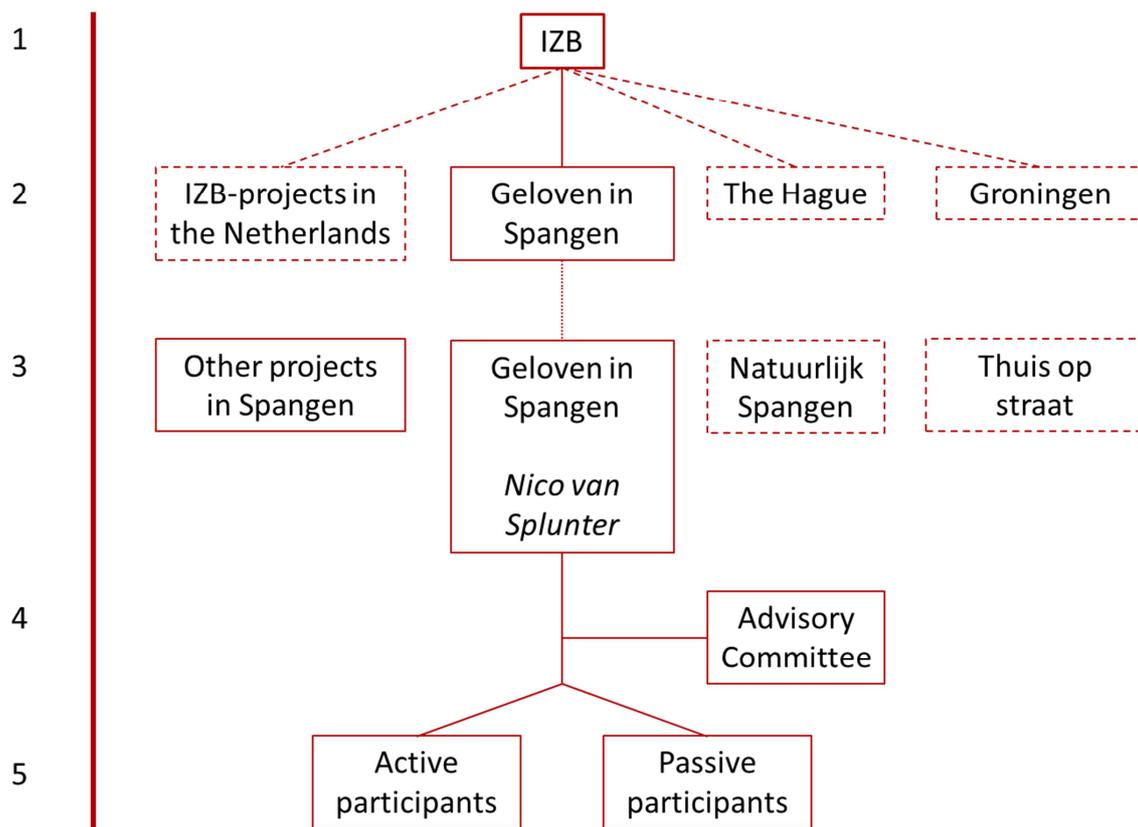


Figure 13 Organisation structure (Heij, 2013)

The IZB is the overall organisation, and its headquarters are located in Amersfoort. In several neighbourhoods in the Netherlands, there are projects of the IZB. The planning and organising of the projects is settled centrally, however per project the plans will differ. The funding of the IZB projects has several sources. The IZB tries to connect projects to Church communities in the Netherlands, making them a partner, in moral support but also giving them financial responsibilities (IZB, 2012). Other financing comes from organisations, entrepreneurs, private funds and Churches in the Netherlands (IZB, 2012). They do not receive government funding which confirms the independency of Faith Based Organisations such as the IZB. *Rodney van de Hengel*, leader of one of the other local organisations mentioned that it is convenient not having to rely on the continually changing government.

Rodney van de Hengel, leader of 'Thuis op Straat'

The interesting thing of Nico (leader of GIS) and its organisation is that, from the knowhow that I have, they do not receive much money from the state, but are supported by private financiers which is very interesting. Also for the local government.ⁱ

Jose de Reus from the local government confirms this:

Jose de Reus, area manager of Spangen

I think that being independent of government support gives a lot of rest to a voluntary organisation. The government financing is quite moody and unpredictable.ⁱⁱ

The mission of the IZB is to proclaim the Gospel to all those who are not familiar with the Gospel and they want close cooperation with the churches in neighbourhoods. The IZB's idea about evangelisation includes having attention for the weak and helpless people in society (IZB, 2012). Doing so, terms like hospitality and solidarity are central in their projects. Their opinion is that it is a role of a religious organisation, to have attention for people who have no one else who care about them, who are excluded from groups (IZB, 2012). That is a strength of religion. However, the IZB is also concerned with the actual situation in the Netherlands which includes the secularisation, what people think about religion, and the multicultural character of the neighbourhoods, ageing and other factors (IZB, n.d.). Because they are of the opinion that mission has to be focussed on the lives of people in different contexts like social and political relations, this organisation is valuable for this study.

The projects of the IZB try to be part of the lives of people in neighbourhoods surrounding churches. The IZB has 22 projects in the Netherlands (see figure 14). These projects are adapted to the neighbourhood in which they are localised and try to be of value to the neighbourhood. Most projects are situated in the conurbation of Western Holland. For this study a case was needed that fitted the criteria of being localised in a less developed urban neighbourhood, and being a project that tried to change the involvement of neighbourhood inhabitants. The

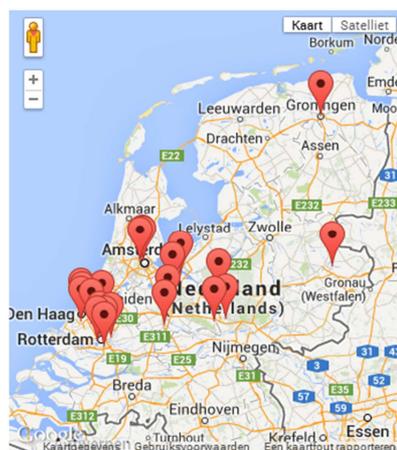


Figure 14 Map of IZB Projects (IZB, n.d.)

project Geloven in Spangen / Believing in Spangen¹ in Rotterdam fitted the above mentioned criteria. This project is formed by inhabitants of the neighbourhood Spangen and aims to contribute in a positive way to living in the community, inspired by the Bible (Van Splunter, n.d.). In order to achieve that, several activities are organised, which are further explained in chapter 5. The activities are accessible for everybody. The project Geloven in Spangen is part of the Faith Based Organisation 'IZB'.

3.8.5 Geloven in Spangen / Believing in Spangen (GIS)

One of the eight neighbourhoods in Delfshaven is Spangen. In Delfshaven there is one large protestant church (Reformed Congregation of Delfshaven = RCD) with a large emphasis on missionary work in the



Figure 15 Logo of Geloven in Spangen (Hervormde Gemeente Delfshaven, 2007)

neighbourhoods and trying to facilitate the meeting of different cultures. This church is supported by the IZB. The Faith Based Organisation 'Geloven in Spangen' is actually a church plant in the neighbourhood of Spangen. The Reformed Congregation of Delfshaven has created and facilitated all the necessary preconditions for the meeting of the different cultures. However, the underlying goal is that they can teach the inhabitants about Jesus Christ.

The neighbourhood of Spangen has to deal with many problems or challenges. As mentioned earlier, a very large part of the neighbourhood consists of youngsters. Furthermore, there is a high unemployment level, poverty, addictions and many kinds of family problems. The religious community of Delfshaven has the incentive to offer help in a missionary and Christian way. Therefore, in 2004, the RCD started to think about a project in Spangen, to reach the inhabitants of Spangen. In the years 2005 – 2007, the outline for the approach has been created; relations have been build which resulted in a foundation for a new project in a multicultural problematic urban neighbourhood (Hervormde Gemeente Delfshaven, 2007). They chose the name Geloven in Spangen (Believing in Spangen), because of the double meaning: believing in the neighbourhood of Spangen and therefore actively participate and work in the neighbourhood; and the second meaning, believing as in faith and religion in Spangen. To reach this goal several activities have been organised, each of the activities working for one of the two meanings. In 2010, a missionary worker (Nico van Splunter) was appointed to the project of Geloven in Spangen. Still, GIS is small-scale, because they have the opinion that on a small scale people can be better reached, more networks can be created

¹ For more information about the project, visit the website <http://www.geloveninspangen.nl/>

and people are more likely to participate in the activities. The participants are mostly reached with person to person contact because this has the most effects. The logo of Geloven in Spangen (see figure 15) displays connected people which shows how important participation and contact is for this organisation. It is not the activity that is central, but the relationships between people. GIS is not working alone in the neighbourhood, there are many other organisations and partners like the local government, schools, welfare organisations (ZoWel!) and other organisations (Thuis op Straat). All organisations are visualised in figure 17. The different organisations all focus on different groups of the society. However, GIS is also trying to connect with all those other organisations, to be able to reach more people, or to create a stronger, more open and more connected community / neighbourhood of Spangen. Such a society is necessary to fill the void that has resulted from budget cuts. GIS also tries to create a new congregation, the project is called 'a church plant'. However, the FBO is of the opinion that it is not solely important to organise services but also to reach inhabitants of the neighbourhood that will not come to the religious activities (or will never come because of other religions). They want to reach this group of people, because the inhabitants are part of the process of improving liveability and creating or increasing social cohesion in the neighbourhood. This last of group of people has to be reached in a different way, with other kinds of activities (IZB, 2013).

The project 'Geloven in Spangen' / 'Believing in Spangen' focusses on four topics, which are depicted below in figure 16:

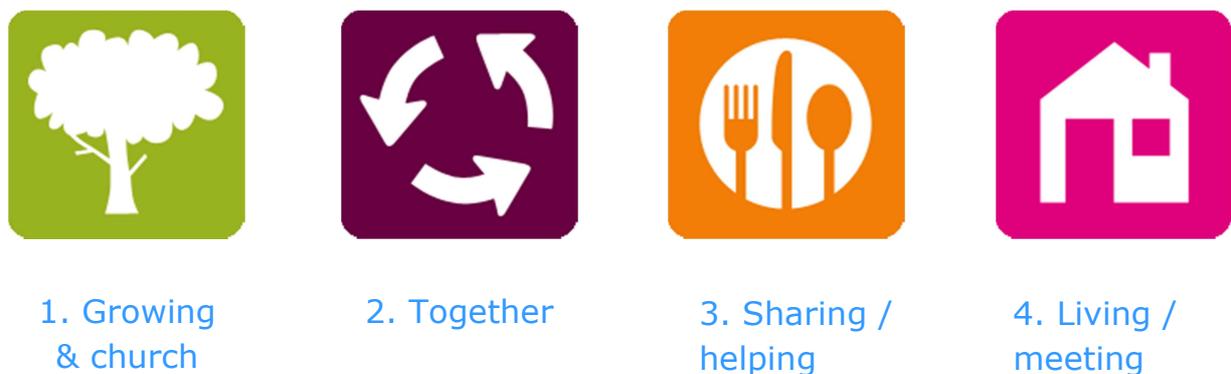


Figure 16 Pictograms of the different topics (Hervormde Gemeente Delfshaven, 2007)

The first picture shows 'growing', this means growing in a Christian lifestyle, mainly growing in faith by offering courses and missionary work. However, growing also implies offering physical help, such as: marriage courses, help in raising children and helping studying. The second pictogram shows 'together'. In the project GIS, the objective is to work in society and help people. The Faith Based Organisation should be visible in society and be a very visible partner when talking with other partners in the neighbourhood. Religion can give another dimension to talking and working in

society. The third picture is 'sharing/helping', which means bringing people together in two ways. The first is in a religious context, such as organising services, but the second is the societal context, people that connect with each other and talk. And while connecting, they also try to help each other. The last pictogram illustrates 'living/meeting'. Living in the neighbourhood and being missionary while living there. People that are part of the FBO live in the neighbourhood, and by living in that environment, they show something of the love of Christ in which they believe. They are also trying to participate in daily life, and by doing so trying to improve the liveability of the neighbourhood. This last topic is a very practical way of living. It also includes meeting with other inhabitants and participants. They try to involve neighbours or other people in the neighbourhood in the activities of the FBO.

The FBO has the goal of bringing people to Jesus and increasing the amount of Christians in the neighbourhood of Spangen. What GIS really wants is that those Christians take responsibility for the neighbourhood of Spangen. GIS has a missionary worker: Nico van Splunter, who is leading the organisation. He lives in the neighbourhood and is, besides GIS, a very active inhabitant. The missionary worker is leading the team of GIS. The team exists of two groups of Christians. One part are Christians that live in Spangen and feel responsible for the neighbourhood and the second part are Christians from the Reformed Congregation of Delfshaven. It is a challenge to meet people that differ most from the Christians in the team, people that are different in social, ethnical and cultural point of view. The Christians in the team see it as their mission to be active in the local neighbourhood, in an altruistic way.

3.8.6 Connections between Geloven in Spangen and other institutions in the neighbourhood

Besides Geloven in Spangen, there are many other institutions in the neighbourhood of Spangen that have the intention to help the neighbourhood and its inhabitants in a positive way. These organisations have their own aims and their own target group. In figure 17, all social organisations of Spangen are mapped. This mapping was done by the organisation 'Welcome to Spangen'. It is their task to promote the neighbourhood of Spangen and to help all the inhabitants of the area Spangen to get familiar with all other institutions and organisations that are present in the area. In order to do this, they mapped all institutions. The organisations that are present in the neighbourhood are mainly private organisation or organisations that are still receiving government support. The map is very broad, with organisations in nine different categories as can be seen in table 4. All the activities of Geloven in Spangen are also depicted in the map of Welcome in Spangen. Not only in the category 'religion and cultural organisation', but also in the categories 'Education', 'Welfare and Sports', and

'Integration and cohesion'. This shows the diversity of the Faith Based Organisations like the IZB's project Geloven in Spangen.

