



YES WE CAN!

Local Citizen Initiatives: A narrative analysis of influencing factors
in the case of Schoonenburg, Ede

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Voorwoord

Beste lezer,

Aan een hele lange, misschien iets te lange, periode als masterstudent Human Geography aan de Radboud Universiteit te Nijmegen komt een eind. Voor u ligt mijn masterscriptie, het eindverslag dat ervoor zorgt dat ik de volgende stap in mijn leven kan maken. Na drie jaar studeren in Groningen heb ik ervoor gekozen om in de buurt van mijn familie en vrienden te wonen en aan de Radboud Universiteit te Nijmegen te gaan studeren. Hier heb ik geen spijt van gekregen!

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Annejan Visser

Abstract

Since the beginning of the century citizen participation became a highly debated subject again (De Wilde, 2014). There is still an ongoing debate on how to approach citizen initiatives and a variety of influencing factors have been found. The aim of this case study is to explain how factors on the individual, neighborhood and government level can influence the process of a local citizen initiative. My findings show that factors on the individual, neighborhood and government level play a different role in each phase of the initiative. Trust and communication transcend the different levels and phases and are central to the process of the local citizen initiative.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Background

By the year 2000 onwards citizen participation became a highly debated subject in the Netherlands as well as in other European states (Dekker, 2007: 356; De Wilde et al, 2014: 3366). In 2007, a Dutch Neighbourhood Deal was developed and implemented by the national government (De Wilde et al, 2014: 3369). This Neighbourhood Deal entails policy goals like improvement of public space, empowerment of residents and growth of social cohesion. The implementation is up to local governmental actors, local institutions and residents (De Wilde et al, 2014: 3369). There still is an ongoing debate on how participation should be approached (e.g. Roberts, 2004; Irvin & Stansbury, 2004; Silverman et al, 2008; Walker & East, 2014). There is also debate if it empowers citizens or not (e.g. Silverman et al, 2008; Koch, 2013;), and if so which factors are important? Several authors describe different factors that influence participation (e.g. van de Wijdeven, 2013; Denters et al, 2013). This research will try to benefit the participation debate by analyzing in which way different factors influence the process of a local citizen initiative. And do the different factors vary in the different phases of the process? Through analysis of the experiences of citizens and professionals involved a narrative is reconstructed and the influencing factors are examined.

According to the municipality of Ede in the Netherlands, the neighborhood of Veldhuizen is has the highest levels of decay in comparison with other neighborhoods (Buurtmonitor 2005-2015, gemeente Ede, 2017). Physical decay like polluted and poorly maintained public spaces, and social decay like burglaries and nuisance. In 2014, the municipality used the input of residents, volunteers and professionals to set up a 'neighborhood agenda'; a list of goals to improve the neighborhood of Veldhuizen. Some of the goals that followed from this input are improving the image of the neighborhood (the neighborhood received negative media attention, Volkskrant; 2001; 2008; 2011; Telegraaf, 2008 among others), reducing undesirable behavior and degradation, improving safety by actively involving residents to take responsibility for their environment. Furthermore, the agenda states that professionals will support running citizen initiatives, as well as stimulating and supporting new initiatives to improve the neighborhood together (Wijkagenda Veldhuizen & Kernhem, 2014, gemeente Ede). The neighborhood agenda is to be renewed in 2017, setting new goals for neighborhood improvement for the next three years. Before this agenda was set there already were residents who took initiative to improve their neighborhood. One of these cases is Schoonenburg in Veldhuizen. Schoonenburg is part of the much larger neighborhood of Veldhuizen. Although it differs from Veldhuizen it was one of the recent larger local citizen initiatives in Veldhuizen. The initiative started in 2009 and ended in 2015. It proves to be an inspiring case where citizens took initiative.

1.2 Research objective and research questions

To get insight into the different factors that influence participation in a local citizen initiative the main research question is:

How do factors on the individual, neighborhood and government level influence the process of the local citizen initiative of Schoonenburg in Veldhuizen?

The purpose of this case study research is to describe, explore and explain how different factors influence the process of local citizen initiatives. In light of the new approach to direct citizen participation and the wide variety of local citizen initiatives, factors play a different role depending on the initiative. By analyzing the influencing factors in different phases of the initiative and what they mean for the actors involved, this research opts to give insight and a profound view of a local citizen initiative.

The main research question will be answered by answering a number of sub-questions:

- 1. How did the concept of participation develop?*
- 2. Which factors can influence a local citizen initiative?*

Empirical sub-questions:

- 3. How did the initiative of the Schoonenburg start? And how did the different factors influence this start?*
- 4. How did the initiative of the Schoonenburg develop? And how did the different factors influence this development?*

The first sub-question focus on what the concept of participation is and how it developed over the years. The second sub-question zooms in on the different factors that influence why residents participate in a local citizen initiative and how these factors can influence different stages of the process of the initiative. These first two sub-questions will be answered from theory.

Different authors focus on specific factors influencing participation, for example social capital and networks (Hurenkamp et al., 2006; Dekker, 2007; Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2011 among others) or government approach (Oude Vrielink & van de Wijdeven, 2011; Denters et al., 2013; Meijer et al, 2015 among others). From the literature different factors can be derived and these factors play a role on the individual level, neighborhood level and government level. These factors on different levels are connected. However, it will provide a proper framework for analyzing local citizen initiatives. Furthermore, it will be analyzed which specific events shape these factors that influence the start and process of local citizen initiatives.

The last two sub-questions that refer to the case in Veldhuizen will be answered through empirical study and focus on analysis of the relevant factors in each phase of the initiative. In the process three phases will be differentiated: start, execution and outcome.



Figure 1.1: Map of Veldhuizen in Ede (source: GoogleMaps, 2017)

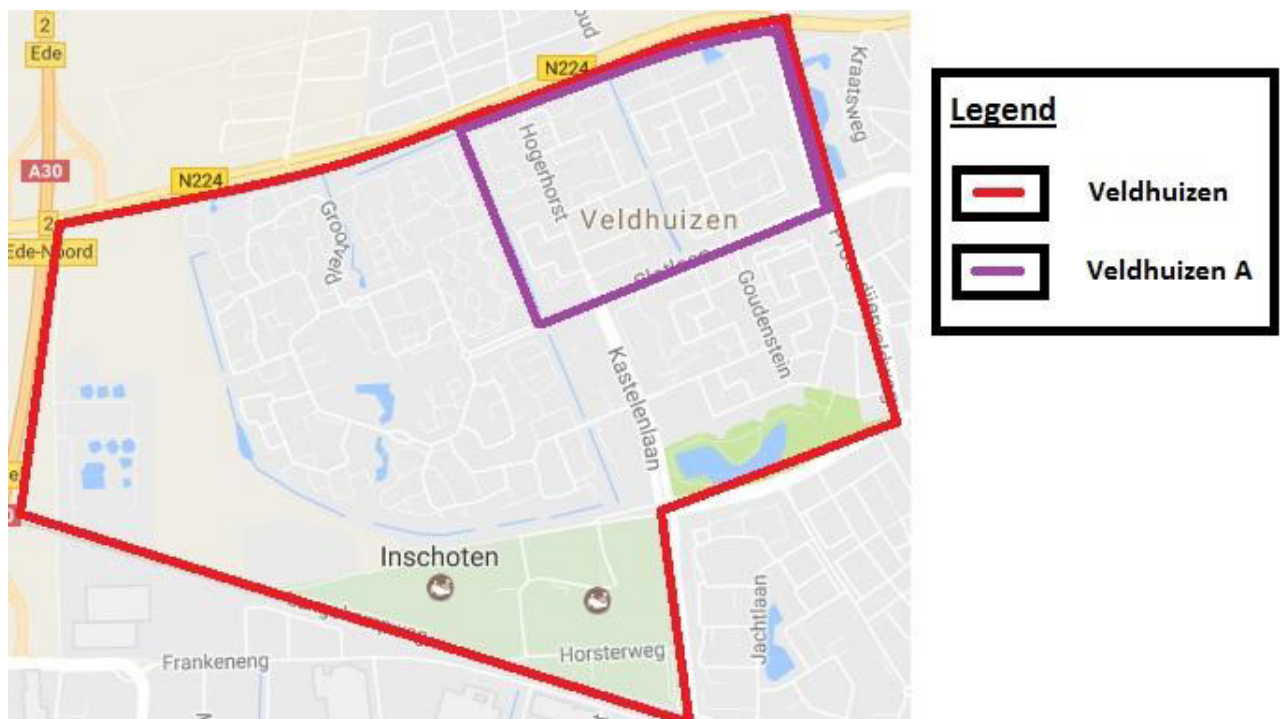


Figure 1.2: Veldhuizen A in Veldhuizen (source: Google Maps, 2017)

1.3 Scientific and social relevance

1.3.1 Scientific relevance

Many studies on citizen participation focus on the role of government (Oude Vrielink & van de Wijdeven, 2011; Meijer et al., 2015 among others) but also on personal characteristics of citizens such as motivation (Lowndes et al., 2006; Specht, 2012 among others) and neighborhood characteristics such as networks (Hurenkamp et al., 2006; Dekker, 2007 among others). Often different factors that influence participation in citizen initiatives are combined (Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2011; Denters et al., 2013 among others). Many authors focus on one or more specific factors and how these influence broader forms of participation or the more specific form of the citizen initiative. The scientific relevance of this research lies in the in-depth analysis of how the factors on the individual, neighborhood and government level influence the process of a local citizen initiative. Furthermore, through a narrative approach I will try to analyze how specific events in different phases (start, execution and outcome) of the initiative shape these factors. The division of the different phases of the initiative provides an extra layer in the analysis of the case of Schoonenburg. The narrative, combined from experiences of actors involved and related documents, gives insight in the story behind the influencing factors and how these come together in the process of the initiative. In this way this research tries to nuance the literature on known factors that influence local citizen initiatives and contribute to the participation debate.