Table 4 Categories of the present organisations

- Welfare and sports
- Healthcare
- Integration and cohesion
- Safety and liveability
- Work and income
- Living
- Business



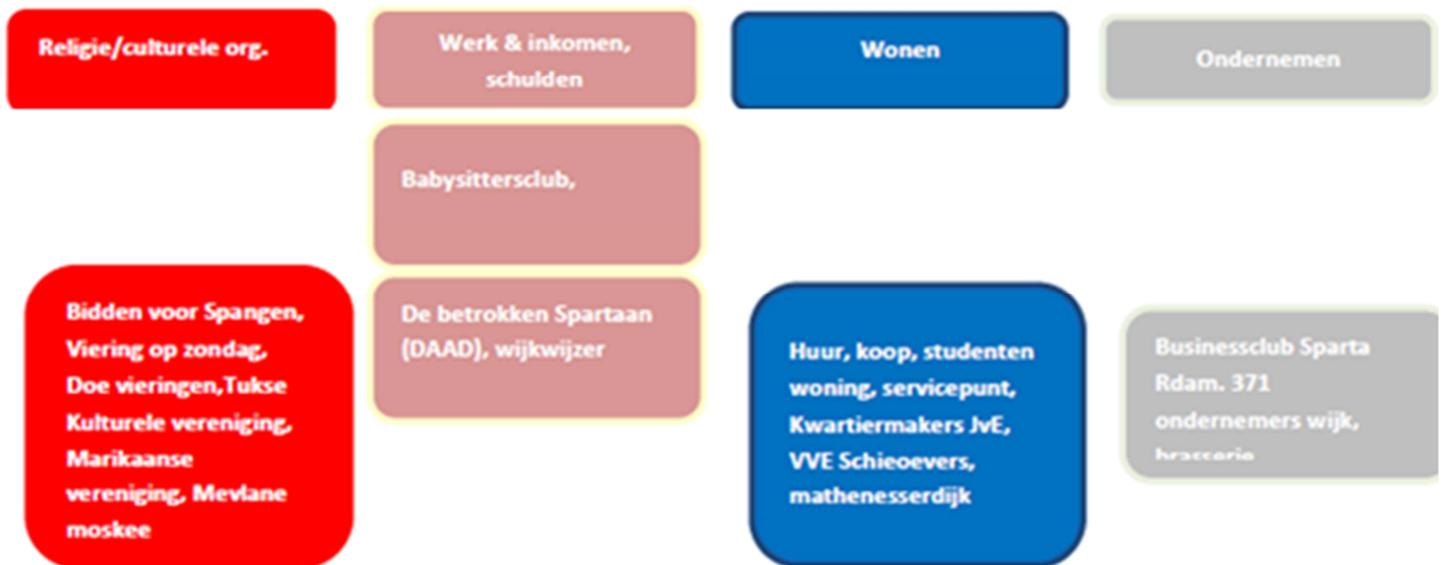


Figure 17 Social map of Spangen (Tijthoff)

The head of the organisation ‘Welcome in Spangen’ Pamely Tijthoff, said the following about her organisation, and what she tries to do in the neighbourhood:

Pamely Tijthoff, Welcome in Spangen

Yes, Welcome to Spangen will do the promotion, they share it with others, and when they see opportunities for connection they will try to arrange that with other partners or organisations, so that new energy can be created and that projects may grow. We also have the goal to create connections to increase the participation of people in the neighbourhood. ⁱⁱⁱ

GIS is very connected to the platform ‘Welcome to Spangen’. Although both groups have their own communication methods, such as a website, twitter and a Facebook page, they both try to promote the activities of the other group. Welcome to Spangen helps to increase the reputation in the neighbourhood of Geloven in Spangen. Welcome in Spangen also tries to connect Geloven in Spangen to other organisations, and one example of their efforts can be read in this quote from Pamely Tijthoff:



Figure 18 Planting seeds with pre-schoolers (Heij, 2013)

Pamely Tijthoff, leader of Welcome in Spangen

There are many of those partners. For me, Geloven in Spangen is a ‘self-organisation’, a group of active inhabitants of the neighbourhood who want to do

something in Spangen, with a religious approach, sharing their religion. There are many other initiatives. One of those initiatives is about the green zones in Spangen, the same people that facilitated the flock of sheep. I am trying to connect Geloven in Spangen tot the initiative 'Natural Spangen'. That is our job as platform.^{iv}

This connection was successfully made, which can be seen in one of the activities: the leaders of the pre-schooler parties took the pre-schoolers to one of green zones of Spangen for a nice activity: planting seeds of flowers (see figure 18). According to *Jaap*, one of the employees of 'Natural Spangen', it was a great success, and he was very happy that those two groups came into contact with each other

Geloven in Spangen is also connected in many different ways to a primary school in the area: the Prinses Margrietschool. There is much cooperation, and many activities take place at this school as will be further discussed in chapter 5. Not just religious activities, but also cooperation in a very practical way. Besides other organisations in the neighbourhood, there are also government officials that are in contact with Geloven in Spangen. The government officials try to keep an overview of what happens in the neighbourhood. One of these officials is Jose de Reus, the area manager of Spangen:

Jose de Reus, area manager of Spangen:

It (GIS) is a project that has a very important role in Spangen. I don't know exactly how many people they reach, but what I do know, and also hear when I speak to Nico, is that he has access to the very small vessels of the area. He knows a lot of people, and he can get very close to people, and knows what is necessary, what people really need. He tries to fill in a certain need in the neighbourhood with his project.^v

Her opinion of Geloven in Spangen is that this organisation has information that the local government does not have. GIS can get into contact with people (the small vessels) that have difficulty talking to official people. Also the local police officer of Spangen, Garry Werners, shares that opinion. They really want to help all people that are in need of help, which will be illustrated with an example from reality. The manager of Welcome in Spangen met a woman, who really needed help. She did not know where to go to, but then she thought of Geloven in Spangen. She went to GIS, and they really helped that woman with commitment and compassion.

Pamely Tijthoff, leader of Welcome in Spangen

When I came outside, I really thought 'wow', that is really what a neighbourhood needs. Every neighbourhood needs a pastor, where people can go to when they help, whatever problem they have. That has completely disappeared. (...) For me it was an eye-opener, wow there is a friendly and compassionate place, a warm community.^{vi}

Geloven in Spangen is seen as a valuable organisation according to other organisations and institutions in the neighbourhood. They have access to many people that would not easily go to other organisations; they reach people in a very friendly and peaceful way, which gives confidence to participants. Their acts show the norms and values that the Faith Based Organisation has, and these norms and values are the added value that secular organisation do not have.

4. Activities of Faith Based Organisation ‘Geloven in Spangen’

In paragraph 1.2.2 is explained that there are several research topics. In this chapter the first topic, about activities of the Faith Based Organisation in the neighbourhood of Spangen, will be further investigated as can be seen in figure 19.

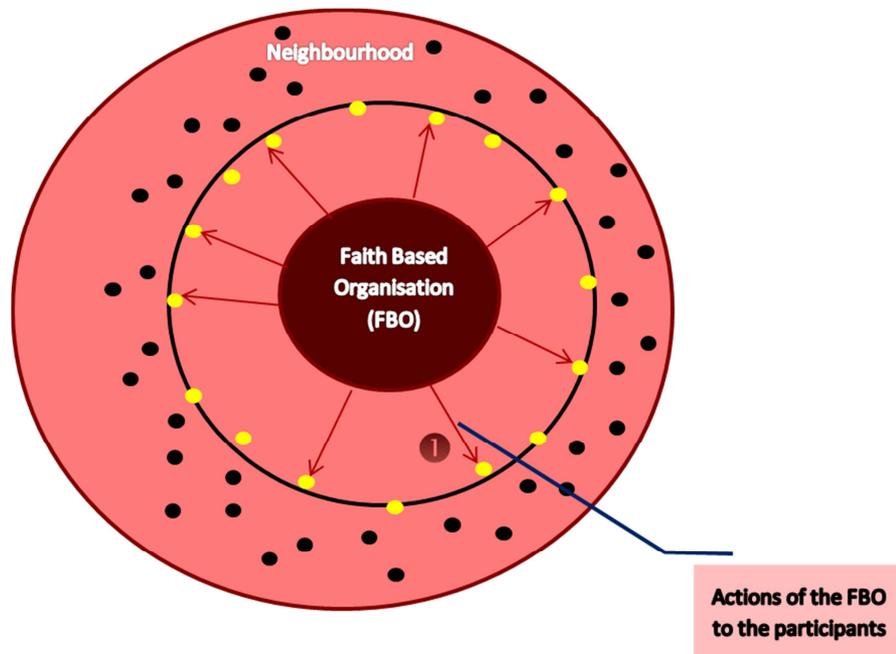


Figure 19 Activities of Faith Based Organisations (Heij, 2013)

4.1 Target group

The project Geloven in Spangen, ‘GIS’, is accessible to all inhabitants of the neighbourhood of Spangen. However, Geloven in Spangen has chosen a target group out of all the inhabitants. As mentioned in chapter 3, the neighbourhood consists for 85% of people of foreign descent; therefore it is important for the project of Geloven in Spangen to focus on those migrants because they are the dominant population of the neighbourhood. Although it would be great to bring all cultures together, this is practically unlikely to happen due to different cultures and believes. Therefore GIS has chosen to focus mainly on Surinamese, Antillean, Cape Verdean, African and Western European people because in those countries and their cultures, a Christian religion can be traced back (IZB, 2013; Hervormde Gemeente Delfshaven, 2007). This makes it easier for the FBO to connect with a group than with a group that lacks the common points of interest or common background. Further specified, GIS focusses on all social classes (both wealthy and educated people, and very poor and socially weak people). The higher educated people are necessary, because for an organisation to survive, people from the neighbourhood should take some responsibility in the organisation of Geloven in Spangen. This is easier for educated people, than for poor and socially weak people. This

group needs more care, which can be given by the other group. The last specification of the target group is the decision to aim at families with children (IZB, 2013). This is an obvious choice, when looking at the rate of youngsters in the neighbourhood of Spangen (see chapter 3).

4.2 Range of activities

In chapter 3.8.5 four different categories of activities organised by Geloven in Spangen are explained. The categories are: (1) Growing & Church, (2) Together, (3) Sharing / Helping, (4) Living / Meeting. GIS wants to have a broad and diverse range of activities for the neighbourhood of Spangen. The activities that are organised by GIS are matched with the four categories, and as a second step, the four categories are evaluated with the three dimensions of social cohesion.

4.2.1 Growing & Church

The first group of activities, church, obviously focusses on the Christian community of Spangen, and will be the place where Christians learn more about Jesus and get strength to serve the neighbourhood from a Christian perspective. GIS has the desire to be a source of inspiration for the inhabitants of the neighbourhood. Activities that are part of this group are:

- Services on Sunday: a meeting with the (active) participants that most of the time are true Christians
- Sunday school: a meeting for the children, during the services.
- Prayer meetings: a group of active Christians that prays for people that need prayer and other situations that come to their attention
- Bible study groups: active house groups that have meals together and afterwards they have intensive discussions about faith and religion as well as about the neighbourhood. They really have a strong bond.
- Introduction course to the Christian faith: for people that hear about religion at other activities and want to know more about God.
- Bible introductions courses at the primary school 'Prinses Margriet': it is not just about the Bible, but the leaders also try to talk about social subjects that are causing problems in the neighbourhood or about norms and values.
- Individual pastoral meetings: for individual help, whether the person is religious, a Christian or not.

When matching these activities with the dimensions of social cohesion (paragraph 2.1.3), many activities can be matched with the dimension of shared ideas. For religious groups it is important to

share the same 'faith' and thus have the same set of norms and values. In these activities, a certain level of involvement is expected from the members of the group. This applies to the dimension of social participation. Although most activities organised by GIS are accessible for everybody, these activities are mostly attended by people who deliberately have chosen for it and identify themselves with the group, which is the third dimension.

4.2.2 Together

The other three groups of activities are more in line with the research question of this study. For answering the question about the role of FBO's in order to enlarge social cohesion, especially activities that focus on social contact are important and these can be found in the categories 'together', 'helping' and 'meeting'. The activities that are organised in the category Together, for increasing social contacts and helping the neighbourhood, are:

- Boys clubs and girls clubs: afternoon meetings for boys and girls with activities and talking about important things of the boys' and girls' lives (see figure 20).
- Saturday afternoon meetings for women (women's club): a meeting only for women, where they talk about common things, problems they have and eat and share food together. Every other week there is a theme (see figure 21).
- Pre-schooler parties: eating healthy food together, listening to a story, tinkering (see figure 22).
- Helping at lessons at the primary school: the volunteers of the FBO help at the Prinses Margrietschool, not just organising Christian courses, but also with other courses, or reading stories.
- Parents' room at the primary school Prinses Margriet: talking about a variety of things. Sometimes there is a speaker for a certain theme, also stimulating parents to get involved with the school and speak Dutch (see figure 23).
- Theatre for kids
- Cooking club
- Dinners

Geloven in Spangen has the intention to help others and improve the neighbourhood. One of the ways of helping people is to organise activities that focus on solidarity and team spirit. There are separate activities for almost everyone (e.g. pre-schooler parties, boys club, women's club), which increases the solidarity (the dimension of social participation). Besides solidarity there is also another dimension present in the activities: the dimension of shared ideas. For example, at the women's club, participants talk about common things and in doing so discover common grounds. By sharing

common experiences, reciprocal togetherness grows (identification with the group) and the desire to help each other also grows.



Figure 20 Girls' club (Heij, 2013)



Figure 21 Womens' club (Heij, 2013)



Figure 22 Pre-schooler party (Heij, 2013)



Figure 23 Parents' room (Heij, 2013)

4.2.3 Sharing & Helping

The 'helping' activities are mostly 'Faith Based social welfare work', which means helping people who are in need of help. This can be offered individually or in combination with other agents in the neighbourhood. The organised activities are:

- Individual meetings (about debts, domestic violence, relations)
- Language teaching for pre-schoolers at the primary school 'Prinses Margriet': helping to get rid of deficits of the Dutch language
- Language teaching / buddy system for women (also in helping them finding jobs): teaching the Dutch language to women that have very limited knowledge of the Dutch language. The buddy system helps to give women confidence about their skills

- Serve the City: a movement of volunteers serving cities in practical ways and inspiring people to be givers in this world (Serve the City, n.d.). They believe that many people doing small things together can make a big difference in our world. One of the neighbourhoods where Serve the City is active is Spangen.
- Homework support: every Thursday there is a homework class organised by the FBO, for pupils having difficulty keeping up, always arranging a proper meal in between the homework activities (see figure 24).



Figure 24 Homework support (Heij, 2013)

Many of the above mentioned activities take place at the Prinses Margrietschool. The volunteers help in lessons with crafts or religious education (dimension of social participation). The homework support is for children that have difficulty keeping up with the learning material. The language teaching courses help people to get a better knowledge of the Dutch language. The school thus benefits from the cooperation with the Faith Based Organisation because parents of children that visit some activities are more participating and for schools participating parents is of major importance. Another benefit is that the volunteers fill gaps, where the regular teachers have not time

to do things, like religious education and social science. Helping others and cooperation are part of the dimension of identification (experience).