1.3.2 Social relevance

With the ongoing debate on how participation should be approached, the analysis of influencing factors on the citizen initiative might show how initiatives are more effectively performed. By governments as well as citizens. A successful initiative can have different advantages for example growth of social cohesion and social capital, or as Tonkens & Verhoeven (2011, p. 426) put it: “they improve the forming of networks, and link people so that people get to know and trust each other”. Because of the variety of local citizen initiatives and citizens involved, and the different contexts wherein they occur, the analysis of the factors on the government level could provide recommendations for municipal professionals on how to handle different initiatives. In relation to this, Oude Vrielink & van de Wijdeven (2011) pose the question in which context a mix of different types of government support is feasible and this case study could provide insight. The context of an area undergoing redevelopment such as Veldhuizen could prove to be insightful.

1.4 Outline of this research

The introduction of this research will be followed by a theoretical framework that covers the development of citizen participation, and the factors that influence participation on the individual, neighborhood and government level. At the end of the theoretical chapter a conceptual model will be presented. In chapter 3 the research method and location are discussed. Chapter 4 will describe the context of the case. The empirical part of this research will be dealt with in chapter 5: participation in

a local citizen initiative, the case of Schoonenburg. In chapter 6 conclusions, discussion and reflection will be presented.

Chapter 2 Theoretical framework - Citizen participation in local citizen initiatives

2.1 Definition of participation

To explain and analyze participation in relation to the citizen initiatives contemporary literature will be examined. This will form the theoretical framework that is needed to understand which and how factors influence the process of the local citizen initiative. The citizen initiative is a relatively new concept but how did it come to be? This will be discussed in the first paragraph. Hereafter the wide range of different factors that can possibly influence the process of the local citizen initiative will be examined. This chapter will be concluded with a conceptual model which summarizes the theoretical foundation of this research.

Different scholars use a wide variety of conceptualisations in relation to participation. The concept changed over the years and the role of the citizen with it. Hardina (as cited in Walker & East, 2014, p.344) describes citizen participation as the engagement of individuals and groups to influence programs, policies and local decisions. Frieling (2012) uses a similar definition for direct citizen participation; 'the process by which members of a society (those not holding office or administrative positions in government) share power with public officials in making substantive decisions and taking actions related to community'. There are two different forms of participation: formal and informal. In the international literature the focus lies mostly on Formal participation (van de Wijdeven et al., 2013). Formal participation entails the taking part in the decision-making processes whereas informal participation refers to the informal activities undertaken to influence most often the neighborhood (Dekker, 2007). Dekker (2007: 357) uses the example of a citizen addressing undesirable behaviour of loitering teens. This can also extend to citizens forming a group or network to clean the neighborhood once in a while or undertake other activities influencing the neighborhood.

This means that participation is active involvement, other scholars such as van de Wijdeven et al. (2013) also speak of active citizenship. The idea of participation came through the concept of citizenship; till the seventies the debate was about obtaining citizenship and inclusion, the debate shifted to the desirable interpretation and substance of citizenship (Van de Wijdeven et al, 2013, p.7). The concept of participation will be further explored by analyzing the development of participation and citizenship in light of the changing relation between state, market and community in the Dutch context.

2.2 Changing relation between citizen, market and government

2.2.1 Generations of Citizen Participation

The ideas regarding participation and citizenship, and therefore the relation between market, state and community, changed over the years. After the second world war, the ideas about social security, education and care changed; the state should be responsible for these matters to rebuild the nation (ROB, 2012, p. 23). Private initiative was still possible but critique rose that the responsibility shifted to the state and execution was steered by bureaucracy and professionals (Tonkens, 2009). During the seventies the public became more articulate and were more included in decision-making processes

with government, this is seen as the 'first generation citizen participation' according to Lenos, Sturm and Vis (2006). At the end of the seventies, the debate on citizenship shifted because the welfare state was overstretched, there was a need for cutbacks (ROB, 2012, p. 25; van de Wijdeven et al, 2013, p. 7). The solution was sought in the market, public amenities could be cheaper provided through the efficiency of the market; this meant the start of market forces in health care (ROB, 2012, p. 25). Internationally, New Public Management became attractive and business models became examples for managing public organizations (ROB, 2012, p. 26). Following this neoliberal stance, critique came that the welfare state caused passive citizenship and that citizens also have a duty to society which entailed a form of active citizenship (Van de Wijdeven et al, 2013, p. 7). During the nineties, citizens get the opportunity to participate in earlier decision-making stages, through interactive policy-making and co production. Lenos et al. (2006) call this the 'second generation citizen participation'. 'First generation citizen participation' often meant that citizens could only react to already worked-out plans and policies, there was little room for real change. With the second generation, the state still determines in which stage and in which role citizens can participate but they have more influence than before.

In the beginning of the 21st century the trust of society in the market declines, especially after the crisis of 2008, as they cannot do right to the public character of public tasks (ROB, 2012). Furthermore, the state cannot react adequately to developments in the needs of society and the focus shifts towards community, citizens and their ties (ROB, 2012, p. 26). In search of a new balance between state and community, the relation takes a turn where citizens or civil society can initiate and the state participates when needed. Lenos et al. call this the 'third generation citizen participation' which is characterized by citizen initiative. Citizens determine where they want to commit in the public domain and lead the content as well as the process; citizens with an idea execute it mostly themselves, when needed with help from the state (Van de Wijdeven et al., 2013, p.9). The state gives citizens space and facilitates. This still seems difficult in practice. In the international literature, citizen initiative often has a formal meaning, for example citizens taking initiative collecting signatures to change policy. In Dutch literature, citizen initiative is primarily focused on the informal character where citizens start a concrete initiative to contribute to the public domain (Van de Wijdeven et al., 2013, p. 10). For example, as mentioned above, citizens forming a group or network to clean the neighborhood.

As described above, the policy concerning resident participation can be distinguished into three generations. Lenos, Sturm and Vis (2006) were the first to distinguish these three generations; according to the authors these generations do not replace each other through the years, but further explain the development of participation and exist alongside each other. The first generation is characterized by taking part in the conversation, the second generation by co-decision and the third generation by partaking. The last decade there is an increased attention for citizen initiative as the trust of society in dealing with matters in the public domain shifted from state to market to community (ROB, 2012).

2.2.2 Forms of Participation

Participation takes on different forms. Different authors tried to capture these forms into models (e.g. Arnstein, 1969; Pretty, 1995; Edelenbos et al., 2000). One of the best known models is that of Arnstein (1969); the ladder of citizen participation.

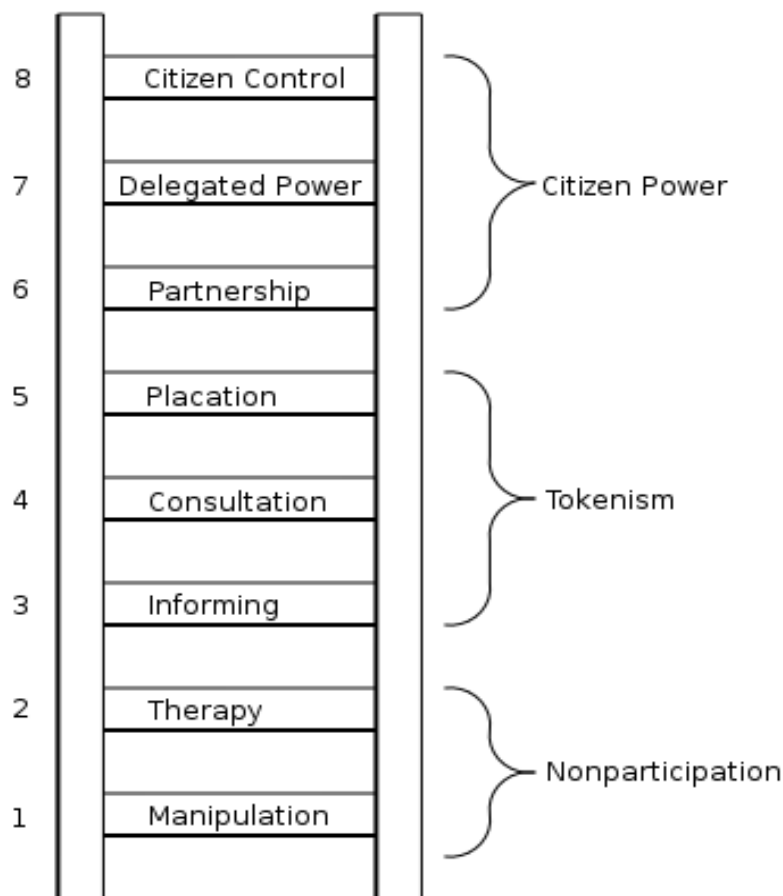


Figure 2.1: Ladder of Citizen Participation (Arnstein, 1969, p. 217)

This model focuses on citizen participation in policy-making, but can also be used to explain participation in a broader sense. According to Arnstein (1969, p. 216-17), participation is a categorical term for citizen power, it is about the real power to affect the outcome of the process. The lowest two levels, manipulation and therapy, are a form of non-participation where the real objective is not enable people to participate but is more symbolic. Informing and consultation (3 & 4) allow people to hear and be heard but the real power lies with government officials. Level 5 is a higher level of tokenism, people can advice but the power to make actual decisions still lies with the powerholders. Partnership (6) enables people to negotiate with government. Delegated power (7) entails that citizens have the majority of decision-making seats. Citizen control (8) is a simplification but illustrates the point that citizens have full power of developing, executing and managing policy (Arnstein, 1969, p. 217-18).