4.2.4 Living & Meeting

The last group of activities is 'living and meeting'. It is not fully realised yet, but a plan has to be realised in the coming year (2013-2014). It is a café, in the middle of the neighbourhood, and it is a meeting place for all inhabitants of Spangen. With every colour, age, income people are welcome to meet each other and have contact with each other. It should be a place of inspiration for the inhabitants, and a place where all the capacities of the inhabitants can be recruited for the good of the neighbourhood. It is the vision of GIS that out of the café, the inhabitants are going to involve themselves and participate more in the neighbourhood, and serve the city, making the neighbourhood better, safer, cleaner. It should also be a facilitator towards the other activities of Geloven in Spangen. The other part of this group of activities is being active in the environment that you live in. This is already partly realised, because the participants are living in the neighbourhood of Spangen. But they should be more active, because all participants doing small things will make a big difference in the neighbourhood.

This group of activities focusses mainly on the dimension of social participation. By living in the neighbourhood and meeting with other people, the participants strengthen each other, and try to help each other.

4.3 Conclusion

In paragraph 2.1.2 is explained which dimensions have been used to study the phenomenon of social cohesion. The dimensions are: (1) Identification with the group, (2) Shared ideas and (3) Social Participation. All activities that are organised by Geloven in Spangen have elements of the three dimensions of social cohesion. Solidarity is an important word. At activities, people get to know each other and hear common things, because they have the same background or because they live in the same area. They often have the same set of norms and values, but even people that have another background or other norms and values are welcome at the activities. Geloven in Spangen also tries to stimulate people in helping others. There is also a large set of activities that focusses on learning, guidance and raising children. This is important in a neighbourhood that is less developed, has high unemployment numbers and much criminality. Helping with education, helps youngsters to get a good basis which might lead to a less problematic neighbourhood in the future.

5. Participant's experiences of Faith Based Organisations

In this chapter will be discussed how participants experience the presence and the activities of the Faith Based Organisation and how participation can be connected to the FBO. This is called 'vertical cohesion' (see paragraph 2.1.2). Figure 25 illustrates this topic. In this chapter first the experiences of the participants will be discussed, and secondly will be discussed whether the participants are actively involved in the organisation.

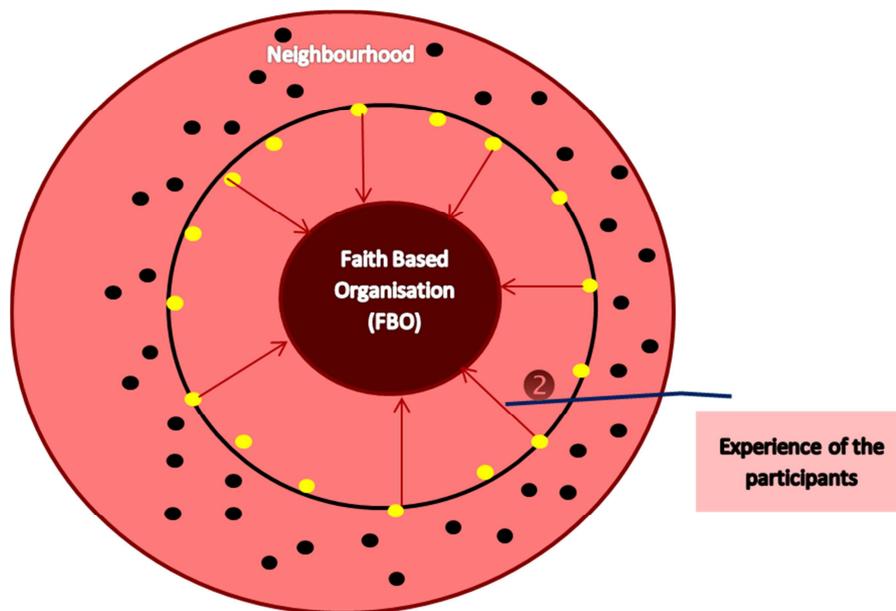


Figure 25 Participant's experiences of Faith Based Organisations (Heij, 2013)

5.1 Participation

The participants of the activities have a strong bond with the activity that they visit. According to *Mila*, when they are not able to come, they even call to tell this and to apologise. This especially shows their connectedness when the activities are without obligations. According to *Theresa* this is because it is more difficult to quit or not attend with a religious organisation than with other organisations, because the bond is stronger. The people leading the activity care for the participants, and really miss them and also the other participants miss them. There is strong social commitment towards the activities, and towards the other visitors. This can be read in a quote from *Almira*:

Almira, 40 years, Spanish, female

Q: Do you miss people that are not present? A: Yes, for example, when someone is in the hospital, or someone we have not seen for weeks than we will make some inquiries about that person, and ask other about whether they heard something, or do you call or SMS? We really do that, yes. (...) For example, when I have not

visited the activities for several weeks, they'll trace me and ask 'Almira, how are you'? Or, they say: 'I've missed you, do you come again the coming week, or next week?'^{vii}

This shows how the women care about each other, and trace people that did not attend the last couple of times, to ask whether they are fine or not. *Almira* has the same experience with her son.

Almira, 40 years, Spanish, female

They were very compassionate with Nick, because he was in the hospital, they wanted to know how it went, and they brought a card for him.^{viii}

When he needed treatment in a hospital, they came to visit him which has made a large impression on the mother, because there were people really interested in them.

There is also another group that has a strong bond with the Faith Based Organisation. This is the group of people that already were Christians and have connected themselves to the FBO because they want to be of value, for the organisation and for the neighbourhood. An example of this is *Deborah*, a 26 year old, higher educated, white woman. She moved to the neighbourhood due to idealistic motivations, searching for the worst area of Rotterdam and wanted to change the area by living there. This woman is connected to many activities of Geloven in Spangen: pre-schooler parties, language buddy system and the services on Sunday (especially organising activities for children). She is very active because she believes that her help is needed in the city:

Deborah, 26 years, Dutch, female

A: I just know, the city needs attention, they need attention badly, and they especially need Gods love. That's what I believe in.^{ix}

This quote shows her motivation, and such motivation shows the strength of Geloven in Spangen. The active participants that help organising the activities have such strong motivations to do so, that this is visible in their work. The passive participants experience those motivations and value this. Another quote to illustrate this is from *Mila*:

Mila, +/- 55 years, Surinamese, female

And you can see, the cooperation between people, you call it social cohesion, people help each other, not realising they do that. That is very beautiful. Geloven in Spangen plays a role, when we have services, by letting me use this room, to be able to help the women, to give them shelter. I don't have to pay for it. It is a role with multiple functions, because every time the people come here, they believe a

little bit more. They see the charisma. I do not talk about Jesus, I do not talk about God, I do not say: 'you HAVE to read the Bible'. No, I do not say any of that. But from our work, they see that we are religious.^x

From this quote, it becomes clear that *Mila* really want to help other people because her deeds will show her religion. For her it is of major importance that all participants know of God. However, she does not talk about is, but she acts in such a way that people will remember her for what she did. This is again an example of the strength of Faith Based Organisations. People are dedicate do their faith, and want to transmit this to others.

5.2 Experiences

The respondents were asked about their opinion of the activities that are organised by GIS and about their opinion of the FBO. Almost all answers about the experiences of the activities were positive. This can be concluded from the words that the respondents used to describe the activities and the feeling that it gave them:

- Friendly
- Moderate
- Nice contacts with people
- Great
- Encouraging

The reason that most answers are positive is that the respondents for this study were all participants. Apparently they like the activities enough, to visit the activities multiple times. People, who could be negative about the activities, could have made the decision not to return to the activities of Geloven in Spangen. Other people that could be negative about the organisation Geloven in Spangen can be the other participants of the neighbourhood who do not share or agree with the identity of the organisation. One female respondent had some negative comments about the activities, such as that working in the same neighbourhood as living and visiting activities, does not always work and this complicates her visiting the activities. She is thus not present at all activities of the FBO, but she too mentioned the desire to have contact with other people, and that is what attracts her to the activities.

There are many different elements that attract the respondents to the activities. For some people it is their religion or their growing interest in religion that attracts them. One example to illustrate this is *Theresa*:

Theresa, 42 years, Cape Verdean, female

It's going very friendly and moderate here, which gives me a great feeling. (...) But the greatest thing is, that is does not matter about GIS. We share one important thing, and that is the love of God. We share religion with each other, and then it does not matter whether you are brown, black, white, yellow or green, or what other kind of background you may have. I think that the most important thing is that we share God with each other.^{xi}

Another example of religion as main interest can be found in *Annemieke*, a +/- 35 year old, higher educated, white woman. Her motivation to go to the activities of GIS and also organise some activities can be found in religion:

Annemieke, +/- 35 years, Dutch, female

I like to put my faith into practice, very practical. And, it seems nice and logical to us, to do this in a neighbourhood.^{xii}

For Faith Based Organisations, shared ideas are very important. The religious activities are thus mostly organised by people who are adherents to the Christian faith. However in starting religious organisations, the group of active Christians is quite small. *Annemieke* has been a Christian for a long time and thus is seen by GIS as capable to be active with religious activities such as the house groups. In the above mentioned quote it becomes clear that *Annemieke* has the desire to be actively involved with the FBO. However, Geloven in Spangen is quite a small organisation with many activities, which results in the fact that most activities are organised by the same small group of active people. According to *Annemieke* this has negative elements in it, as can be read in the following quote.

Annemieke, +/- 35 years, Dutch, female

I give, I have to give a lot, and for me the house group is a place where I can spiritually take.^{xiii}

This is a kind of activity that she really likes, because it is an activity that she can visit for inspiration and constructive growth. Most important, it is an activity which she does not have to organise all by herself. *Annemieke* really sees this as a negative element of Faith Based Organisations in general, because these organisations depend highly on religious people to organise most activities.

A totally other reason someone is going to the activities of GIS, is because this person likes to speak to higher educated people. This is an extraordinary comment because most visitors of the general activities are visited by less educated people. However, the religious based activities of GIS

are visited by higher educated people. One example of such a person is Jaap. He did not really like talking to people, and contact and relationships were not important to him. However, talking to higher educated people made him enthusiastic about talking in general and about GIS. This can be read in the following quote:

Jaap, +/- 50 years, Dutch, male

A: The boy was Johan and the girl was Annemieke (...) and I liked having contact with them. They were thinking more clearly than the people I normally had contact with. They had an education, which is something you do not see often in this neighbourhood. (...) I visited them later and remembered that I went to a Christian secondary school, and had a Christian education (...). I wrote a letter to them because I thought it was good to come into contact with that background again. (...) In that way, I finally am content. I really wished for more contact and some of my wishes have been realised. Just having nice contacts with people. This has been realised in the last couple of years.^{xiv}

He is visiting the house groups, which he likes and he also really likes having contacts with other people. This is something he has not done in the years before he went to activities of GIS. Another example can be found in a statement from Pamelty Tijthoff, a Dutch, higher educated woman, about 40 years old and also the leader of Welcome in Spangen. She has a job in the neighbourhood, which includes promoting the neighbourhood and facilitating all the initiatives in the neighbourhood. To learn more about Geloven in Spangen, she and her family have visited some activities themselves. Her opinion about GIS can be read in the following quote:

Pamelty Tijthoff, +/- 40 years, Dutch, female

My opinion about GIS is that they are very active, and that they are also very visible. It is always nice to know how the community grows, how large it becomes. And some time ago, I signed my husband up for a temporary choir for Christmas. I said to him, isn't that something for you? (...) They were singing all together in this building, and it activated him to go to another choir. So yes. I think that it is really good and nice that they are in the neighbourhood. In that way, GIS is really activating people. At least they activated my husband to sing again. (...) Then I think, yes, for me, the extra value that it gives to the neighbourhood has been proved.^{xv}

Another opinion about the activities is from Lucia, the mother of two children that visited the pre-schooler parties. This activity is only for pre-schoolers, and her twins are too old now to attend the activity. She said that her children really liked going to the parties and that they went every week. The mother has a strong positive opinion about the activities as well, supported by the fact that the pre-schooler parties are a religious activity. This can be read in the following quote:

Lucia, +/- 35 years, Dutch, female

I am a Christian myself, and when we were looking for a primary school for the kids, then you are looking for a school that fits and corresponds, because most of the time your kids are at school, they get part of their education at the school. So, then it is important that the norms and values that we have correspond with those of the school. You often see that Christian schools, are just Christian in name, but you cannot see anything Christian in their norms, values and principles. That is why I really appreciate the extracurricular activities of this school. It is a really good initiative, because there they pay more attention to it.^{xvi}

At the extracurricular activities of GIS the same norms and values are maintained, as that she has at home, and because her children spent most of the time at school, this is very important. She also likes the things that they do at the parties: singing, praying, playing, talking and eating healthy and tasty food. They also teach important rules: having respect and being nice for each other.

5.3 Conclusion

This chapter elaborated on the experiences of respondents about Geloven in Spangen. The answers were mainly positive. This can be explained by the fact that non-participants were excluded from the research to get as much information as possible about the motivations of the participants. When asking non-participants about their opinion, it is likely that the answers will differ. From the answers of the respondents, it became clear that Geloven in Spangen focusses on all three dimensions of social cohesion: (1) Social participation; (2) Shared Ideas, and (3) Identification with a group. There are multiple reasons to choose for a religious organisation and the one that has been mentioned most is 'norms and values'. This is part of dimension two about shared ideas. The people that valued the norms and values were both active and passive participants. For them, having a place where they share the same ideas or get an education in line with their own norms and values is of major importance. The first dimension of social cohesion 'social participation' is also important for respondents. They mentioned that activities of Geloven in Spangen helped them to establish

relationships with other people. People become more socially active and also care more for other people. They identify themselves with the group (dimension three), and miss people when they are not present. Geloven in Spangen is thus valued highly for the opportunity to meet with sympathisers and share the same ideas. For religious people, Faith Based Organisations are preferred above other organisations in a neighbourhood.

6. Relations between participants

This chapter elaborates on the relations that participants do or do not have with each other. It is about the connections that they have. The question is whether the activities of the Faith Based Organisation lead to more mutual contact with the other participants beyond the organised, formal gathering. The words 'more contact' suggest that there are data that show a difference between two different moments. However, there has not been a baseline measurement. Nevertheless, with the qualitative research method that has been used for this study, it was also possible to answer this question. By asking respondents questions about their behaviour and contacts, it was possible to draw a conclusion about changed contacts and a change in the amount of social cohesion.