It becomes apparent from this model that the conditions set by government for participation determine the role of the citizen. The division of generations of participation cannot be placed within these models. Although, it can be argued that the highest rungs of these models correspond with third-generation participation where citizens make the decisions. However, within these policy-making models the government, and not the citizen, takes the initiative. Furthermore, within third-generation participation citizens decide if they want support from government. However, most initiatives come in contact with government as will be explained below.

There is a broad range of factors that influence citizen participation. Some of these factors reflect the personal characteristics of an individual and therefore will be called individual factors. Other factors reflect on the role of the neighborhood and government. Each of the factors play an influencing role on a specific level, the following paragraphs will explain which and how these factors play a role.

2.3 Individual factors influencing the citizen initiative

There is a broad range of factors that influence why citizens do or do not participate. Different authors tried to capture these factors into models to provide a better understanding of these factors.

One of these models is the CLEAR model by Lowndes, Pratchett and Stoker (2006). This model proposes a diagnostic tool for assessing official schemes to encourage participation.

According to this framework people participate when they:

Can do: have the appropriate skills and resources to participate

Like to: have a sense of attachment that reinforces participation

Enabled to: are provided with the opportunity for participation, through contact with groups or networks.

Asked to: are directly asked to participate by other people in their network / neighborhood

Responded to: see evidence or have the idea that their involvement is making a difference (Lowndes et al., 2006, p. 286-289)

Lowndes et al. draw upon the Civic Voluntarism model of Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995) who try to explain why people do or do not participate in political activities. They found three reasons why people do not participate: because they cannot, because they do not want to or because they were not asked. The first reason, cannot, is because of a lack of resources: they do not have the time to take part, money to contribute or the skills to use time and money effectively. The second reason, do not want to, is due to lack of engagement and the belief that their involvement does not make a difference. The third, and last, reason mentioned by Verba et al., nobody asked, implies isolation from the networks of recruitment (Verba et al., 1995, as cited in Schlozman et al., 1999, p. 430-431).

The first reason mentioned by Verba et al. (1995; Schlozman et al., 1999) relates to the 'can do' of the CLEAR model of Lowndes et al. (2006). The second reason has to do with the 'like to' and partly the 'responded to'. The third reason relates to the 'asked to' and partly to the 'enabled to' of the CLEAR model. Lowndes et al. extended the model to a more broad definition of participation than only political participation. Van de Wijdeven, de Graaf and Hendriks (2013) also see the similarities between the models and conclude that based on this earlier research three factors are needed to engage citizens in active participation: capacity, motivation and invitation (Van de Wijdeven et al., 2013, p. 21).

The three factors mentioned by van de Wijdeven et al. (2013) capture the different elements of the Civic Voluntarism Model and the CLEAR model and are explained down below. These are factors that play a role on the level of the individual and influence why people do or do not participate. However, some of these factors also play a role in the different phases of the process of the initiative. Therefore, it is explained based on the contemporary literature how these factors and the related events play a role in taking initiative as well as the process of the initiative.

2.3.1 Capacity

As mentioned above, the capacity to participate involves the availability of civic skills, and resources; time and money (Schlozman et al., 1999; Lowndes et al., 2006).

Resources

Schlozman, Verba and Brady (1999) state that participation requires a certain investment in time. If citizens or residents do not have the appropriate amount of time to invest in an initiative, it will be likely to not succeed or even start.

They use the example of the contribution of money to campaigns and other political causes, when it comes to other forms of participation (non-political) it can be argued that it differs if money is an issue. When it comes to citizen initiatives money could be involved, but often in the form of subsidy by government.

Skills

When it comes to civic skills, Verba et al. (1995), in their Civic Voluntarism Model, argue that communicative and organizational skills allows the use of time and money effectively (in Kirlin, 2003, p. 5). These skills are gained through various life stages, in school and at home, as the authors show. Kirlin (2003, p. 14) draws upon the Civic Voluntarism model and argues that civic skills fall in four dominant categories; organization, communication, collective decision-making and critical thinking. Categories overlap but it is a typology that provides a framework for examining skills and show which skills could be needed to foster a good process.

Organization skills include those necessary for accomplishing tasks; specific skills include 'organizing individuals to take action' and 'planning and running meetings' (Verba et al., 1995; Boyte, 2000 as cited in Kirlin, 2003, p. 20). According to Kirlin, these skills reflect the capacities of the process side of participating.

Communication skills include 'writing letters, being proficient in a shared language and vocabulary, and making oral presentations' (Verba et al., 1995 as cited in Kirlin, 2003, p.20). Furthermore, citing Batistoni (2001, p.35) Kirlin argues that 'communication of our thoughts and actions, both vertically to our leaders and representatives, and horizontally, to our fellow citizens' involve some type of communication skill (Kirlin, 2003, p. 17, 21).

Collective decision-making skills include 'interrelated skills of expressing your own opinion, hearing other's opinions and working towards consensus' (Kirlin, 2003, p. 21). There is a clear overlap between communication skills and collective decision-making.

The last set of civic skill is that of critical thinking and has a general nature. These are 'cognitive skills that include identifying and describing, analyzing and explaining, synthesizing, thinking critically and constructively and formulating positions on public issues' (Patrick, 2003 as cited by Kirlin, 2003 p. 22).

Kirlin (2003) uses this typology of civic skills in the context of political participation, just as Verba et al. (1995). It can be argued that these civic skills can be seen in a broader sense, as Lowndes et al. (2006) do: 'skills range from ability and confidence to speak in public or write letters to the capacity to organize events and encourage others of similar mind to support initiatives' (Lowndes et al., 2006, p. 286). Furthermore, as example if a citizen applies for subsidy or a grant they need a mix of

organization, communication, critical thinking and arguably collective decision-making skills to do so.

Oude Vrielink and Verhoeven (2007) found that initiators improved their civic skills during the process of participation. The authors refer to citizens learning the importance of timing in setting up the initiative as well as good preparation in executing the initiative. Also, other specific skills such as writing a grant application can be learned. Local organizations, such as a government, can support a good process. This shows that citizens of lower socio-economic status can acquire the civic skills that are needed to set up and execute a citizen initiative. Tonkens and Verhoeven (2011) support these conclusions in their own research on small citizen initiatives. They also found that citizens developed a range of skills during the execution of initiatives such as social reflexivity, empathy and trust (social and institutional). As skills, the authors distinguish social skills, democratic skills and bureaucratic skills. They found the most growth in democratic and bureaucratic skills, as well as a growth in empathy towards other citizens and organizations. Social skills refer to defensibility and respect towards another person. Democratic skills entail negotiation and deliberation. Bureaucratic skills refer to writing letters and organizing.

Trust in skills and own ability is needed to start an initiative; one needs to be confident that his or her skills are proficient enough to make the initiative succeed. Different studies show that self-confidence is an important aspect to trigger participation (Verba et al., 1995; Wagenaar & Specht, 2010; Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2011; Van de Wijdeven et al., 2013). *“The self-confident citizen is likely to be an active citizen”* (Almond & Verba, 1989, p. 206 as cited in Van de Wijdeven, 2013).

Whose capacity?

Capacity draws upon socio-economic arguments (Verba et al., 1995). Socio-economic status (SES), those with higher education, higher income and higher-status jobs, remains an important predictor for (political) participation (Verba et al., 1995; Lowndes et al., 2006; van der Wijdeven et al., 2013). Not everyone with a high SES participates, but it is argued that people of higher SES more often have the appropriate civic skills and resources to participate and that low levels of participation are found in the most deprived areas. Generally, people with lower SES spend more time and energy on keeping track of their daily lives and therefore participate less (RMO, 2007 as cited in Van de Wijdeven et al., 2013). Nevertheless, Van de Wijdeven et al. (2013), and Lowndes et al. (2006) emphasize that having a high SES is not solely a predictor of participation. Citizens with ambition and interest in public entrepreneurship who see possibilities and can concretely set up initiatives do not have to be highly educated. Furthermore, Bakker, Denters and Klok (2011) found that citizens in Enschede, the Netherlands with an average education were overrepresented in neighborhood focused initiatives.

Tonkens and Verhoeven (2011) found in their study in Amsterdam that in third-generation, doing-initiatives a more diverse group of citizens take part, in contrast to older forms of participation. In first-generation (meepraten) and second-generation (meebeslissen) participation give the image that mostly highly educated, white, middle-aged men take part (Verba et al., 1995; Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2011; Van de Wijdeven, 2013; Denters et al., 2013). In third-generation, doing-initiatives, participation more women, lower educated, people with lower income, youths and migrants take part (Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2011). When it comes to physical-spatial initiatives more men tend to participate (Denters et al., 2013). Nevertheless, resources and skills play an important role in if citizens participate, as well as in the process of participation.

This study focuses on local citizen initiatives, because of the local aspect of the initiative it can be assumed that the initiative includes the residents living in this locality, independently of their gender, age or socio-economic status. Therefore personal characteristics are not included as influencing factor in this research.

Types of citizens

Vermeij, Van Houwelingen and De Hart (2012) make a distinction when it comes residents. They distinguish initiators, supporters of the initiative and traditional volunteers (in clubs or churches). As mentioned before, the distinction between initiators and supporters of the initiative is important; initiators cannot do it alone and need to work together with supporters. A factor that can influence the process of the initiative is that initiators can become dominant because they feel it is their initiative. This relates to the collective-decision skill mentioned by Kirlin (2003). Personal interest should not be given priority over common interests and through collective decision-making a satisfying result for everyone should be achieved.