Important to know is whether they see each other at other occasions or only at the activities. This is illustrated in figure 26:

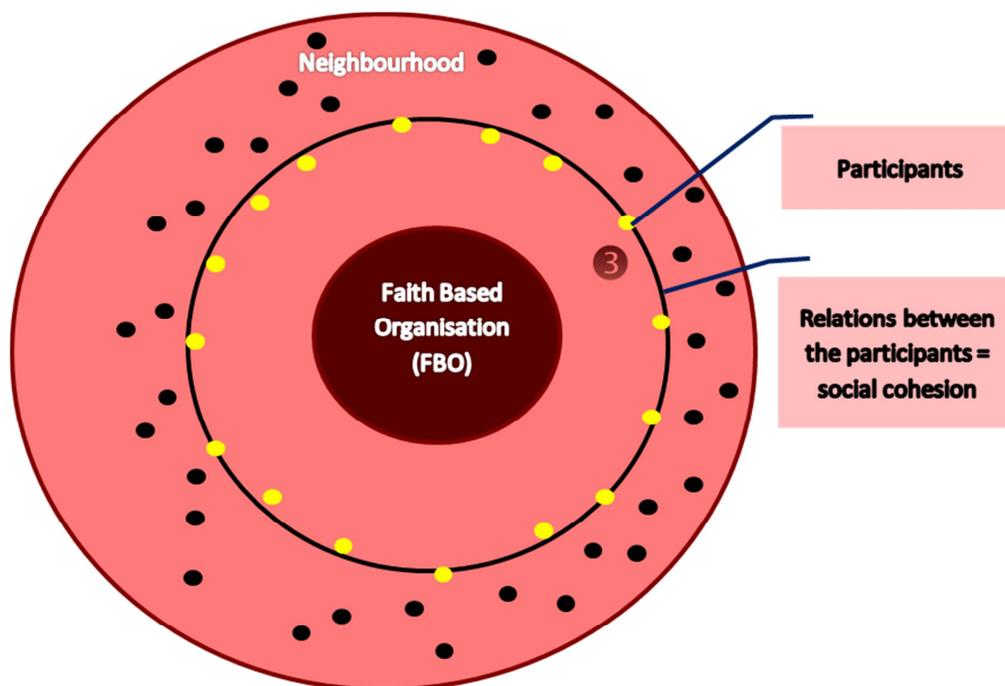


Figure 26 Relations between participants (Heij, 2013)

The yellow dots in the middle represent participants, and the circle-shaped line through those dots represents the relation between the participants. This circle will be the key element of this chapter.

From the interviews it can be concluded that participants have different kinds of relationships, which could be divided in three groups:

1. Participants meet each other several times a week and (very good) friends
2. Participants meet sometimes, or often talk to each other in the streets when they see each other
3. Participants never meet during the week or have incidentally contact with other people.

The activities have different effects on people, and the different kinds of activities also have different effects on mutual relationships of participants. It should be noticed that this division is made from the interview results of about 20 participants. Because there are three groups, each group consists of about 6 people. These are relatively small groups and this should be understood before reading the results. Because the groups were very visible during the activities, there is chosen for this approach. The three groups will be further explained in this chapter and the impact of 'Geloven in Spangen' will be further studied. Each paragraph will describe and analyse what is visible of the dimensions of social cohesion in each different group.

6.1 Group 1 (people meet each other several times a week)

The first group that will be discussed is the group of participants that meet each other several times a week. These participants are the core visitors of the activities of the Faith Based Organisation and are often related to the Faith Based Organisation because they are adherents of the Christian faith. The desire to invest more in their faith is the reason why they visit activities of the Faith Based Organisation. There are several activities during the week that this group visits: Services on Sunday, Prayer meetings, Bible Study Groups (house groups). The group of core visitors is not very large (about 30 people) and therefore these participants know each other quite well, and have become a close group of friends. They speak to each other several times a week, and even organise activities together or visit each other's birthday parties. One example of this group can be found in the following quote:

Piet, 46 years, Dutch, male

Q: And those groups, do they form a bond together? A: Yes, we sometimes try to do something together with both two house groups. With the practical services on Sunday both groups are coming together, because the house groups are the core visitors of the services, and at the services you meet each other again. Q: And do you speak each other outside of the activities? A: Sometimes, yes. At birthday parties or when we organise something nice together. So we try to not only have contact in the church, but also try to involve and invite each other in and to nice activities.^{xvii}

From this quote it becomes clear that this participant meets the other participants also at occasions that are not organised by the Faith based Organisation. These contacts are a result of the Faith based Organisation, because without the organisation this core group would not have known each other.

They have become real friends which can be concluded from the statement that they have birthday parties together and organise other nice activities that they can do together.

A second part of group 1 is the group of participants with children. Those participants are also part of the core group that visit the house groups and services. At those activities, the children are also present and they also become friends. Especially for them it is easy to meet several times a week. This can be read in a quote from *Theresa*:

Theresa, 42 years, Cape Verdean, female

The children are going to Nico (leader of GIS), and they meet at home. This didn't happen before we went to the activities. And they also play with the kids from Piet, and know them better than before. They play with each other, and also during activities. Those contacts are very friendly and moderate, and that just gives me a good feeling^{xviii}

These are children, who meet other kids than they normally played with because of the activities. The same occurred with the mother, because she met the parents of the other kids. However, the step to make an appointment with the other parents to have a meeting is often too big. This is because the kids have chosen each other to play together, the parents were in a way 'forced' by their children's choice and they feel anxious about meeting each other. But still, more relations have been facilitated and social participation has been enlarged.

There are also participants that already knew each other before they both went to the activities of the Faith Based Organisation. Several participants invited a friend or acquaintance, who now also comes to some activities. For example, there is a woman that goes to the women's club, who has invited many other women and who also has many contact with these friends during the week.

Almira, 40 years, Spanish, female

A: 3 years ago I came, and I have said to all women, come and have a look, come with me, and that is the reason that it (the women's club) has grown. Especially to the women who were very on themselves and did not come at other places. To them I said, come and have a look. Sometimes we do activities, and every other week we eat together. And there is always coffee and tea, yes, I it was very nice, still is. (...) I also have my special friend, like Cinta, who is also coming, or Sita and Mila. And for some things you really need to speak with them personally and then you wait all week until you see them. With Cinta that is different, I see her daily.

(...) Most people I have on my facebook. And they are coming to my birthday and to Nick's (her son's) birthday.^{xix}

She also invited her best friend, who is now coming to the women's club every week. She speaks this friend daily. She also made other friends at the women's club and with them she also speaks about personal things. Although she may not speak face to face to the other friends daily, she has them as 'friends' on facebook. This probably means that she also has contact with those people during the week. Faith Based Organisations thus can be a catalyst for intensifying existing friendships, or increasing friendship between acquaintances.

Another example about this group is from *Coby*, she came to the women's club with a neighbour. Before she came to the club, she did not know her neighbour really well. But now they are very good friends, who visit many things together.

Coby, +/- 80 years, Dutch, female,

A: Yes, I had a neighbour, who lived at the 3rd floor. And she was already coming to the women's club and I said I'll come with you. Q: Nice. A: Yes, yes, sometimes we are there both and sometimes we are not coming together. That depends on my agenda. Q: So, you speak to the people of the women's club during the week, at least with your neighbour? A: Yes, and also with another neighbour, she lives at the 5th floor and sometimes she also comes. (...) The neighbour with whom I do things together and the other neighbour I have known better now.^{xx}

One of the activities of GIS stimulated a participant to invite her neighbour: *Coby*. This neighbour became also a participant of GIS, and now the two of them are having more contact with each other.

This is a positive effect of participating in activities of GIS. At the activities participants are stimulated to invite friends, neighbours or other people. According to Heuser (2005) voluntary organisations have the incentive to connect people with each other. By stimulating participants to have contact with acquaintances they increase their connectedness and social participation increases. It is also a first step towards having more contact. Identification with the others is stimulated at the activities, by searching for more sympathy and establishing respect towards each other. The result of these practices is that people meet with each other at other occasions than the organised activities. Putnam (2002) said about this, that active participation is a prerequisite for increased social cohesion. Therefore, the intensive relationships between members of this group shows their connectedness, which is a sign of increased social cohesion (Dukes & Musterd, 2012).

6.2 Group 2 (people meet sometimes)

The second group contains people who meet sometimes, but also people that just meet each other on the street or in the supermarket. The first case that will be discussed is of a 68 year old woman,

Karin, 68 years, Dutch, female

A: But at the time, I have got to know a very nice neighbour of mine. And together we do nice things. Yes. Q: And are there people from Geloven in Spangen in your group of contacts? A: Yes, that lady, my neighbour is also with GIS. I took her myself and she really likes it. Q: And when you see people during the week, do you see people from the women's club during the week? A: Not that often, no, but sometimes in the supermarket. But not very often^{xxi}.

This woman, *Karin*, mentioned during the interview that she comes to the activity of GIS because she likes talking to people, eating together and because it is cosy at the activities. However, she has her own large social network; therefore she does not explicitly need the participants of GIS to have contacts during the week. She has her neighbour and together they visit markets or museums, which is most important for her. She also says that if there is something else that she can do with other friends on Saturdays, that will be more important than the activities of Geloven in Spangen. Her commitment to Geloven in Spangen exists, because she also mentioned that she would notify someone of the activity about her absence. However, the commitment is not very strong because the activities of GIS never have priority. For people that already have a large social network, the activities of GIS do not contribute to more social participation. For them, the commitment to the activities and thus the identification with the group is less strong than for people without a large social network. The literature about social cohesion distinguishes primary networks (such as family relations, local communities or organisations) and relates this to the intermediary 'secondary organisations' (such as a voluntary organisation, a church / FBO, or a political party) (Berman & Phillips, 2004; Jensen, Mapping social cohesion: the state of Canadian research, 1998). When there already is a strong primary network, the role of the mediator is less important. This is illustrated by the behaviour of respondent *Karin*. Due to her already existing strong primary network, she does not need the FBO to increase her network. Intermediaries (such as an FBO) are still necessary for creating and increasing social cohesion, but especially for groups of people who do not have a large primary network.

People without a large social network are also part of group two. For example, a participant that speaks sometimes to people from the activities is Halima, a Moroccan woman. In the following quote she describes how the activities have helped her to increase social participation.

Halima, +/- 35 years, Moroccan, female

Q: And do you also speak to the participants of the women's club during the week?

A: What do you mean? Q: Do you just have contact with those women on

Saturday, or also on Monday, or... A: No, just on Saturday. Q: Just Saturday's,

okay, but do you see them on the street? A: Yes. Q: Okay, so you do see them. (...)

Did you find real friends there? A: No, not really real friends. Q: Not real friends,

more a kind of... A: Just a kind of acquaintances. Q: Acquaintance. A: Talking

together, bringing the kids to school together and going back^{xxii}.

She describes the relationships with the other participants as 'acquaintances'. So the other participants are not real friends, but sometimes she speaks with them while going somewhere (like going to school). For her, this is an excellent occasion to have easy conversations in Dutch. For people with small networks, learning other people helps especially in increasing social participation (which was the first dimension of social cohesion).

6.3 Group 3 (people never or incidentally meet each other)

There is also a group of participants that is not activated by the activities of the Faith Based Organisation. They come to one or two of the activities, but that is all they do, they do not feel like investing in relationships or see investing in the relationships as too much. For some people, speaking to someone else is a very big step. The first case that will be discussed is of a woman, 47 years old and of Cape Verdean descent. She visits the women's club on Saturday. She is quite new at the activities, and the reason she came was that she was fired at her job. She spoke to *Mila*, who invited her to join the Saturday activities.

Priscilia, 47 years, Cape Verdean, female

Q: What kind of people are coming to the women's club? A: People like me (...).

Just women, it is a women's club. People who at least want to have real contact

with other people. That is how I see it. That is very important. Different people

have their own opinion. Everybody has their own things, and sometimes they

differ. (...) Q: And the women that come to these afternoons, do you see and speak

with them during the week? A: Not really, only on Saturdays. Saturday's are just

fine, because every day is a little bit too much. It is fine as it is. (...) Sometimes you

see some people, and then you can talk to them which is nice. Q: Of this group? A:

Yes, of this group, so I do have more contacts.^{xxiii}

This woman is going to the Saturday's women's club, almost every week. Visiting the activities is important for her. At that moment she really needs the contacts with other people. However, she only speaks with them at the activity, and most of the times, she also does not speak to other people during the week. Her opinion about this situation is two-sided: (1) she misses the contacts with other people. (2) She does not really want the situation to change, because talking to people every day is a little bit too much for her. Therefore, she is happy with the current situation, and for her it is a big improvement, because she is going to a social activity, she visits the activity almost every week, and she is speaking to other people.

A second case is the case of *Susan*. This is different from the previous case in group 3, because this woman does not feel the need to have relationships with other people, but she also did not find real friends at the activities of the Faith Based Organisation.

Susan, 46 years, Dutch, female

I know that it is a cosy place, but the last times that I visited, I came and I sat there, while nobody was talking to me, and then I thought, I don't care. For me, that has been the only reason that I thought, that is their problem. I do not need it anymore (...). So it was for me: I don't care. But this week I met Mila and she invited me to come by again. And I said, fine, I'll come again. (...) Like Mila and Cinta, they really have real interest in me and my business. Otherwise, Cinta wouldn't have made me officially a friend on facebook.^{xxiv}

From this quote, it becomes clear that *Susan* goes to the activities of the FBO, but she does not have a strong bond. This is because she does not really have relationships with the other participants. She says that the other participants do not talk to her, which she does not like. However, she also says 'I don't care'.

Susan, 40 years, Dutch, female

Q: Do you have friends, from the women's club? A: Yes, sometimes with Cinta. (...), because I wasn't at home yet, and she already replied to my friend request on facebook. And that is really nice. In most situations, if it happens, if I see them, it is here (at the women's club). But it is nice to be able to talk with them on facebook, or to chat, about your day.^{xxv}

From this quote, the conclusion can be drawn that she likes to talk to other people (from the Faith Based Organisation), but face-to-face contact is not necessary. For her, having a number of friends on facebook has more value than having real friends off line.

Susan, 40 years, Dutch, female

Q: So now, you have more contacts then? A: Yes, although it is another way of having contact. But, I am not the person that is constantly visiting other people.

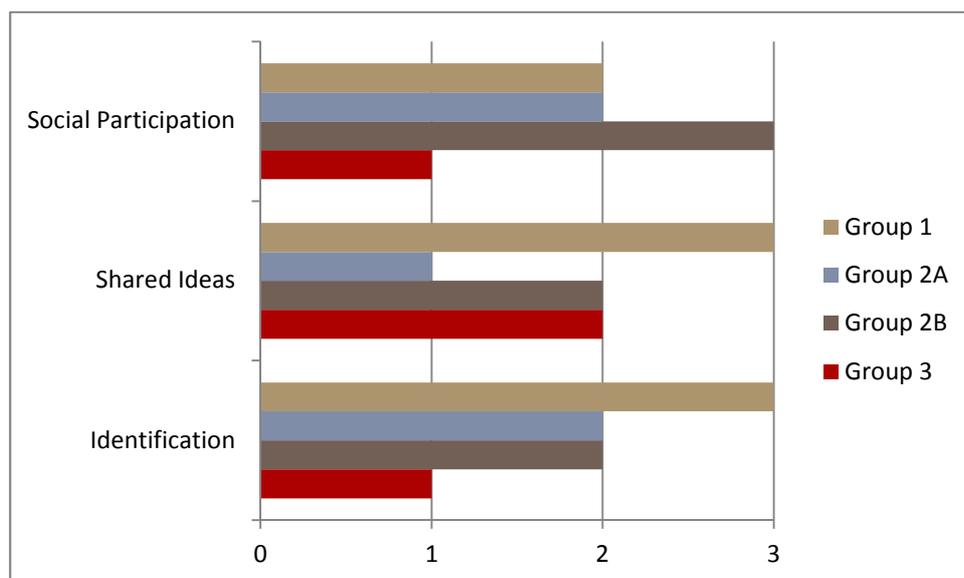
(...) Q: And when you are going to the women's club, is it a valuable asset for your week? A: In theory, yes. Like the last couple of times it was really nice, so there is nothing wrong with that. It is really good that it exists, and that you can go if you need it, but it shouldn't be obligatory.^{xxvi}

Still, for her these activities mean that she is having more contact with other people than she had before she started visiting the activities.

6.4 Conclusion

In this paragraph the results will be discussed per group. In table 5 is shown how the different dimensions of social cohesion are visible in each group.

Table 5 Dimensions of social cohesion per group of participants (Heij, 2013)



Geloven in Spangen stimulates all participants to have more contact with the other participants. This results in increased social participation, however for people it has more effect than for others. In the groups that have much contact with each other, the participants share ideas and have norms and values that are similar. Therefore they identify themselves more with the other participants and are more likely to have friends from the same group. For the first group (people meeting each other several times a week) shared ideas are very important. People come together to talk about religion, they share the same faith and it is important for them to meet often to get inspiration and have real friendship. They have chosen for the activities of GIS, because of the fact that it is a religious

organisation. Identification with the group is also visible. According to Friedkin (2004), a group is more cohesive when the group level conditions lead to positive behaviour and when the group members try to improve (or maintain) the group conditions. The first group of people really tries to be one group (which is dimension 2, about identification with the group). Increased social participation due to the activities of Geloven in Spangen is also visible, but is less important for this group, because they were already very active.

The second group of people consists of participants who meet each other sometimes. They often did not know each other before they went to the activities and their backgrounds are very different. There are however, two different kinds of participants in this group. There are people who have their own large social network, and there are people with a small social network. Therefore the first subgroup will be called 'group 2A' and the second subgroup will be called 'group 2B'. Some people (group 2A) have a large network outside the activities of Geloven in Spangen. For them a reason to come is because they like to meet people from their own neighbourhood and after a while coming to activities became a tradition. Identification with the group is for them important, however because they have their own large network, these participants feel a bit less connected. Therefore the contact which they have with other participants will mostly be with basic conversations. On the other hand there are also participants who meet sometimes that are completely different from the above mentioned description. This group (2B) consists of people who meet sometimes, outside the activities, but besides that they have little other contacts. These participants have a small network, and the activities help in getting more basic conversations and in increasing their social participation. It is a big step for some of them to come to the activities, but the reason they have chosen for Geloven in Spangen are the norms and values which GIS as a religious organisation has. According to Kearns and Forrest (2000) a society is really socially cohesive when the participants have common values and a common set of more principles. Even though participants have different cultural backgrounds, still they share values and principles which leads to more social cohesion. These participants have other religions and cultures but still they like visiting the activities of Geloven in Spangen due to the atmosphere. The activities also help in decreasing language deficits for some people, which results in more confidence and therefore these participants gradually will identify more with the group.

The third group is formed with participants who do not have contact during the week with other participants. However, even the people who never meet during the week still value the activities highly because of the contact they have with other people. For them this is enough. It does not contribute to increasing participation outside the activities; however, because they are coming to some activities these people are also more active than before.

7. Relations between participants and non-participants

In this chapter attention will be paid to the relation between participants and non-participants (see figure 27). There are different categories of contacts and relations between participants and non-participants, and in all categories the relation with the FBO will be discussed.

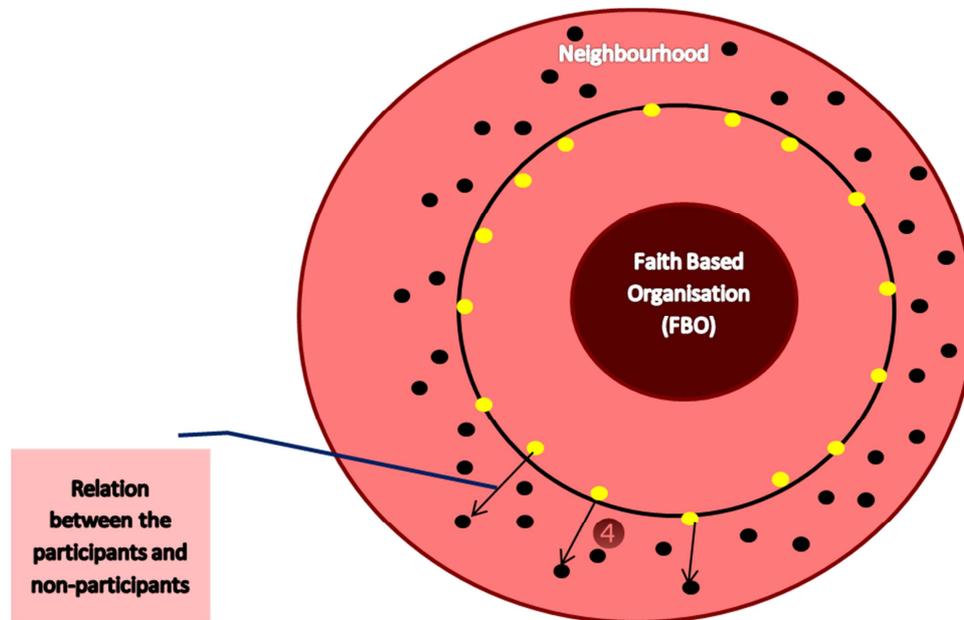


Figure 27 Relations between participants and non-participants (Heij, 2013)

7.1 Different categories

Most people have at some point contact with other people. This can be a basic 'hello' or 'good morning' to some-one else and it can be all the way up to a deep relation or conversation with a neighbour. The main question however was: how do the activities of the FBO lead to more contact of participants with non-participants? During the interviews, the questions about relation between participants and non-participants singled out the following categories:

- More communication: People who (now) have more (basic) conversations with people on the street, the store or the apartment building.
- No contact: People who do not have contact with others except at the activities of the FBO.
- Very social people: People who are known as very social people, because of the many social contacts they have.

The concept of 'contact' is looked at from two different perspectives. The first perspective is about frequency: do the participants have more (or less) contact. The second perspective is about the kind of contact that participants have. Is the contact focused (which means a socially encounter, with having direct conversations) or unfocused (which purely means being at the same time at the same

location)? Logically, when people have focused contact, they are also at the same time at the same place, thus focused contact also leads to unfocused contact (Goffman, 1963). The opposite is not always the case: someone can be at the same place, without making focused contact. In this chapter however, to be able to draw a conclusion on whether participants are having more contact with non-participants, the focus will be on focused contact between people.

7.2 More communication

This paragraph will further elaborate on the people who now have more basic (focused) conversations. To be part of this category, people just have to speak to other people besides the other visitors of the activity where they go to, and they also need to have the incentive to talk to other people instead of living a recluse's life. Most participants mentioned that they were making more basic conversations than before they visited the activities of the FBO. One of those people is *Halima*, a Moroccan woman that has been living for a long time in the Netherlands. However, she never mastered the Dutch language. Since spring 2013 she has been following a language course where she has been stimulated to visit the women's club which she does for a couple of months now. Although it is still not easy to speak Dutch, when visiting the women's club it is easier to speak Dutch because the acceptance level is lower. The women's club has increased her self-confidence, and this has resulted in her speaking to people on the street, the store and in her apartment building.

Halima, +/- 35 years, Moroccan, female

Q: And do you feel connected to the neighbourhood, and with the street? A: Yes.

Q: Yes, and do you do some things for the neighbourhood? A: I, for example, when

I am outside I greet everyone. Q: Okay, just greeting. And do you know your

neighbours well? A: Yes. Q: And do you have much contact with them? A: Yes.^{xxvii}

It is not yet the case that Halima has made friends which she sees daily. She now has basic conversations with people in the streets and in her apartment building. To be able to have these conversations, two things were needed: the language course to improve her Dutch language skills, and second, increasing confidence which has been created at the women's club. Moreover, when this Moroccan woman finishes her language course, she even wants to help at other activities.

Halima, +/- 35 years, Moroccan, female

A: When I am done at school, I'd like to do something else, like helping with the

kids that stay over at school. Q: O yes, staying over. A: In the school. Q: So you

really like doing something? A: Yes, I like it.^{xxviii}

This shows that increased confidence results in increased participation (by communicating with others, and by the desire to help at school). When participating more, people are becoming a real part of the neighbourhood according to Flint, Atkinsons and Kearns (2002). They also mentioned that especially in multicultural areas this feeling of belonging and social participation is difficult to achieve. Nonetheless, *Halima* is identifying more with the neighbourhood and is also participating more.

Another respondent in this study, *Deborah*, is working in the language course as a buddy. She helps women, in face-to-face conversations, as can be read in a quote from her interview”

Deborah, 26 years, Dutch, female

Q: Okay, and with that language buddy project, do you help, are you stimulating the women to go outside and try to establish relationships with others? A: Yes, I do think so. Because, my buddy was really good in Dutch, in two years’ time she has learnt so much. She can be proud about that. But even she said, sometimes I feel ashamed, and there are barriers. So, attending to social things is more difficult for her than for Dutch women. She does participate in it, but I think that when she is sure that her Dutch is fluent, she will have more confidence.^{xxix}

The women’s club, and the language courses / buddy system are facilities that help to establish women’s self-esteem. This confidence results in more active women that have trust in themselves. It also leads to women of ethnic minorities that are becoming more part of the neighbourhood. Jensen (2002) mentions that solidarity between all groups is of major importance. This leads to more social cohesion.

Another example of a person who has more basic contact with people is *Jaap*; he has been living as a hermit for about 10 years because he had problems with the ethics in the business world. However, after having some contacts with two active participants of GIS, he went to some activities himself.

Jaap, +/- 50 years, Dutch, male

Q: Did the contacts with Maarten and Marloes, and also with the other people in the house groups, help you to have more contact with people in general? A: Yes, it really helped me (...) because, the recruiting thing of faith had its effect on me as well. However, that recruiting element results in the organisation of several activities and other things, and that attracts people who come and see it for themselves and that results in more contact with other people, and also for me

there is always something interesting. Sometimes I find it a little bit too forced, anyway, I now speak to other people, and I did have contact with them.^{xxx}

From this quote, it becomes very clear that due to visiting the activities, and due to religion, *Jaap* now finally speaks to other people. He even became an active neighbourhood member. He is participating in some green projects in Spangen and has more contact with people in the streets. He finally has realised that those contacts are essential for living

Jaap, +/- 50 years, Dutch, male

Q: And do you talk to the other visitors of the house groups when you see them, on weekdays? A: Yes, now I am settled down. In the beginning it was very oriented on the area where Johan and Annemieke, and Nico lived, that was a more modern area. So I went from here to that area, but at a certain moment I came in contact with my neighbours opposite the street and another man that lives across the street in that new apartment, and those are real neighbours which I see sometimes during the day.^{xxxii}

7.3 No contact

For some people, visiting the activities does not result in having more contacts outside the activities with non-participants. Sometimes, this is because the participant does not feel like having more contacts; in other cases the person does miss the contacts but has no idea how to increase them. The first case that will be discussed is again of *Priscilia*, a woman, 47 years old and of Cape Verdean descent. She has already been mentioned in chapter 6.3 as a person who visits the women's club on Saturday, almost every week. In chapter 6.3 it was mentioned that she did not like talking to people every day, because it was too much for her. This does not only count for the relation between the participants, but also between her and other neighbourhood inhabitants.

Priscilia, 47 years, Cape Verdean, female

Q: And do try to get more involved now? A: Get involved, yes. Q: And do you have contact with your neighbours. A: No, not really. Q: Do you think that it is important to have contact with your neighbours? A: In general, I don't think so, (...) because where I grew up, nobody was interested in someone else, and I didn't have interest in anyone else, only with holidays a little bit. Q: And when you need help, to whom will you go? A: I'll call my son. Q: Your son? A: My son is the only one that I'll ask things, and further no one else.^{xxxiii}

From this quote, the conclusion can be drawn that this woman prefers to be on her own. This kind of behaviour is the result from her upbringing and education. She does not see the necessity of having contact with other people and even when she is in need of help, she will not call upon her neighbours. The FBO tries to facilitate relationships between people, but it does not always result in the desired effects. Not all inhabitants are having the same interest in social cohesion. However, *Priscilia* mentioned that she tries to get more involved with people.

The second case is *Susan*, a 46 years old white woman. In chapter 6.3 she mentioned that she did not find real friends at the activities of the Faith Based Organisation. However, she also does not have many real friends outside the FBO and has very little contact to other people in the neighbourhood. This can be read in the following quote from *Susan*:

Susan, 46 years, Dutch, female

Q: And do you have much contact with other people in general? Do you speak to many people? A: No, but I don't need, I don't need a very large circle of friends. Q: Do you have a circle of friends? A: Only people who like me, and with them I have some contact. However, I do have the feeling that if you have many good friends, you also have to maintain the relationships, and that is not going to happen. I really like the fact that I have so many contacts on LinkedIn^{xxxiii}

She likes having friends, but she does not like maintaining relationships. For her it is enough to have virtual friends. The contact that she has with those virtual friends is not very important, but the number of those virtual friends is enough for her. This follows an observation of Durkheim, which is about relations between fundamental changes in daily life and the behavioural changes in society. The shift towards social media networks instead of 'real life networks', results in the decline of social cohesion in society, because it is not necessary any more to meet someone, for having contact. The role of communities is less important (Hariche, Loiseau, & Mac Erlaine, 2011).

Susan is also of opinion that if people want to be friends with her, they have to invest in a relationship with her.