2.3.2 Motivation

According to the Civic Voluntarism Model of Verba et al. (1995), the motivation to participate is explained by four types of 'motivators'. The first motivator is the **expectation to make a positive difference**. The other motivators can be seen as benefits or revenues of participation and are civil, social and material based. The **civil motivator** refers to making a contribution to society or, in other words, doing your civic duty. The **social motivator** refers to experiencing excitement in doing, making new contacts, receive recognition or pleasing the one who asked to help. **Material motivations** are about personal gains such as reinforcing one's career or creating possibilities for the future, for example laying contacts to go into politics (Verba et al., 1995 as cited in van de Wijdeven et al., 2013).

These different motivations can also prevail when it comes to local citizen initiatives. Denters et al. (2013) found that most citizen initiatives in neighborhoods have social and targeted goals. Citizens want to tackle concrete public problems, mostly in the direct environment. They call this a **targeted motivations**, for example fighting problems like nuisance or loitering. Tonkens & Verhoeven (2011) speak of **pragmatic motivation** which is about citizens perceiving a problem and want to do something about it. They use the example of cleaning trash in your own street. This relates to targeted motivation.

Citizens participating because they find it fun and interesting to work together is seen as a **social motive**. Denters et al. (2013) but also Tonkens & Verhoeven (2011) and Van de Wijdeven et al. (2013) find that a lot of citizen initiatives focus on strengthening the social cohesion; improving encounters and mutual contacts. This can be seen as a social and targeted goal (Denters et al., 2013). Others motivations they describe are duty-bound and self-interest goals, which they found were not evident. **Duty-bound motivations** refers to citizens feeling it is their civic duty to contribute to their neighborhood or society. The **self-interest motive** refers to solving a private problem or gaining certain experience.

It is likely that the self-interest motive is underestimated because the motives are given by the residents themselves. For example, it is in the interest of other people in the neighborhood that someone takes initiative to improve the environment, be it social, physical or both, but it is also in the interest of the person themselves.

The motivations distinguished by Denters et al. (2013) relate to the motivators named by Verba et al. (1995). These motivations are more focused on participation in neighborhood initiatives, although it can be said that these are general motivations for participating / taking initiative.

Expectation and trust to make a positive difference

Citizens need to have the feeling that they can positively influence the current situation, or they will not participate / start an initiative. The trust and the expectation to actually make a change is related to the capacity '**confidence in own ability**', but also with **trust** in institutions and/or the participation process (Bolt, 2005; WRR, 2012 as cited in Van de Wijdeven, 2013). The power of do-initiatives lies in achieving results. The early wins are important. If, also small and mid-term, results are not achieved the energy will flow out of the initiative. (Van de Wijdeven 2013, p. 27). Thus, these early wins positively influence the expectation and trust to make a positive difference. Furthermore, it is important that these early wins are known; the more people know about these early wins, the more effect they have on a positive mood in the neighborhood, the higher the chance that other citizens will join, and show their support (WRR, 2005). These early wins can be seen as specific events that positively influence the process of the initiative.

Dissatisfaction with the current situation

A range of authors (e.g. Lowndes et al., 2001; van Marissing, 2008; Verhoeven, 2010; Specht, 2012; Van de Wijdeven et al., 2013) found that **dissatisfaction with the current situation** is one of the key motivations for citizens to get active and start an initiative. This dissatisfaction can be an experienced deficit in public services (Marschall, 2004 as cited in Van de Wijdeven, 2013), but also a reaction to policy (Lowndes et al., 2001; Verhoeven, 2009 as cited by Van de Wijdeven, 2013). Specht (2012) calls this dissatisfaction a '*voedingsbodem*', but states that there is need for a specific event to trigger action (Specht, 2012, p. 103-04). Besides dissatisfaction, a certain level of satisfaction seems to be a factor of importance. The WRR states that (2005, p. 203) citizens need to complain, but not so much that they stop thinking of ways how they can do something about it. Tonkens and Verhoeven (2011) found that initiators were satisfied; they feel at home in the neighborhood, are satisfied with the neighborhood and have positive expectations of the future development of their neighborhood. These are different elements of strong neighborhood attachment (Denters et al., 2013). As mentioned above, achieving results lies at the core of do-initiatives. It can be argued that achieving results positively influence the process of the initiative and therefore the satisfaction with the current situation.

Place / neighborhood attachment and social capital

Different authors found that active citizens on the neighborhood level have a strong **neighborhood attachment** (Marschall, 2004; Dekker, 2007; Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2011; Denters et al., 2013; Van de Wijdeven, 2013 among others) and like the place they live in. This sense of attachment strengthens the position of residents to improve their neighborhood even more.

Dekker (2007) shows that neighborhood attachment comprises of social attachment and spatial-emotional attachment. Social attachment refers to people identifying with others, this does not mean that people have to be part of a social network. Spatial-emotional attachment refers to the connection people feel with the neighborhood and their sense of belonging (Dekker, 2007, p. 362).

Positive attachment would lead to action. Furthermore, this attachment is not the same as but relates to social networks and local ties, which are indicators of **social capital**, as well as length of residence, homeownership and children living at home (Denters et al., 2011 as cited in van de Wijdeven et al, 2013). These indicators of attachment are all overrepresented with active citizens. Social capital will be further discussed under neighborhood factors. It can be argued that a high degree of neighborhood attachment and social capital positively influences the process of the initiative. Working together can

strengthen ones the local ties even more, especially when considered that most neighborhood initiatives focus on strengthening the social cohesion (Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2011; Denters et al., 2013; Van de Wijdeven et al., 2013).

Earlier positive experiences

Walker and East (2014) found that earlier positive experiences with participation is influencing factor in participating again, or in other words starting or joining a new initiative.

It can be assumed that because of earlier experiences with participation it becomes easier for citizens to use their network and experience to set up an initiative. For example, in recruiting other citizens (they are known as an active resident in the neighborhood) or getting in contact with officials (already established relationship). If during the process of the initiative the experiences do not match earlier experiences, the process can be influenced negatively but also positively. Earlier experiences create expectations for the next initiative. As mentioned, earlier experiences can make it easier to recruit others to support the initiative or get in contact with officials. This can be a factor benefiting the process of the initiative.

It becomes apparent that there is a wide range of different motivations to start a citizen initiative. As Denters et al. (2013, p. 21) state: 'There is a diverse range of motivations which in different forms and contexts of participation can prevail'. These motivations have different impacts on whether to or not to start an initiative as well as the process of the initiative. As Denters et al. (2013) mention, it depends on the form and context of the initiative how these prevail.

2.3.3 Invitation

The third, and last, element of the model of Verba et al. (1995) is invitation. When people are asked to participate they surprisingly often say 'yes' (Verba et al., 1995, p.135 as cited in van de Wijdeven, 2013). When an individual is not asked to participate it implies an isolation from the networks of recruitment. This individual factor of invitation, being invited to participate, relates to the neighborhood level. Within the social network of the neighborhood invitation can be greatly influencing if other residents participate or not and therefore the initiative. According to van de Wijdeven et al. (2013, p. 27) it is about more than just explicitly being asked to join the initiative. In a broader sense, it is about implicitly being 'inviting'; the feeling of being appreciated for participating. Explicit and implicit inviting influences residents to take initiative as well as the preparation and execution phase of the initiative. This feeling of appreciation is important not only on the individual level but also on the neighborhood and government level, as will be discussed below.

2.4 Neighborhood factors influencing the citizen initiative

Although touching upon some factors on the neighborhood and government level, the factors influencing participation and the process of participation under capacities, motivations and invitation focus on the individual level. Factors on the neighborhood level focus on how citizens / residents work together.

To get a more comprehensive understanding of local citizen initiatives the literature concerning influencing factors on the neighborhood and government level will now be discussed.

2.4.1 Form initiative: networks and communication

Most initiatives take form in networks, and influence who participates and how there is communicated internally as well as externally (Hurenkamp et al., 2006).

Hurenkamp, Tonkens and Duyvendak (2006) analyzed networks of citizen initiative through two factors. First, the degree of cohesion, or binding social capital, within an initiative, they call this solidity (hechtheid). Second, the degree in which the initiative has contact with government and other organizations, or bridging social capital, they call this interconnectedness (verwevenheid). The interconnectedness will be touched upon here and further dealt with under government factors.

This analysis of the degree of internal and external contact leads to four types of citizen initiatives: light initiatives, networking initiatives, cooperative initiatives and federative initiatives.

Light initiatives are organizations or initiatives with little internal contact as well as little contact with the outside world. Light initiatives are small clubs with mostly social goals, for example a neighborhood comity organizing an annual neighborhood barbecue. Networking initiatives are organizations or initiatives with little internal contact but a lot of contact with government and other organizations. Networking initiatives want to achieve goals and are often focused on the neighborhood. Cooperative networks are organizations or initiatives with a lot of internal contact but little contact with the outside world. An example of a cooperative initiative is also neighborhood comity, the degree of internal contact is higher. Federative initiatives are organizations or initiatives with a lot of internal contact and a lot of external contact as well. These are solid, interconnected groups and are often larger than the other variants. Neighborhood committees can be a federative network, it all depends on the degree of internal and external contact.

	A lot of external contact (interconnected)	Little external contact (floating)
A lot of internal contact (solid)	Federative initiatives	Cooperative initiatives
Little internal contact (loose)	Networking initiatives	Light initiatives

Table 2.1: Types of citizen initiatives (Hurenkamp, Tonkens and Duyvendak, 2006, p.33)

Social networks related to participation are often found to be helpful in facilitating participation by bundling individual needs and capacities and allow collective action to take place (Dekker, 2007, 360). This bundling of needs and capacities gives people the trust and expectation to make a positive difference and take action. Furthermore, social networks are an element of social capital which is also a determining factor if citizens will participate. This will be discussed down below.

The way in which is communicated within the neighborhood is an influencing factor on the process of the initiative. Hurenkamp et al. (2006) do not specify the events that can influence the process. It can be argued that the specific events that influence internal communication relates to the different skills mentioned by Kirilin (2003), for example how other citizens are approached and invited to take part in the initiative; how collective decisions are made; how meetings are run. Therefore, I will argue that the way in which is deliberated during the process is also part of the binding social capital within the neighborhood.

2.4.2 Social capital and cohesion in the neighborhood

As mentioned above, place- or neighborhood attachment is an individual characteristic and factor that influences participation and relates to indicators (social networks and local ties) of social capital.

Dekker (2007) analyze a combination of neighborhood attachment and social capital as explanatory factors for participation in distressed urban areas. Features of social capital are social networks, trust and norms.

Dekker (2007, p. 360) shows that different studies across the Western world conclude that those with social networks may be expected to participate more. A restriction mentioned is that not everybody is free to choose to which social network they belong and this can influence inclusiveness when we relate this to neighborhood initiatives. Especially people with lower socio-economic status would experience more difficulty entering a network of their choice. However, as argued before, because in neighborhood initiatives participants share a common locality, personal characteristics, like socio-economic status, are not analyzed as direct influencing factor for participation. Trust in other residents and in authorities is also seen as an explaining factor for participation, different authors found that lower levels of trust meant lower levels of participation. The third element of social capital, norms are also an explaining factor for participation. One who rejects deviant behavior is more likely to participate. Dekker (2007) argues that both neighborhood attachment and social capital are strong indicators of participation: citizens having strong social networks within the neighborhood, trust in other citizens and government and shared values are more likely to participate (Dekker, 2007, p. 356). Related to this, it can be said that a certain amount of social cohesion must be present in the neighborhood for people having the social ties and trust to start an initiative. Most initiatives focus on other people and improve social capital and social cohesion in the neighborhood; “they improve the forming of networks, and link people so that people get to know and trust each other” (Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2011, p. 40). Tonkens and Verhoeven (2011) refer to the well-known definition of Putnam (2000): social networks, social trust and public moral. By working together in an initiative the public moral can be improved. This exclusively says something about the nature of initiatives, and not about the diversity of social capital of the group that, besides the initiators, took part in the initiative (Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2011). Social trust and public moral can also diminish through negative events where certain trust and expectations are betrayed.

The neighborhood level is defined by the way residents work together. In general, social capital, communication within the neighborhood and social cohesion (and related elements) are the main possible neighborhood factors influencing the process of the citizen initiative.

2.5 Government factors influencing the citizen initiative

Initiatives taken by citizens or communities are often characterized by the bottom-up character of the initiative. This means that citizens come up with and start an initiative without government input. However, the collaboration or contact with other organizations or government is an important aspect in regard to local citizen initiatives; “most citizens try to tackle a certain public problem and because of this come in contact with government” (Van de Wijdeven et al., 2013, p. 14). Furthermore, around informal citizen initiatives there is a diversity of interactions with institutions (Hurenkamp et al., 2006) and with third-generation participation, governments often responds to activities of active

citizens (Oude Vrielink & van de Wijdeven, 2011). Thus, the factors influencing the process of the initiative focuses on the relation between residents and government / other institutions.

2.5.1 Network: external communication

As mentioned above, most initiatives adopt form in networks. These networks often collaborate with other initiators, with the government or other organizations. According to Hurenkamp, Tonkens and Duyvendak (2006, p.35) federative and networking initiatives are most common, these networks are characterized by their high degree of external communication. External communication and the way this is performed has implications for the initiative.

Sometimes initiatives do not come of the ground if the external communication fails. If government or other institutions do not give the proper support or recognition to an initiative it can be that residents do not take action because they do not feel that their input for a better neighborhood will matter. The focus of Hurenkamp et al. (2006) lies on the degree of contact and what this means for the form of the network. Furthermore, recommendations are made to government on how to approach the different kinds of networks. From these recommendations it can be deduced how certain elements of communication influence the external contact of networks and therefore the process of the initiative. Hurenkamp et al. (2006) conclude that in the interaction with government, initiatives desire more subsidy, engagement and that the government adopts a more listening attitude. This means that specific events such as visiting a meeting or listening and reacting to ideas in an equal conversation can be greatly influencing. This gives the feeling that citizens are appreciated for their work. On the one hand, the factor of external communication, or bridging social capital, relates to the individual factor of capacity; one needs the appropriate skills and trust in self to collaborate with government. On the other hand, external communication and the form of the network relates to the neighborhood factor of network. In this research external communication is located on the government level because the neighborhood level focuses on the collaboration between residents, whereas the government level focuses on collaboration between residents and government. Government can adopt a clientelistic stance and help foster a good process. This will be further explained down below.

2.5.2 Government approach

According to Denters et al. (2013, p. 25) a (local) government can approach initiatives in a stimulating, facilitating or co-productive way. In the stimulating approach professionals play an active role when it comes to the realization of initiatives. Through budgets and professional aid citizens can be stimulated to take initiative. The facilitating approach entails that a (local) government or other institutions give space and, if necessary, a little bit of help to an initiative that arose by itself. In the co-productive approach professionals and citizens work together to develop and execute the initiative. This is a form of equal collaboration.

This study focuses on bottom-up initiatives, which means that the initiative is taken by the residents of a certain locality. When in need of help they can, but not have to, rely on support from a local government. This complies with the facilitative approach mentioned by Denters et al. (2013). In relation to this approach, Meijer et al. (2015) argue that the implementation of most planning practices in citizen initiatives follows a clientelistic logic. A clientelistic logic implies that formal institutions are, intentionally, very open towards informal institutions (Meijer et al, 2015). Formal institutions

refer to laws and governmental rules and regulations, whereas informal institutions refer unwritten agreements, social networks and trust (Van Assche et al., 2014). Clientelism creates opportunities for bottom-up practices; it involves a direct way of engaging local government into the lives and needs of local actors (Healey, 2006 as cited in Meijer et al, 2015). Initiators of bottom-up practices can use this clientelistic stance of government to obtain subsidies or for smooth settlement of formal procedures. This can positively influence the initiative whereas possible obstacles of formal institutions are taken away. Meijer et al (2015) conclude that clientelism creates spaces for alternative forms of planning, like the citizen initiative. Formal regulation can complicate, but also can strengthen the position of communities. It is important, with this clientelistic, facilitative approach that government does not try to take over the initiative (Oude Vrielink & van de Wijdeven, 2011; Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2011; Van de Wijdeven et al., 2013; Denters et al., 2013 among others). In relation to this Denters et al. (2013, p. 33-34) mention in the facilitative approach; *'facilitating can be an important approach of citizen initiatives, because most initiatives originate (from conversation) at the dinner table, during parties or meeting from a neighborhood association, and in the end only need recognition, knowledge or some money from a local government, housing corporation or other organization. When initiatives come up spontaneously, and the initiators are motivated and skilled enough to execute it, there is no reason to do more'*.

When citizens are motivated to take action but lack some skills or contacts to get the initiative of the ground or perceive problems during the process, there are some ways for local governments or other institutions to support the initiative.

Oude Vrielink & van de Wijdeven (2011) made a typology of government support in and around citizen initiatives. They make two distinctions; instrumental and personal approach, and roles of professionals inside and outside the initiative.

	Instrumental approach	Personal approach
Role in contact with the initiators	Complementing citizen power	Empowering initiators
Role in contact with the environment (institutions / neighborhood)	Connecting institutionally	Vitalizing the neighborhood community

Table 2.2: Typology of support in and around citizen initiatives (Oude Vrielink & van de Wijdeven, 2011, p. 444).

In the first type of support called complementing citizen power (aanvullen burgerkracht) the professional supports the plans of the citizens initiative by complementing citizen expertise, **without taking over the initiative**. This involves helping to set goals from the perspective of the residents and making sure what is possible within the procedural limits (Oude Vrielink & van de Wijdeven, 2011, p. 445). The second type of support, empowering initiators, focuses not only on a successful process of the initiative but also on personal growth of the initiators. The professional endeavors to make sure that potencies, qualities and skills be shown to advantage. The third type of support, connecting institutionally, entails the professional helping in making the initiative more known with other citizens and institutions, making connections with institutions that can benefit the initiative, and being critical to institutions when they form an institutional barrier and taking away this barrier. The fourth and last type of support, vitalizing the neighborhood community, involves a personal approach to residents and stimulate them to take initiative. Government tries to provoke initiatives in this way. These four approaches of government support are often mixed, the mix differs per initiative (Oude Vrielink & van de Wijdeven, 2011, p. 445-448).

These different approaches have different implications for residents taking initiative and the process of the initiative. In relation to this study, it must be said that it is important that the residents or initiators decide which form of support they accept. For example, the last form of support 'vitalizing the neighborhood community' corresponds with the stimulative approach mentioned by Denters et al. (2013) and it can be argued that this is not a characteristic of real 'bottom-up' initiatives. Bottom-up initiatives often originate when governments are absent or unwilling to act. Citizens step in when governments do not take action. It is important to note that initiatives can receive support in different kind of ways but the power must lie with the citizens. In the preparation of the initiative government can actively help setting goals, laying contacts, giving recognition, empower citizens, taking away institutional barriers, and providing knowledge or subsidy. In the execution of the initiative, government or other institutions can provide practical support, make the initiative more known, provide knowledge and take away institutional barriers. In the outcome of the initiative, government and other institutions can also help in making the initiative more known for example an article in the newspaper or on the municipal website, or help with problems that occur after the initiative is executed. As mentioned, the central assumption is that government or other institutions take a facilitative, clientelistic stance, where residents decide what kind of support they want to receive. This relates to the conclusion of Walker and East (2014), in their study on the benefits of including engaged residents in low-income neighborhood redevelopment planning processes, that the nature and process of the dialogue between residents and government is valuable for participation. It should not be done in a patronizing and dismissive manner and there must be time and room to discuss past hurts and frustrations, in this way ongoing dialogue can increase understanding (Walker & East, 2014, p. 352-353).