Susan, 46 years, Dutch, female

A: I mean, it is always like, the nicest thing is, they say I'll come sometime, and I answer, it is up to you when you come. Most of the times I am at home, and if I'm not at home you have had bad luck. (...) They know where I live.^{xxxiv}

People have to come and visit her to be real friends. If they come by and she is not there, she will not do any efforts to contact them. Although this woman is not yet really activated by the activities of

Geloven in Spangen, still she benefits from going to the activities because there she speaks to real people. At this point, the question arises whether social cohesion should be increased for everybody. Some persons really do not want to change the way they live.

7.4 Very social people

This last group of people is difficult to categorise, due to their active life before they first visited the activities. And after visiting, they often are willing to help organising the activities, or they are active participants. For some participants it is therefore not possible to say that they became more active, and have more relationships due to the activities of Geloven in Spangen. One example that fits in this group is *Trudy*, a 70 year old, white, woman. She is a very active person, helping people with their paperwork of financial, social or other organisations and she is also an adviser for elderly people. She has many contacts with people in the neighbourhood:

Trudy, 70 years, Dutch, female

A: Of course I have many contacts with my neighbours. Everybody is saying hello / good bye to me, because they know who I am. And if it was necessary, I would help my neighbour. However, it is not that I am really waiting for it because I am almost 70.

She was already a very active woman before she visited the activities, due to her employment history. However, she is limited by her age although she still would help people.

An example of a person that connected to Geloven in Spangen is *Mila*, a Surinamese woman about 55 years old. She is very active in the neighbourhood, and helps many people (especially women). She now runs her own activity.

Mila, +/- 55 years, Surinamese, female

A: Here on the Saturdays, from 14.00 – 16.00 I could use the room to welcome the women. Not just people from the street, but only women. (...) And on Saturdays, they could get a (...) meal. (...) And everybody came, sometimes the police came inside as well. The neighbourhood came inside. Even Carlos Conzaves came inside and said 'it looks nice in here'. And everybody liked it, people could share things with each other and care for each other.^{xxxv}

From this quote it becomes clear that she tries to help other neighbourhood inhabitants, and in doing so she has increased her network of relationships. Other people that are an example of very social people and also have increased their network due to GIS is the married couple *Johan* and

Annemieke. They are both white, higher educated people that have made the deliberate choice to move to Spangen to be able to do something for the neighbourhood. They have committed themselves to the project 'Geloven in Spangen'. They are of the opinion that if you want to change something, you have to live close to it, being able to help and serve the community together.

Johan, +/- 35 years, Dutch, male

What I really liked about GIS is that they have chosen for a specific neighbourhood and that they stimulated people to create a community in the neighbourhood. That was also our vision, if you want to do something for the neighbourhood you should also live there. GIS really listened to that. It is not sure yet whether these tactics are going to work, but it is their mission. Help and serve each other, especially with the other elements such as together and helping.^{xxxvi}

Both people are actively involved with Geloven in Spangen. They have taken over some organisational tasks and activities. Because of their wish to improve the neighbourhood, they also have increased their network, which can be read in the following quote:

Johan, +/- 35 years, Dutch, male

A: We know some people here in the neighbourhood; in any case through 'Geloven in Spangen' (...) I have noticed that due to GIS, I have more contact with other neighbourhood inhabitants. If I would not have them, my contacts would be more spread throughout Rotterdam. Q: And if you would have lived here, and did not have GIS? A: Then my contacts would clearly be less.^{xxxvii}

7.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, different categories of people have been discussed to see whether the participants of GIS are actively involved in the neighbourhood. It should be mentioned again that for answering this question only interviews have been held among participants, because it is of this group of people that it is interesting to know whether they have more contact with non-participants. In this topic dimension three about identification with the group, is less relevant because the non-participants are not part of 'the group' Geloven in Spangen. Therefore they are considered outsiders in this research.

The largest group of participants can be placed in the category 'more communication'. Sometimes this means relatively basic communications of saying 'hello' to someone in the street, but for people who never did that this is a major step forward. The activities of Geloven in Spangen try to increase the self-confidence of people, which leads to more relationships and more focused conversations. This increases the first dimension of social cohesion, 'social participation', in the

neighbourhood. Also the 'very social people' are influenced by GIS. In many cases they were already active people before they attached themselves to GIS, but due to their connection with GIS they also increase their network.

Norms and values do play a role in contacting other people: it is more difficult to contact someone with a completely different background. However, at the activities of Geloven in Spangen there are also conversations between people from different cultures which increases the solidarity between people, both participants and non-participants. Therefore, the step towards contact with non-participants is reduced.

Also a group exists that does not have relations (outside the activities) with other people. This group of people contributes little to the increasing of social cohesion, and they also mentioned that they do not share the desire to increase social cohesion. Some people like the way their lives are, and do not need more people in it. This groups has hardly any focused conversations except for at the activities of Geloven in Spangen.

8. Conclusion and discussion

8.1 Reintroducing the research topic

The aim of this study was to determine whether activities of Faith Based Organisations lead to changes in the level of social cohesion in Dutch urban less developed neighbourhoods. Therefore the question “*What role do Faith Based Organisations and their participants play in order to enlarge social cohesion in urban less developed neighbourhoods?*” was central. Government policy of the last years for problematic neighbourhoods has had little result (Permentier, Kullberg, & van Noije, 2013). Physically, neighbourhoods have really been improved by real changes such as demolition of squats and removing drug dealers from the neighbourhood, which has been positive for the neighbourhoods. However, the expected social improvements have not taken place. Therefore looking for methods that can change the social situation in urban less developed neighbourhoods is of major importance (Saris, et al., 2011).

Due to budget cuts in government funding, many social organisations in problematic neighbourhoods such as neighbourhood centred had to shut down while there is still a need for social activities and support. One group of social organisations that are still present is the Faith Based Organisations. At the same time that religion declined in the 60s and 70s of the 20th century, also social cohesion in society declined (Kearns & Forrest, 2000). This decline of social cohesion had several reasons, amongst which the decline of religion. This shows an opportunity for religious groups in order to increase the amount of social cohesion in society. Many people worldwide believe in a higher power and for almost all religious communities or groups it is important to help others and act in a merciful way to others (Mol, 1970). Faith Based Organisations focus on more things than religious activities; they also offer education, recreation and community services. By focussing on themes like ‘together’ and ‘sharing’, it seems clear that FBO’s play a role in the communities (Hervormde Gemeente Delfshaven, 2007), trying to increase social responsibility and connect people to each other (Furbey & Macey, 2005).

Social cohesion has multiple definitions (Friedkin, 2004), but in this study three dimensions of social cohesion have been used: (1) Social participation, (2) Shared ideas and (3) Identification with the group. Social participation is concerned with behaviour: how do people behave among each other and how do their individual decisions have impact on the group (Jensen, Mapping social cohesion: the state of canadian research, 1998). It also deals with how activities make people more active in society and what their behaviour in society will be. Shared ideas are concerned with norms and values. In a group, people should have matching norms and values, but for some activities a common identity is also valuable (Chan, To, & Chan, 2006). This directly connects to the third

dimension, identification with the group (Beauvais & Jensen, 2002). How do people experience activities, is there a desire to belong to the group and do the participants feel like they want to do something? Do participants help and trust each other (Flint & Robinson, Introduction, 2008)? The three dimensions are important to be able to draw a conclusion about cohesion, and how certain activities impact cohesiveness.

8.2 Explaining the methodology

For this study, a qualitative research method has been chosen, in order to be able to describe, interpret and explain the behaviour of the research subjects: 'the participants'. With a case study it was possible to investigate one neighbourhood extensively (Creswell J. W., 2007). The Faith Based Organisation was the central object of investigation. For data collection and analysis, different collection methods have been used: observation, participative observation, interviews, reports and documents (Boeije, 't Hart, & Hox, 2009). For the validity and reliability of this research study, these several methods are essential (Creswell J. , 2009). Also, a topic list has been used during the interviews, to be certain that the same questions have been asked in every interview. To be sure that respondents did understand the questions, at the end of each interview there was a summary of the given answers. At the beginning of the research study, comprehensibility of the question was taken into concern. The understanding was that with qualitative research there would be less problems than with a quantitative questionnaire. However, there were more language barriers than expected at the beginning of the study. All interviews were in Dutch and many interviews have not been carried out in the mother tongue of the respondent. This often resulted in short answers of some respondents and long explanations of the questions by the interviewer. These explanations sometimes resulted in subjective questions which resulted in answers that might have been slightly biased. In this report, quotes from the interviews have been carefully translated into English. However, this translation might have as a consequence that answers could have lost some meaning in the translation.

In qualitative research, generalizability of the results is difficult. The strength of qualitative research is that a phenomenon is studied in its context (Yin, 1994). That context is different in other locations, and therefore the conclusion might not be relevant for other cases. In this study only one organisation has been researched, and from this organisation only one project. Nevertheless, the full method of this study can be used for other projects and Faith Based Organisations. Many factors are applicable to other organisations and projects: This research study has been carried out (1) in an urban less developed neighbourhood with many problems, (2) with a Christian organisation, (3) the project has the desire to be part of the neighbourhood and (4) has a social mission. If there are

projects that have these same factors, these results (with the corresponding theory) can be used to evaluate their own project. For neighbourhoods with the above mentioned four factors, the effects that Faith Based Organisations have on social cohesion in a neighbourhood are likely to be the same. There may also be Faith Based Organisations that have other missions, such as focussing on religion instead of increasing social cohesion. When the focus is on religion and there are no or only few social activities, it is likely that there are less changes in the amount of social cohesion caused by religious organisations.

8.3 Conclusion per topic

8.3.1 Activities of FBO's

The research for this study has been done at the 'IZB' (which means, Internal Missionary Organisation of the Netherlands). This is a Faith Based Organisation with multiple projects in the Netherlands. Increasing neighbourhood participation and improving neighbourhoods is part of their mission statement. One of the IZB-projects is 'Geloven in Spangenen', in Rotterdam. Rotterdam is one of the urban areas of the Netherlands that struggles with the concept of social cohesion and especially Spangenen is an area where social cohesion is low.

The organisation Geloven in Spangenen has activities that focus on the religious character of the organisation, but they have even more activities that focus on social activities (Hervormde Gemeente Delfshaven, 2007). The social activities often have the aim to help people in a material way, but also to help them with having social contact (IZB, 2013). In urban deprived areas, many people with low incomes and with only basic education have problems having contact with other people. Therefore organisations that help in getting these contacts are necessary. Geloven in Spangenen focusses on four different groups of activities: (1) Growing & Church, (2) Together, (3) Sharing & Helping, (4) Living & Meeting (Hervormde Gemeente Delfshaven, 2007). Many of their activities are focusses on meeting, helping and doing things together. One activity of Geloven in Spangenen is the women's club on Saturday. This activity is facilitating a location where women come to just sit and talk to other people. Meanwhile they get something (healthy) to eat. The aim of this activity is to increase social cohesion. For a neighbourhood like Spangenen, which struggles with individualism and many other problems, such an activity is very important. People also said during the interview or during the activities that they really like such a place. It should be located centrally so that it is easy accessible for everyone and it should be visible from the outside. There is a similar activity for boys and girls and just like the women's club, here people are stimulated in different ways. A remarkable fact is that there are almost only female participants at the activities of Geloven

in Spangen. When looking at the interviewed passive participants, 10 are female and only 1 is male. This is because there were no other male passive participants. In the group of active participants, there are more men (visiting the house groups or the services). There are specific activities for children and for women but none for men. It would be interesting to investigate whether men would appreciate special activities. It would be a good thing when also men were reached by a certain organisation (whether this is done by an FBO or any other organisation). One dimension of social cohesion was social participation and at the activities, visitors are stimulated to get into contact with other people and help other people. This stimulation occurs because of the norms and values that the religious organisation has. But even when an activity has not a religious focus, still the norms and values (such as helping one another) are shared.

8.3.2 Experiences

Most of the participants value the activities highly. During the interviews, the following things were mentioned: they feel safe at the activities, there is someone who will listen to them, it is cosy and it is very easy accessible to everyone. The participants would absolutely miss it if the activity would not exist. During the activities, people start to feel like a group and they identify themselves with the group.

8.3.3 Relations among participants

Furthermore, if someone is absent, it will be noticed and people will make inquiries about the missing person. They want to act in the best interest of the group. The visitors of the activities also get more confidence and as a result they start inviting others to come with them to the activities. For some people this step is too difficult, but they start to involve more with other people too, making basic conversations in the streets or in the supermarket. The activities thus help people to speak more to others and to participate more, which is leading to increased social cohesion.

The concept of trust was included in the theory about social cohesion by Chan, To and Chan (2006). They said that one part of social cohesion is the dimension of shared ideas, and to share ideas people should trust each other. Without trust, people are less likely to participate and help others. One of the questions during the interviews was whether people started to trust each other, or have more trust in the neighbourhood. However, during the interviews a completely different definition of trust came alive, which was not expected from the theory of social cohesion. People said during the interviews that visiting the activities of Geloven in Spangen helped them to get more trust in themselves, to get confidence. In urban less developed neighbourhoods education levels are very low and many residents are of foreign descent. Therefore many people have language problems or

are scared of the Dutch culture. Easily accessible activities such as the women's club and the language buddy system help them to get more confidence in themselves which results in people that become more active in society. This is part of the dimension of social participation. However, several times former immigrants said that they were coming to Geloven in Spangen because of its religious background. Even though some of those people have another religion (mostly Islam), for them the religious background of activities means that the norms and values are probably similar which made them come to the activities. In many cases the visitors benefitted from the activities.

The religious activities are also valued highly by the participants. These activities are also easily accessible which is especially appreciated by participants who want to know more about the Christian faith. It is also appreciated by the other neighbourhood inhabitants that there are Christian activities in the neighbourhood, because of the norms and values that GIS have. Adherents of the Christian faith like to be among other believers to support each other. The group of Christians that became members of the Faith Based Organisation are also participating more in the neighbourhood and have more social contacts, because the organisation supports them to be active in the neighbourhood. Their motivation for participating is based on religious motives and it leads to social cohesion. Not only Christians are becoming more active. Many other visitors meet new people at the activities and new relationships are formed. They have often many things in common with the other participants, which is experienced positively. Some people get more respect for the situation of others and other people have some basic communication with others.