2.6 Conceptual model and final words

Through the discussed body of literature it becomes apparent that there are different factors that influence if citizens start an initiative and influence the process of the initiative. Individual factors include capacities, motivation and invitation; neighborhood factors include social network, communication within the network, social cohesion and social capital; government factors include communication outside the neighborhood network and government approach. However, these different factors are connected. For example, communication reflects on the capacities of the individual, characterizes the network and the way the initiative interacts with government and other institutions. Nevertheless, this distinction of levels gives a proper framework for analyzing in which way these factors influence the initiative. Furthermore, the different phases of the process of the initiative adds an extra layer in the analysis of how exactly the different factors influence the initiative. The different phases of the initiative are positioned on a timeline; start / preparation, execution and outcome of the initiative. The period of this timeline can differ per initiative and is dependent on the goals of the initiative. Some initiatives tackle a concrete problem and the different phases can easily be distinguished. Individual factors reflect how personal characteristics influence the process of the initiative; neighborhood factors reflect how residents work together; and government factors reflect on how the initiative interacts (individuals within, or the group) with the government or other institutions.

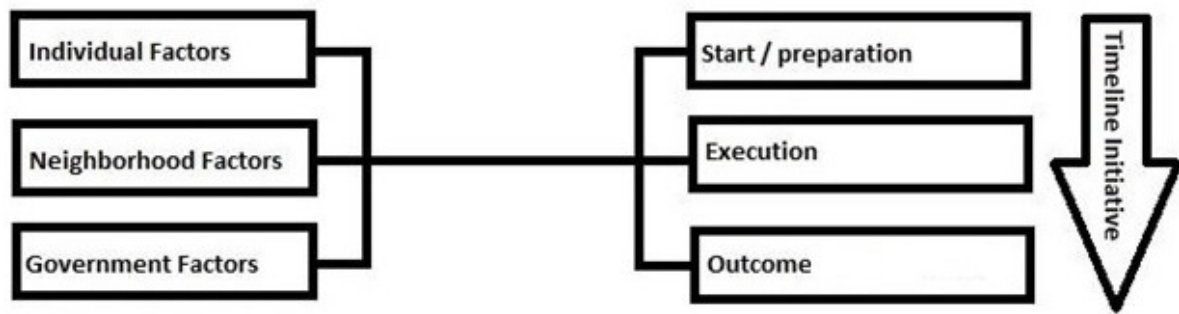


Figure 2.2: Conceptual model: factors influencing the process of the initiative (Own research derived from literature, 2017)

The main question is: *in which way do factors on the individual, neighborhood and government level influence the process of the local citizen initiative of Schoonenburg in Veldhuizen?* Possible factors are captured and explained in the conceptual model. The operationalisation of this model is through an interview guide which can be found in the appendix.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In the first two chapters the research question and purpose are introduced and the theoretical framework is shaped. In this chapter the research method (§3.2), selection of the case (§ 3.3) and data collection (§ 3.4) will be discussed.

3.2 Research design

To get deeper insight into the factors that influence the process of the local citizen initiative, the research design of single holistic case study is chosen. Case studies are most appropriate to answer 'How' and 'Why' questions (Yin, 2009). Furthermore, the contextual conditions are relevant to the initiative and the boundary between the context and the factors influencing the initiative is not clear, this implies that a case study is most relevant (Yin, 2009). Yin (2009, p. 39) makes a distinction between four types of case studies; the single-case holistic design, the single-case embedded design, the multiple-case holistic design and the multiple-case embedded design. The single-case designs are a form of research where a single case is researched, the multiple-case designs focus on multiple cases. In a holistic design cases are researched as a whole, in an embedded design sub-units of research are distinguished. Figure .. shows the different types of case study.

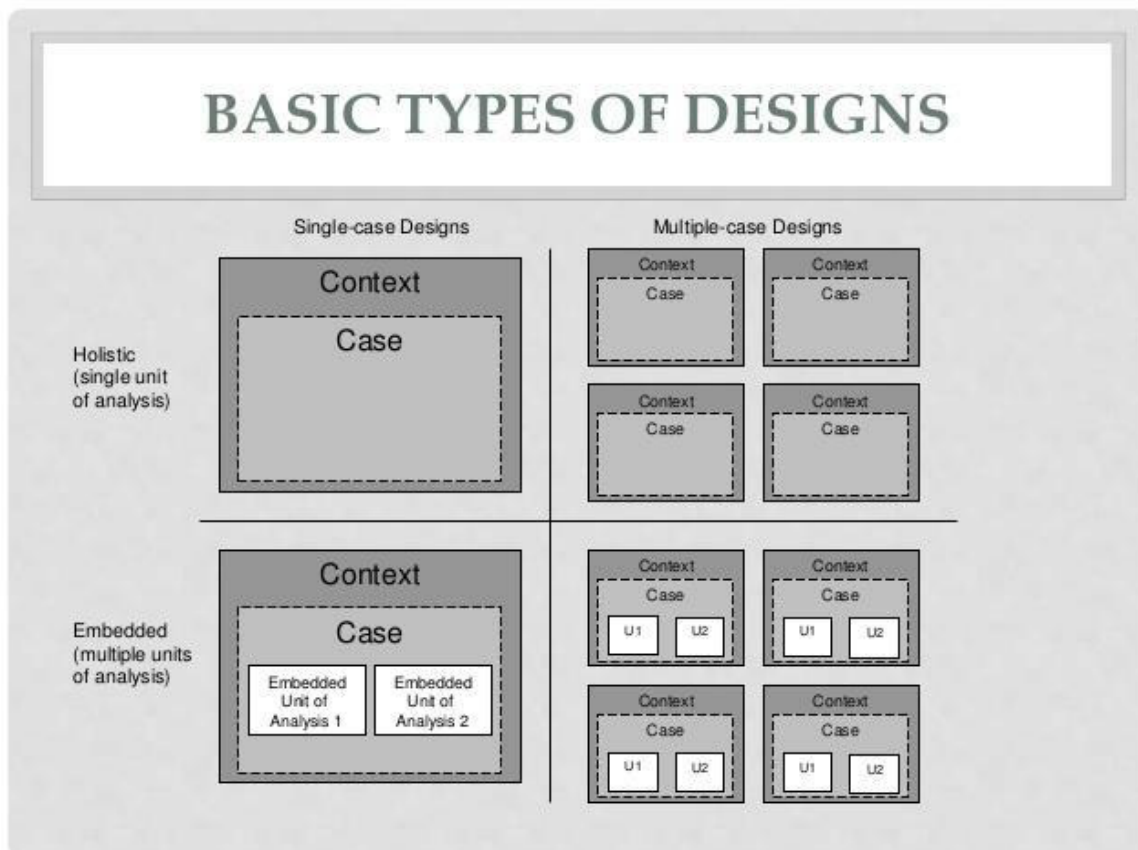


Figure 3.1: Types of case studies (Yin, 2009, p. 46)

As shown in the theoretical chapter, the factors influencing participation are connected; 'when the relevant theory underlying the case study is itself holistic of nature, the holistic design is advantageous' (Yin, 2009, p. 50). The influence of different factors, such as motivation (Denters et al., 2013) or government approach (Oude Vrielink & van de Wijdeven, 2011), are dependent on context, it is therefore important to analyze these factors within the context they occur.

This qualitative, holistic research method is chosen to give proper insight into the way factors on the individual, neighborhood and government level influence the process of the citizen initiative. Qualitative methods are useful for investigating complex behaviors, opinions and emotions, and for collecting a diversity of experiences (Longhurst, ch. 8, 2010). Furthermore, the purpose of qualitative research is to describe detailed behaviors, the underlying meaning and to understand and explain this behavior (Boeije et al., 2009, p. 254). The qualitative method relates to the central 'how' question in this research. In-depth interviews are best suited to analyze influencing factors from a resident perspective; one of the benefits of in-depth interviews is that the data collected can be fuller and richer than data collected in a closed interview (Kitchin & Tate, 2013: 219). Non-structured interviews also give more flexibility for the researcher who steers the interview; the researcher has the freedom to explore certain experiences or opinions more in-depth (Kitchin & Tate, 2013: 219). As Specht (2012) mentions, qualitative interviews require active listening and adequately following up on certain 'markers' mentioned by the interviewee. In relation to this research certain 'markers' could be elements of influencing factors. Furthermore, to get the most rich and detailed data the interviewer must be interested in the answers and let the interviewee feel at ease. The interviewer must also use effective interview techniques, such as avoid yes/no questions, good use of body language and not express own opinions or be judgemental (Boyce & Neale, 2006).

A negative element of in-depth interviews are the time they take; interviews are costly to undertake and the analysis is time-consuming (Kitchin & Tate, 2013: 219). Another disadvantage of case studies and in-depth interviews is that no generalizations can be made; these are subjective stories and factors that influence the process of participation can differ per citizen. Although no generalizations can be made, studying complex social phenomena like the citizen initiative through case study method allows the researcher to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events (Yin, 2009).

3.3 Case selection

Ede is a municipality in the province of Gelderland in the Netherlands. The municipality has one of the largest territories in the Netherlands, it has seven surrounding villages which are part of the municipality (Gemeente Ede, 2003). The number of inhabitants has grown from 42.618 in 1947 to 108.286 in 2011 (Gemeente Ede, 2011). The neighborhood of Veldhuizen A was built in 1960's and has all the characteristics of a early post-war neighborhood; low variety in housing, one sided composition of the population with regard to age and income, relatively low level of education and relatively high rate of unemployment. In the 1990's problems started to appear (personal communication, council member, April 12, 2017). This corresponds to the description of Dekker (2009, p. 148) about the typical characteristics of post-war neighborhoods. Schoonenburg is situated in Veldhuizen A and is part of the smaller neighborhood of the Burgen. The following statistics shed some light on the context of the neighborhood:

	Veldhuizen A				Veldhuizen (A & B)			
	2009	2011	2013	2015	2009	2011	2013	2015
Grade liveability	6.2	6.7	6.9	6.8	6,9	7,0	7,1	7,2
Social Cohesion	5.3	5.3	5.9	5.8	5,7	5,7	5,9	5,9
Social nuisance	3.6	3.7	2.2	2.5	2,3	2,1	1,7	1,7
Degradation	5.3	5	4.2	4.5	4,6	4,3	4,1	4,1
% voluntary work	33%	37%	46%	40%	36%	38%	50%	45%
% active in neighborhood	–	–	–	–	–	–	22%	21%
Feeling of unsafety	48%	43%	29%	35%	35%	35%	30%	26%
Grade Safety	5,3	5,8	6,3	6,2	6,1	6,2	6,3	6,6
Victim of offense	–	–	35%	26%	–	–	30%	24%

Table 3.1: Liveability in Veldhuizen (Gemeente Ede, Strategie & Regie, 2017)

	Ede				The Netherlands	
	2009	2011	2013	2015	2009	2011
Grade liveability	7,5	7,4	7,4	7,5	7,4 (2010)	7,4
Social cohesion	6,4	6,3	6,3	6,3	6,3 (2010)	6,3
Social nuisance	1,6	1,6	1,5	1,4	1,7	1,6
Degradation	3,3	2,9	3,1	3,0	3,6	2,9
% voluntary work	39%	41%	49%	47%	–	–
% active in neighborhood	–	–	18%	20%	–	–
Feeling of unsafety	20%	20%	20%	18%	16,5% (2010)	20,2%
Grade safety	6,8	6,8	6,7	6,9	–	–
Victim of offense	–	–	26%	23%	–	–

Table 3.2 : Liveability in Ede and the Netherlands (Gemeente Ede, Strategie & Regie, 2017)

As is shown in the two tables Veldhuizen A scores lower in different areas of liveability than other parts of Ede and the Netherlands; social cohesion is lower, residents experience more social nuisance and physical degradation in comparison with the average of Ede and the Netherlands. In relation to safety, residents in Veldhuizen, and specifically Veldhuizen A, feel more unsafe and are more frequently the victim of an offense. Dekker (2009) argues that some neighborhoods in cities are perceived as more disfunctional, promoting less trust, cooperation among people and leading to very low levels of participation. Nevertheless, participation, as volunteer and within the neighborhood, is not lower than in the rest of Ede as would be expected based on the assumptions of Dekker (2009). In some ways Veldhuizen A can be described as a deprived urban neighborhood as Dekker (2009) describes. However, Schoonenburg is small neighborhood on the edge of Veldhuizen A characterized by home-owned linked family houses (rijtjeshuizen) and therefore differs from the whole of Veldhuizen A. The initiative of Schoonenburg is chosen as case because of the longer duration than average local citizen initiatives. Tonkens & Verhoeven (2011) found that most local citizen initiatives are of short duration (approximately 6 months) and that they have an average budget of 6000 euro. In comparison, the initiative of the Schoonenburg lasted for five years and had a budget of more than 20.000 euro. Furthermore, the initiative of Schoonenburg is a case where residents appropriated the direct living environment for improvement. Like most initiatives, the initiative came in contact with the local government which gives insight in the factors on the government level.

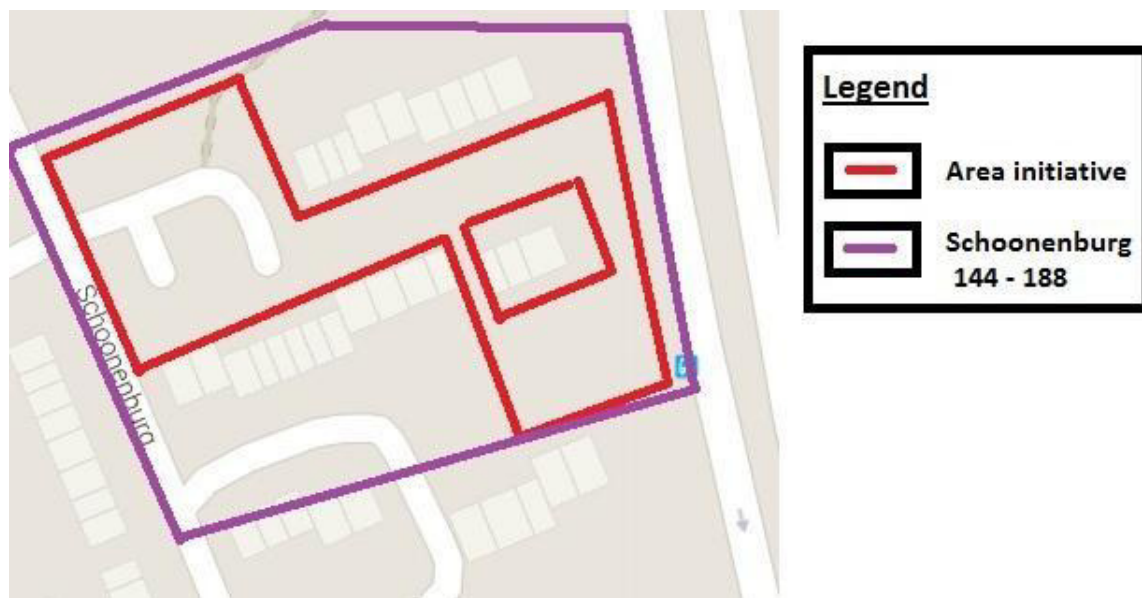


Figure 3.2 Map of Schoonenburg no.144 -188 and the area of the initiative

3.4 Data collection

To get insight in how factors on the individual, neighborhood and government level influence the process of the initiative a narrative research strategy is chosen. Narratives allow the researcher to understand a process of events in a comprehensive way. A narrative is characterized as follows: “First the initial situation is outlined (how everything started), then the events relevant to the narrative are selected from the whole host of experiences and presented as a coherent progression of events (how tillings developed), and finally the situation at the end is presented (what became).” (Hermanns, 1995, p. 183, in Flick. 2009).

The interview starts with a 'generative narrative question' which refers to the topic of study and stimulates the interviewee to tell the main narrative. It is important for the quality of the data to let interviewees tell their story without interrupting and empathize with the story. In the second stage of the interview questions can be asked to go deeper into specific segments of the story. In the last stage of the interview 'how' and 'why' questions can be asked which aim for direction and argumentation (Hermanns, 1995, in Flick, 2009). This method provides a rich version of events and experiences but also has some disadvantages. Flick (2009, p. 200/201) names that expectations of the interview are violated because questions are not asked in a normal way. Not every interviewee is mastered in telling narratives. By explaining the specific character of the interview situation these problems can be countered. In relation to this research elements of the episodic interview will also be used. 'The episodic yields context-related presentations of in the form of a narrative' (Flick, 2009, p. 185). Asking interviewees to recount specific experiences and events in relation to the initiative will give insight in the events that influenced the process.

Data will be collected through in-depth narrative interviews and study of written material. The analysis starts with a structural description of the context wherein the initiative took place. By reconstructing the narrative of the local citizen initiative of Schoonenburg and analyzing the experiences of actors involved this research opts to explain how different factors influenced the process of the initiative.

3.5 Respondents

Vermeij et al. (2012) made a distinction of types of residents who participate: initiators, supporters of the initiative and traditional volunteers (in clubs and churches). The initiators are the individuals who started the initiative. However, these initiators cannot do it alone, they need the help of others. These can be labeled as the supporters. These are the individuals who are asked by the initiators to join and help. Traditional volunteers can be engaged in a local citizen initiative, for example if an initiative asks support from a club or church but this is not very likely. This research will focus on the initiators, the supporters and public officials involved in the initiative. I have chosen to interview multiple relevant actors to reconstruct the narrative as correctly as possible. For this research, two initiators, four supporters and three public officials (neighborhood coordinator, manager, and foreman) were interviewed. The interviews took place in April of 2017. The interviewees gave permission to record the interviews so they could be typed out literally for the analysis.

Chapter 4 Case context

4.1 Introduction

In chapter 1 the research question and purpose of these research are introduced. Hereafter in chapter 2, the theoretical outline is shaped where a theoretical answer is given on which factors can influence a local citizen initiative. Then in chapter 3 the made choices with regard to the empirical part of this research are accounted for. Before reviewing the findings of this research the context wherein this initiative took place will be described so the findings can be understood. As examined in the theoretical chapter, influencing factors are often dependent on context. In order to get insight and an in-depth understanding of the way certain factors influence the (different phases of) process of the citizen initiative the context of the neighborhood Veldhuizen A, reconstruction of the neighborhood and participation policy of the municipality of Ede will be described.

4.2 Neighborhood reconstruction

In 1999, the board of mayor and aldermen took the decision for the reconstruction of Veldhuizen A to improve the liveability in the neighborhood (council member, personal communication, April 12, 2017). The reconstruction was based on three 'pillars': (1) enforcing the social structure, (2) economic revitalization and (3) improvement of the physical infrastructure. The goals were to increase trust and social cohesion; to connect the neighborhoods of Veldhuizen and Kernhem through 'amenity cluster ' the Nieuwe Landgoed and to create more variety in housing and improving the physical living environment for its residents (council member, personal communication, April 12, 2017). The reconstruction would be executed in collaboration with a local housing corporation, Woonstede, which owns the majority of rental housing in the neighborhood. The municipality hired an external project group to deal with the reconstruction.