8.3.4 Relations among participants and other neighbourhood inhabitants

People thus have more communication with others. This is quite logical, because when someone does not visit an activity with other people, it does not lead to more communication. However, when someone goes to a place with other people, he or she has more contact with others. The question of this chapter was whether visitors of FBO activities have more contact with other inhabitants of the neighbourhood in which they live. It can be concluded that especially for the people who learn the Dutch language and have a small network, having basic communication with others is good and doable. However, there is also a group that does not communicate with others at all. Both when talking about relations between participants, as well as when talking about relations between participants and non-participants, this group is made up of the same people. In this study it was assumed that increasing social cohesion was desirable. But during the interviews it became clear that besides people who really needed the support to have more relationships, there is also a group that does not want to have more contact. For them, going to one of the activities is a large step, and more contact with others (then at the activities) is not desirable, whether being a participant or

another neighbourhood inhabitant. This was not taken into account when designing and performing this research study. It is however a good thing that even those people who do not like to have contact have chosen an organisation to be involved with anyway. The reason they chose Geloven in Spangen is often because of their religious background.

Remarkable were some comments about social media. People, who do not like to have contact in real life, really valued the amount of friends that they have on Facebook, LinkedIn or Twitter. For them, the opportunity to get contact at these social media sites is more important than really speaking to people face-to-face. To reach this group of people, social media could be a possibility. However, Nico van Splunter and Pamelij Tijthoff both said that their website and social media page were only visited by a small group of people.

8.4 Implications

8.4.1 Implication for government policy

From this research study several implications for policy concerning Faith Based Organisations are evident:

- Social cohesion is not desirable by all people in a neighbourhood
 - Some people have no need for contact with other people. This group is difficult to reach by the government, because those people are often not interested in the measures of the government
- Social media networks are becoming more important for some people than 'real life networks'.
 - This results in the question whether 'real life' social cohesion is still important to increase for all people. However, because increasing 'real life' social cohesion also results in improved neighbourhoods, it is still important to aim for. But government policy should take other forms of networks into account, in their policies.
- Government policy should see Faith Based Organisations as an equal partner in neighbourhoods
 - Government policy for has tried measures like sports to improve neighbourhoods, but Faith Based Organisations are also important for a neighbourhood. FBO's reach people that current government policy could not reach. Most people that have contact with the FBO are becoming more participative in society, which was also an aim of the government policy. The FBO's connect to those people on the basis of the interest in religion, but because they have many secular activities, Faith Based Organisations serve a wider range of inhabitants in a neighbourhood.

8.4.2 Implications for Faith Based Organisations

- Faith Based Organisations should realise the role that they have in a neighbourhood
 - The two groups of activities that they have attract different people, and especially the secular activities attract a group that was not reached by governmental organisations. Therefore they have an important role to attract the vulnerable people in society.
- The motive of Faith Based Organisations is ‘believing’:
 - Believing as part of religion, but also believing in a neighbourhood. Believing and ‘faith’ is thus the motivation of the FBOs, from which all activities are organised. Although it might not be the cohesive factor for all inhabitants, it does connect people to each other, whether they have the same religion or not.
- Norms and values are of major importance for Faith Based Organisations, but this can also be a challenge
 - For all groups and organisations, the dimension of social cohesion ‘shared ideas’ is important, but for a religious organisation, the concept of ‘shared ideas’ is of vital importance, because the norms and values have a religious aspect.
 - Faith Based Organisations attract people that share (parts of) the same norms and values, but for sharing norms and values people do not need to have the same religion. However, these people explicitly feel attracted to and visit the organisation because of the shared ideas. To protect these norms and values, while still serving a group of people that are not of the same religion, all activities are organised by religious people. However, in such organisations this group of people is often very small in the beginning, which demands perseverance and dedication of the pioneers.

8.5 Further research opportunities

It would be interesting to further explore the concept of trust. It became clear that although the concept of social cohesion includes the concept of trust, in reality another definition of trust would be more suitable. This definition of trust is mostly mentioned by people with a small social network.

Another interested topic for further research is how women with limited knowledge of the Dutch language (and often a different cultural background) can be reached. With the current governmental policies, this group is difficult to reach. However, several women mentioned that visiting activities of FBO’s helped due to the shared ideas at those places. Therefore it would be interesting and very useful to know what those women need to become more participative in society and what barriers there are for participation (cultural, distance, time etc. barriers).

A third topic for possible further research is concerned with social media. Some participants mentioned that having a virtual network was sufficient for them. However, it is difficult to use virtual networks to increase social cohesion in a real life neighbourhood. Therefore, it would be useful to look deeper into this topic, and figure out whether there is a role for increasing social cohesion through the use of virtual networks.

8.6 Conclusion

Government programs for the renewal of less developed neighbourhood have had some results, but mainly in physical changes. For the social changes, other solutions have to be found. People in the neighbourhood need a local organisation which they can trust and with whom they share norms and values. For some groups of inhabitants this can be found in sports organisations and for other people a religious organisation is the right place to go to. In this study it has been investigated what role there is for Faith Based Organisations and their participants in order to enlarge social cohesion in less developed neighbourhoods. The impact of Faith Based Organisation on people differs per group or person. Some groups are more effected by the FBO. People that benefit most from the FBO are people that have a relatively small social network. These are mostly females, with children or migrants that have very limited knowledge of the Dutch language (at this moment).

Faith Based Organisations organise multiple activities, mainly with this division: religious versus non-religious. The non-religious activities are primarily organised with the intention to help the neighbourhood and its inhabitants, stimulate social participation and create and stimulate relationships between participants, and between participants and non-participants. All activities have elements of the definition of social cohesion. The second part of the question was about the participants: do they have a role in enlarging social cohesion. This question is an evaluating question, to see whether the organised activities of the FBO have impact on the participants and the neighbourhood in which they live. In a way, the answer to the question is yes. FBO's have a connecting role: participants go to the organised activities and when they go, they get to know other people, become more social (instead of living a recluse's life), are stimulated to help others and improve the neighbourhood. Some of the participants are reached because it is a religious organisation and they agree more on the shared ideas than with any other organisation in the neighbourhood. Therefore, the presence of a religious organisation is of real value for a neighbourhood, because Faith Based Organisations reach a group of inhabitants that would be more difficult to reach with any other social organisation.

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Appendix 1: Translations of the used codes (English-Dutch)

i

A: Het mooie van Nico is dat hij voor mij, misschien met de knowhow die ik heb niet zo heel veel geld krijgt van de staat. Maar veel meer vanuit de particuliere hoek en dat is voor een deelgemeente altijd interessant.

ii

A: Ik denk dat dat een hoop ruist geeft ja. De financiering van de overheid is natuurlijk grillig

iii

Q: Dus de inwoners van de wijk en de andere projecten zoals GIS ook, die hebben hun activiteiten en geven dat ongeveer door aan Welkom in Spangen en die promoten dat.

A: Die promoten dat, die delen dat die leggen als zij kansen zien verbindingen met andere partners of bewoners zodat er nieuwe energieën ontstaan, zodat dingen misschien wat groter kunnen worden, dat er meer samenwerking kan plaatsvinden. In die zin promoten we, maar we leggen ook echt verbindingen met als doel ook om te zorgen hier die participatie in de wijk echt met elkaar kunnen vormgeven.

iv

Q: Zijn er veel van die partners?

A: Ik zie Geloven in Spangen als een zelforganisatie, als een groep actieve bewoners die iets willen in spangen en dan met als invalshoek het delen van het geloof. Er zijn nog meer initiatieven, er is een initiatief dat gaat over groen spangen, die hebben de schapen nu ook geleverd zoo maar zeggen, dat is een initiatief en ik ben nu bezig om geloven in spangen en natuurlijk spangen met elkaar te verbinden, dat is wat wij doen als platform.

v

A: Het is natuurlijk een project wat denk ik gewoon een belangrijke rol speelt in Spangen, ik weet niet hoe groot hun bereik nu is, maar wat ik bij de contacten met Nico beluister, komt hij redelijk in de haarvaten van de wijk terecht. Hij kent veel mensen, hij komt heel dicht bij mensen in de zin van wat is nodig, waar ik behoefte aan. En hij probeert een zekere rol in te vervullen met het project.

vi

Toen stond ik buiten en toen dacht ik jeetje, wat heeft deze wijk dat toch gewoon nog zo nodig. Eigenlijk heeft iedere wijk eigenlijk gewoon zo'n pastor gewoon nodig, waar mensen gewoon terecht kunnen met hulp en wat is het al, het is er bijna niet meer (...) Dat was voor mij persoonlijk wel echt

een eyeopener, van hé daar zit een, dat is een warm nest, een warme gemeenschap.

vii

Q: Missen jullie elkaar als er iemand niet is?

A: Ja als eentje bijvoorbeeld in het ziekenhuis ligt, of eentje zien we een paar weken niet dan gaan we toch even de een na de ander vragen heb jij iets gehoord, of bel jij even of sms even. Dat doen we wel ja. Als ik bijvoorbeeld een paar weken niet ben gegaan dan sporen ze me op van He Sonia hoe gaat het met je? Ik heb je gemist al een paar weken. Kom je nou aanstaande week of volgende week?

viii

A: Maar ze zijn ook heel erg met Ilon, want Ilon liep toen in het ziekenhuis, wilde ze weten hoe het was afgelopen, kwamen nog een kaartje brengen hier.

ix

A: Omdat ik gewoon weet, de stad heeft brood nodig, heeft aandacht brood nodig en vooral Gods liefde, daar geloof ik dan in.

x

A: En zo zie je dat toch, de samenwerking tussen de mensen en ook de cohesie wat je zegt, de mensen helpen toch elkaar onbewust. En dat vind ik dan toch mooi. En zo is Geloven in Spangen ook weer een deel hiervan. Door als we met de vieringen te vieren en gebruik van de ruimte wat ik dan mag gebruiken. Om dan toch de vrouwen te kunnen helpen, te kunnen opvangen. Ik hoef geen geld te geven. En het is een dubbel rol, want de mensen die hier komen gaan toch een beetje meer geloven. Ze zien de uitstraling: ik praat niet over Jezus, ik praat niet over God, ik zeg niet: je MOET de Bijbel lezen. Nee, dat zeg ik niet. Maar aan onze werken zien ze dat wij gelovigen zijn.

xi

A: Dus dat gaat het gemoedelijk en heel schappelijk gaat dat en dat geeft mij gewoon een fijn gevoel. (...) Maar, het fijne is dat het bij GIS helemaal niet uitmaakt. We delen één belangrijk ding met elkaar en dat is de liefde van God. Het geloof delen we met elkaar en dan maakt het echt niet uit of je bruin, zwart, wit, geel of groen bent, of wat voor andere achtergrond je ook hebt. Ik denk dat dat het belangrijkste is, dat we God met elkaar delen.

xii

A: Ik vind het fijn om mijn geloof handen en voeten te geven, ook heel praktisch. En, nou ons leuk het wel logisch om dat ook in een wijk te doen.

xiii

Ik geef, je moet ontzettend veel geven, en dat is wel echt voor mij een plekje waar ik geestelijk kan nemen.

xiv

A: De jongen heette maarten en het meisje heette Marloes. En vond het leuk om met hun in contact te gaan, ze waren helderder dan meeste die ik normaal sprak. Ze hadden een beetje een opleiding en dat zie je hier niet vaak. (...) Dus die heb ik later nog eens opgezocht en toen ontdekt dat ik wacht eens even, een christelijk lyceum gedaan heb en ik ben ook christelijk opgevoed, (...) dat ik een brief heb geschreven, ik geloof dat ik er goed aan doe om me t die achtergrond toch weer wat in contact te komen (...) Ik ben in dat opzicht, al eindelijk tevreden geraakt, al het gehoopt, sommige van de, er zijn in zekere zin al een beetje in vervulling gegaan, gewoon leuke contacten met mensen hebben, dat begint in de afgelopen jaren we l te lukken.

xv

Ik vind dat ze erg actief zijn. Dat ze het ook allemaal erg zichtbaar maken. Het is altijd leuk om te weten hoe groot zo'n gemeenschap dan ook groeit. En ik heb laatst mijn man opgegeven voor, er was een projectkoor dus ik zeg is dat niets voor jou met kerst, dus die hebben hier staan zingen in het vinkje, maar het heeft hem dan wel weer aangezet om bij een ander koor te gaan. Dus ik denk ja, vind ik wel heel erg leuk dat het in je wijk zit. Dus op die manier activeren ze wel echt mensen GIS. Ze hebben in ieder geval mijn man geactiveerd om weer te gaan zingen. (...) En dan denk ik ja, het nut, de toegevoegde waarde is wat mij betreft wel bewezen.

xvi

A: Ik ben zelf ook christen en toen wij op zoek gingen naar een basisschool voor die kinderen en dan zoek je toch een school die daar een beetje bij past die daar goed op aansluit want je kinderen zitten toch het gros van de tijd op school, ze worden bij wijze van ook enen beetje opgevoed door de school. Dus dan vind het wel belangrijk dat de plek waar ze zijn, dat het ja de normen en waarden die wij hebben goed op elkaar aansluit en vaak zie je ook dat een school zich wel een christelijke school noemt, maar de waarden, de normen en de principes die zie je niet altijd terug. En daarom dat ik dit, het is dan een naschoolse activiteit maar dat vond ik echt een goed initiatief, want dan word er toch wat dieper op in gegaan.

xvii

Q: En die groepen dan, vormen die echt een band met elkaar? A: Ja, we proberen ook weleens iets gezamenlijk als 2 huisgroepen iets te doen, met de Doevieringen komt het bij elkaar, want de

huisgroep is eigenlijk wel de kern van de viering, van de vieringen waar je elkaar weer ontmoet. Q: En spreken jullie elkaar ook buiten de activiteit om? A: Soms wel, bij verjaardagen of als we iets leuks met elkaar organiseren. Q: Dus echt een kennissenkring, zijn al die mensen eigenlijk wel in opgenomen, een deel dan. A: Ja, dus je probeert niet alleen contact te hebben binnen de kerk, of, maar ook met gewoon leuke activiteiten elkaar bij betrekken en uitnodigen.

xviii

Ze komen nu ook bij Nico dan thuis, wat voor heen dan niet echt actief gebeurde. En de kinderen van de familie Kamminga, zeg maar, gaan ze nu ook steeds beter leren kennen. Daar spelen ze ook met elkaar tijdens de dienst. Dus dat gaat het gemoedelijk en heel schappelijk gaat dat en dat geeft mij gewoon een fijn gevoel.

xix

A: 3 jaar geleden ben ik eigenlijk gekomen en tegen alle vrouwen gezegd van ga een keertje kijken daar, ga een keertje mee en zodoende is het een beetje groter geworden daar. Tegen de vrouwen die heel erg op hun eigen waren een beetje eigenlijk en die niet veel ergens kwamen zei ik van kom een keertje kijken. We doen daar activiteiten, om de week doen we een hapje eten met elkaar e standaard koffie en thee en ja, het was gewoon heel erg gezellig, nog steeds. Ik heb natuurlijk ook mijn speciale vriendinnen, zoals Maureen en zo, die erin zitten of Sita en Marlies. En dan wil je sommige dingen echt met hun persoonlijk bepraten en dan wacht je echt de hele week tot je ze ziet. Maureen niet hoor, die zie ik dagelijks. De meeste heb ik op mijn facebook. En ze komen ook op mijn verjaardag of op Ilon's verjaardag.

xx

A: Ja, ik heb een buurvrouw, die woont op de 3e etage. En die kwam al eerder hier op de vrouwenmiddag en ik zei, ik ga wel mee.

Q: Oh gezellig.

A: Ja, ja, dus dan zijn we er samen en dan zijn we alleen. Dat ligt er aan wat je te doen hebt.

Q: Dus u spreekt ook nog de mensen van de vrouwenmiddag, spreekt u ook nog doordeweeks, of in ieder geval uw buurvrouw dan?

A: Ja, en nog een andere buurvrouw, die woont op 5 en die komt hier ook af en toe. Want ik die buurvrouw waar ik nu mee op trek en die andere buurvrouw heb ik nu wel goed leren kennen.

xxi

A: Maar ik het indertijd wel een hele leuke buurvrouw leren kennen. Ja, en daar ga ik ook gewoon leuke dingen mee doen. Ja.

Q: En zitten er ook echt mensen van Geloven in Spangen tussen? Tussen al die contacten?

A: Ja die mevrouw, die buurvrouw van mij zit ook bij Geloven in Spangen, die heb ik zelf ook meegenomen en dat vind ze ook heel erg leuk.

Q: En ja, als u de mensen doordeweeks ziet, ziet u weleens iemand doordeweeks van de vrouwenmiddag?

A: Nou niet zo vaak nee, soms wel, in de supermarkt weleens, maar niet zo heel vaak

xxii

Q: En spreekt u de mensen van de vrouwenclub ook weleens doordeweeks?

A: Wat bedoel je?

Q: Spreekt u die vrouwen alleen op zaterdag of ook op maandag of...

A: Nee alleen op zaterdag.

Q: Alleen op zaterdag, oké, ziet u ze wel eens gewoon op straat?

A: Jawel.

Q: Oké dat wel.

Q: Hebt u er ook echt vrienden aan over gehouden?

A: Nee, niet echt, echt vrienden.

Q: Niet echt vrienden maar een soort,

A: Gewoon een soort gewoon kennis.

Q: Kennis.

A: Samen praten, samen naar school brengen en terug.

xxiii

Q: En wat voor soort mensen komen er naar de vrouwenmiddag?

A: Een soort mensen net als ik (...). Zomaar vrouwen, is echt een vrouwenmiddag. Mensen die tenminste echt contact willen hebben met andere mensen, zo zie ik dat meer. Is ook belangrijk denk ik. Verschillende mensen iedereen heeft zijn eigen mening. Iedereen heeft zijn eigen dingen en soms verschillen ze wel.

Q: En dan de vrouwen van deze middag spreekt u die door de week?

A: Niet zo.

Q: Dus alleen hier op zaterdag?

A: Alleen op zaterdag.

A: In principe je kunt niet zo veel dragen, zaterdag vind je prima want elke dag is een beetje te veel. En als het zo blijft is het prima. Soms zie je ook mensen, af en toe kom je ook iemand tegen dat je

altijd een praatje maken is ook heel fijn.

Q: Van deze groep?

A: Van deze groep ja, is meer contacten ja.

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A: Nou, ik heb ik weet dat het gezellig is maar de laatste paar keren was het zo van de kwam ik en dan zat ik daar en praatte niemand tegen me en dat was, toen had ik ook zo iets van zoek het lekker maar uit. Dat is van mij toen ook de enige reden geweest van zoek het maar uit ik heb er even geen behoefte meer aan. Dus was voor mij een beetje van toedeloe bekijk het even en ik kwam van de week Marlies weer tegen en die zei kom gezellig even langs. En ik zei is goed, ik kom wel weer even.

A: Nou, zoals Marlies en Maureen ja, die zijn dan weer die hebben heus wel echt interesse in me en dat schoor zaken. Anders had Maureen mij officieel ook niet op Facebook als vriendin neergezet.

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Q: Heb je ook vrienden hiervan dan nu?

A: Jawel, Maureen weleens. Want een, ik was nog niet thuis en ze zei ik heb gelijk op mijn facebook ja gezegd, en dan is het ook van toppie. In de meeste gevallen is het van als het gebeurd, als ik ze dan wel zien dan is het toch wel hier. Maar het is toch ook fijn als je op facebook met ze kan praten of chatten, van hé, hoe was je dag?

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Q: Dus je hebt net wat meer contact dan dus?

A: Ja, het is op een andere manier contact dat wel, ik ben ook niet iemand die constant overal bij iedereen op visite moet hangen.

Q: En vind je de vrouwenmiddag als je gaat, vind je dat dan echt een waardevolle bijdrage aan je week?

A: Ik vind het op zich wel, zoals de laatste keren vond ik het best gezellig en daar is dus ook absoluut niets mis mee. Het is hartstikke leuk dat het er is, en dat je er ook gewoon heen kan als je er weer even behoefte aan hebt. Het je moet je ook niet verplicht voelen.

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Q: En voelt u zich ook betrokken bij de wijk, bij de straat.

A: Jawel.

Q: Ja, En doet u daar weleens wat voor

A: Ik bijvoorbeeld, buiten ik groet iedereen zo.

Q; Oké gewoon groeten. En kent u uw burens goed?

A: Ja.

Q: En heeft u daar veel contact mee?

A: Ja.

^{xxviii} A: Als ik klaar ben op school wil ik iets anders op school, bijvoorbeeld overblijven of zo iets.

Q: O ja, overblijven.

A: Op school.

Q: Dus u vindt het wel leuk om iets te doen?

A: Jawel, wel leuk.

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Q: Oké, en met dat taalmaatjes project, help je, stimuleer je hun ook om meer naar buiten te gaan als ware om meer contact te leggen met anderen?

A: Ik denk het wel, zoals mij taalmaatje is echt supergoed in Nederlands al, in twee jaar tijd heeft ze zich zoveel eigen gemaakt echt gewoon om trots op te zijn, maar zelfs zij zei nog, maar soms schaam ik me en dan komen er natuurlijk drempels. Dus, gewoon deelnemen aan de maatschappelijke dingen is voor haar iets lastiger dan voor Nederlanders natuurlijk. Ze doet het wel, maar ik denk dat ze gewoon als ze zeker weet dat ze goed Nederlands spreekt dat ze nog zelfverzekerder zal zijn.

^{xxx}

Q: Heeft dat contact dan met Maarten en Marloes en ook met de andere mensen in die huisgroep, er voor gezorgd dat u meer contact had met mensen in het algemeen?

A: Heeft wel geholpen. Want het wervende van het geloof dat is niet helemaal mijn ding, maar het zorgt er wel weer voor dat ze dingen organiseren, en daar komen toch weer mensen op af en zo en er zijn contacten en daar is het voor mij altijd wel iets, naar mij gevoel dan iets te forceert in, maar ik spreek ze dan toch wel en hoe het dan toch mogen zijn, ik heb het wel gedaan en het gebeurt weleens toch.

^{xxxi}

Q: En spreekt u nu de mensen van die huisgroep ook doordeweeks gewoon op andere dagen als je ze ziet?

A: Ja, ik ben goed ingeburgerd, het was altijd zo erg daar bij Nico en Maarten en Marloes georiënteerd, dat was ook de nieuwste buurt, ik ging altijd vanuit hier daar naar toe en op een gegeven moment ben ik dus in contact gekomen met mijn overburen en een man die in

die nieuwe flat hier woont, en dat zijn gewoon echte burens en die kom ik dus overdag ook wel eens tegen.

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Q: U doet wel uw best om meer betrokken te raken?

A: Bij betrokken te raken ja.

Q: En nu spreekt u weleens uw burens aan?

A: Nee niet zo.

Q: Vind u het belangrijk om contact te hebben met uw burens?

A: In principe, ik vind van niet, want waar ik ben opgegroeid is niemand boeien met jou en boeien met niemand, alleen feestdagen.

Q: En als u dan hulp nodig hebt, naar wie gaat u dan toe?

A: Dan bel ik eerst mijn zoon, want ik bel al.

Q: Dan belt u eerst u zoon?

A: Mijn zoon is de enige die ik vraag, mijn kinderen en verder niemand.

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Q: En heeft u veel contact in het algemeen met mensen, spreekt u veel mensen?

A: Nee, maar ik heb daar ook geen, ik hoef geen hele grote vriendenkring te hebben.

Q: U hebt wel uw eigen vriendenkring?

A: Gewoon de mensen die mijn mogen, en daar heb ik gewoon contact mee dus ik heb wel zoiets van als ik zo veel grote vrienden zou hebben dat je moet ook weer met z'n alle onderhouden en dat word gewoon ook niets. Ik vind het hartstikke leuk dat ik zoveel contacten heb op LinkedIn.

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A: Ik bedoel, het is altijd wel, ze het leuke er van is, ik kom weleens een keer, ik zeg je ziet maar wanneer je komt. Ik ben meestal toch wel thuis en als ik niet thuis ben en je komt dan heb je pech gehad (...). Ze weten mijn huis te vinden.

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A: Hier op de zaterdag mocht ik dan van 14.00 tot 16.00, mocht ik de ruimte gebruiken nu dan alleen om vrouwen te ontvangen. Niet meer mensen van de straat maar allen vrouwen. (...) En op de zaterdag konden ze dan vanaf 14.00 tot 16.00 konden ze dan (...) een maaltijd nuttigen (...) En iedereen kwam, ook de politie kwam soms binnen, de wijk, de buurtwijk kwam binnen. Zelfs Carlos Conzaves is weleens binnen geweest: oh wat gezellig hier. En iedereen vond het gewoon leuk, het

was gewoon leuk omdat daar mensen konden, om aan mensen te geven.

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A: Wat ik van GIS heel sterk vond is dat ze duidelijk kiezen voor een wijk en ze hebben ook heel erg gestimuleerd om aan gemeentestichting in de wijk te doen. Dat is ook heel erg onze visie, wil je iets voor een wijk kunnen betekenen, dan moet je er ook tussen gaan wonen. En daar gaf GIS wel heel erg gehoor aan. En wat GIS ook, tenminste, of het lukt is twee, maar in ieder geval wel de visie, elkaar helpend dienen dus ook met die andere takken dus het samen het hulp.

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A: We kennen hier een aantal mensen in de wijk, sowieso vanuit geloven in Spangen. Ik merk wel dat ik door dat ik meer met mensen in mijn wijk om ga dan als ik dat niet zou hebben dan zou het meer verspreid liggen over Rotterdam.

Q: Oké, en ja als je hier gewoond had en je had GIS niet gehad?

A: Dan zouden mij contacten duidelijk minder zijn geweest.

Executive summary

Background

This research study has been performed as part of a graduating process in Human Geography at Radboud University Nijmegen. The research question in this study is *“What role do Faith Based Organisations and their participants play in order to enlarge social cohesion in urban less developed neighbourhoods?”*. Government policy has not led to sufficient results in urban less developed neighbourhoods. Physical improvements have been made, but social cohesion is still remarkably low in some neighbourhoods. In this study, Faith Based Organisations have been examined to see whether they may be part of a solution to increase social cohesion. The research question has been divided into four different topics. First, the type of activities have been studied; secondly the experiences of the participants were central, the third and fourth topic were about relations of the participants with other participants and relations of participants with neighbourhood inhabitants. The results are structured according to these topics.

Results

In this study multiple theories of social cohesion have been discussed and three dimensions are generally shared, which are: (1) social participation; (2) shared ideas; and (3) Identification with the group. These three dimensions have been used in the study to obtain answers to the research question. A case study has been used as research method. The study has been performed in Spangen, Rotterdam (a less developed urban neighbourhood) at the project Geloven in Spangen (GIS) of Faith Based Organisation ‘IZB’. The research study contained (participative) observations and interviews with participants and other people connected to this FBO.

The FBO ‘Geloven in Spangen’ has the mission to form a religious community in Spangen. However, this is not their only mission. They also want to improve social cohesion in the neighbourhood. Therefore they have many secular activities which are focussed on increasing social participation, increasing trust in others and solidarity between people. The activities are mainly valued positively by the participants, especially because they connect people from the neighbourhood. People start to feel as a group, and also act as a group by taking care of each other and worrying about missing participants. Thus they identify more with the group. The social activities also make people more active. People that had little contact with others now talk to people (e.g. in the supermarket, or when walking to school) because they developed trust. Where social cohesion mainly focuses on trust in other people, the participants mentioned that they also gained trust in themselves. The activities of GIS which are easy accessible and

without commitments help people to get confidence, which results in more participation. Especially women of foreign descent benefit from this.

Geloven in Spangen, as religious organisation, attracts both Christian as non-Christian people; this is probably the result of the different activities that are organised. However, a remarkable fact is that adherents to other religions (such as the Islam) also like to visit the activities. As a reason for this, they mentioned the norms and values of an organisation like Geloven in Spangen. Even when it is not based on the same faith, different religions have matching norms and values. This makes the second dimension of social cohesion, shared ideas, an imported reason to come to activities of an FBO. The people that mentioned norms and values as a reason were often people that had little contact with other people before visiting the Faith Based Organisation. It can be concluded that religious organisations attract other people than, for example, governmental organisations and thus are valuable for the area.

People that visit the activities have more contact with other people, both at the activities and outside of the activities with non-participants. Talking to each other at the activities increases solidarity and trust. One person changed from having a recluse's life to being an active volunteer in Spangen. Especially for people who go to activities that help to increase the command of a language, having basic communication with others is possible now. Remarkable is that there are also people who have no need for contact with others. For them, going to the activities is more than enough. During the week, these people hardly have any contact with other people. Because they still visit the activities, they will have some impact on social cohesion. Nevertheless, for these people social media networks are becoming more important. However, the 'virtual friends' are often not friends in 'real life'. This makes it difficult to have a significant impact on the social cohesion in a neighbourhood.

Conclusion

Faith Based Organisations have a connecting role in urban less developed neighbourhoods. They mainly focus on social activities to stimulate participation and to increase the contact between people. This especially has an effect on women of foreign descent and children. The participants value the activities highly because of the religious norms and values at the activities and because the activities are easy accessible. People find trust and confidence at the activities, which increases the social participation. Besides, solidarity grows due to the kind of activities that are organised. Faith Based Organisations are able to reach a group of people that would have difficulty attending activities of other organisations due to culture or background. Therefore, the presence of a religious organisation is of great value for a neighbourhood.