The municipality would develop the Nieuwe Landgoed and the public space whereas Woonstede would develop the housing (Gemeente Ede, 2011). The execution of the first phase started in 2007 and reconstruction of public space started in 2008 (Gemeente Ede, 2010).



Figure 4.1: Development locations and phases of reconstruction Veldhuizen A. (Gemeente Ede, 2003).

In the original plans the high-rise buildings would be torn down and replaced by family housing and apartment buildings. The Nieuwe Landgoed would be built across the Rijksweg N224. The road would run under the Nieuwe Landgoed and traffic by (motorized) bicycle would be directed into the neighborhood. (See figures 4.2 & 4.3).



Figure 4.2: Route of bicycle path through Veldhuizen A (Gemeente Ede, 2008 – see appendix)



Figure 4.3: Route bicycle path across the parking lot of Schoonenburg (Gemeente Ede, 2008 – see appendix)

In December of 2008 the project group presented two options for a bicycle path. This bicycle path would run through the neighborhood of Veldhuizen A because of the construction of amenity center the 'Nieuwe Landgoed' (see figure). With the flyer 'New bicycle path, your opinion counts!' citizens were invited to vote on which route they wanted (see appendix). In the beginning of 2009 critique arose from the residents concerning the route of the bicycle path. Residents did not want either option and were concerned about the safety of guiding all the traffic directly through their neighborhood. As shown on figure .. the route would cross the parking lot of the Schoonenburg. Whilst the project group started redevelopment of the parking lot, two residents (the initiators) of Schoonenburg had conversations with their neighbors about concerns regarding the reconstruction. The residents of Schoonenburg wanted more parking space and because of the bicycle route the parking lot would be renewed but not adjusted to the needs of the residents. One of the initiators came up with an alternative plan for the parking lot and spoke to several public officials but his efforts were not taken seriously. Dissatisfied, the initiators decided to take a different approach; initiator 2 send an email to all local council members to address their concerns:

“Council members, please help us. We have been at the door, we have been inside, but we are not making any headway. You are spending a lot of money on this reconstruction but you do not know what is going on! Help us, how do we turn this around?” (initiator 2, emphasis added)

Two council members, of GroenLinks and SGP, shared the concerns of the residents and got involved. The reconstruction of the parking lot was stopped. The council members of SGP and GroenLinks asked the responsible alderman to discuss the proposal for the parking lot which was then taken seriously and partly executed. Furthermore, the expressed concerns of the residents resulted in

an invitation of the project group to an information meeting on the 8th of April, 2009, which the council members also attended (council member SGP, personal communication, April 12, 2017). Despite the meeting, the project group did not change their views on the route of the bicycle path. In collaboration with the three other residents, the initiators organized a bicycle tour and invited the whole council. On 29th of June (Ede Stad, 2009) the residents showed the council what they thought was wrong with the plan and how it should be changed. More than thirty residents of Veldhuizen A rode along (de Edese Post, 2009). Just as with the parking lot the initiators presented alternative solutions for the bicycle route.

On the second of July 2009 the council members requested an interpellation debate concerning the route of the bicycle path (council member SGP, personal communication, April 12, 2017). This was quite exceptional for it was the first interpellation debate in Ede since the introduction of the dualism system within the council. The dualism system entails separation of the board and the council and makes it possible for members of the council to put issues on the agenda. The council members invited all residents to attend the debate to show support.

On the 9th of July the interpellation debate took place where, on behalf of the board, the responsible alderman had to answer questions about the concerns of the residents and not adequately informing the council about the bicycle route. The debate resulted in an unanimous vote to postpone the execution of the original route for a half year to deliberate with residents about alternative solutions (council member SGP, personal communication, April 12, 2017).

Some of the planned projects were realized but in 2009 Woonstede indicated that because of economic circumstances they could no longer execute their role as developer in the reconstruction conform the made agreements (Gemeente Ede, 2011). This meant that the original plans could not fully be executed.

The municipality found new partners to develop some locations and the Nieuwe Landgoed. In 2012 the municipality presented a new, less complex plan for het Nieuwe Landgoed, where the amenities would mostly be situated on the side of Kernhem. Only the new neighborhood centre and some housing accommodations would be built on the side of Veldhuizen. Veldhuizen and Kernhem were to be connected through a tunnel (Gemeente Ede, 2012). The change of plans meant that the bicycle route is planned along the n224 and traffic is not guided through the neighborhood of Veldhuizen A. At present time some locations are still being developed. The Nieuwe Landgoed, the tunnel and housing on the side of Veldhuizen are realized.

4.3 Participation policy municipality of Ede

As mentioned in the theoretical chapter, most initiatives come in contact with government; citizens seek contact or government responds to activities of citizens (Oude Vrielink & van de Wijdeven, 2011; Van de Wijdeven et al., 2013). According to de Wilde (2014, p. 3369) nowhere has the revived attention for citizen participation become more evident than in the Dutch policy agenda for a new mode of local governance in neighborhoods. In 2007, a Dutch neighborhood deal was implemented by the national government which entailed goals like improvement of public space, empowerment of residents and growth of social cohesion in deprived urban neighborhoods (de Wilde, 2014). Implementation is up to local governments, institutions and residents. In 2011 the municipality of Ede published a policy document called 'Citizen Participation in the municipality of Ede', stating that

although participation is not new and actively present, this document serves as a policy framework. In this document two lines of participation are distinguished: (1) municipal initiative and (2) citizen initiative. The approach for both lines is based on rules set by the National Ombudsman in 2009. These rules are based on the participation ladder: to inform, to consult, to advise, to co-produce, and to (co-)decide. The municipality decides within each participation course in which way they want to involve citizens. Most of the ladder is focused on citizen influence with regard to policy. In the case of citizen initiatives it focuses on the highest step on the ladder :

“The role of the municipality is limited to facilitating and controlling and possibly subsidizing. It concerns initiatives of citizens which citizens themselves setup and execute.” (Gemeente Ede, 2011)

The protocol for citizen initiatives refers citizens to the department of Neighborhood Management (Wijkbeheer). This department will motivate if they will support an initiative or not. Neighborhood coordinators have a limited budget which they can deploy to realize initiatives from the neighborhood. This was also the case in the Schoonenburg initiative.

Chapter 5 Results

5.1 Introduction

Initial analysis of the interviews resulted in the distinction of three phases of the initiative; the first project and preparation (start, § 5.2.), execution of the plan (execution§ 5.3), and maintenance and giving back the park (outcome § 5.4). Per phase the narrative will be described first and thereafter all relevant factors will be analyzed. Two factors, trust and communication, are relevant in all phases, these will be analyzed and discussed in paragraph 5.5. The chapter ends with a conclusive paragraph 5.6.

5.2 Phase 1: the first project and preparing the initiative

5.2.1 Narrative phase 1

In August of 2009 a new neighborhood coordinator was appointed. At the time the reconstruction of the neighborhood was still ongoing, but not long after it stopped. The public space of Schoonenburg was reconstructed. Not happy with the result of the reconstruction, the residents of the Schoonenburg contacted the neighborhood coordinator. The neighborhood coordinator asked them to invite him for a talk about the perceived problems. The residents had all kinds of suggestions of how their neighborhood could be improved but the neighborhood coordinator could not justify spending money to redevelop a part of the neighborhood that had just undergone reconstruction. The residents told him they would do it themselves. The neighborhood coordinator agreed with the residents that there were a few small things they could change with financial support of the municipality. He was holding back because he needed time to find out what kind of space there was for this kind of citizen action within the municipality. Furthermore, he wanted to see how the residents would approach such a project and see what they were capable of. The residents took the presented chance and started with the edges of plant areas. The neighborhood coordinator wanted to provide the materials but the initiators refused. They wanted to get the materials themselves and send the bill to the neighborhood coordinator. Within a week the materials that the initiators ordered were delivered and together with other residents in the neighborhood they realized the first small project. The neighborhood coordinator was impressed and the initiators and supporters proved themselves to him. The relationship which was established through this first project meant that other projects within the initiative would receive financial support from the neighborhood coordinator, or in other words the municipality.

From the conversations the initiators had with the other residents in the beginning of 2009 (in relation to the bicycle route and reconstruction) they knew what issues were important for the residents. They went door to door to ask for mandate to create a plan for the Schoonenburg. The mandate entailed giving the initiators the power to make the plans and speak on behalf of the neighborhood. The residents agreed to give them mandate and after the plans were made residents could vote if they agreed with them. Residents could answer yes or no and there was always room for discussion but the initiators had the power to decide on the details. The main reason for voting was that deliberating on every detail with the whole neighborhood would take too much time. Except one, all residents voted for the proposed ideas. Some plans were altered after some discussion.

In the meantime, the neighborhood coordinator had the feeling he had some space regarding the initiative. He found budget to subsidize the initiative, a little more than ten thousand Euro. He immediately saw that the costs of the different projects were higher than the budget he could provide and challenged the initiators to make up a project plan to request for other subsidies. Furthermore, the neighborhood coordinator could use this project plan to justify actions taken by the residents to other public officials within the municipality. In September of 2011 the plan was submitted to different subsidy trajectories and ten thousand Euro was granted.

After the first small project, the neighborhood coordinator and the initiators made agreements; the initiative would be executed in different projects, every project bigger than the last. They talked extensively about risks and the way the projects would be executed.



Photo 5.1: Some of the edges the residents made at the start of the initiative

5.2.2 Relevant factors phase 1

Factors on the individual, neighborhood and government level play a role in phase 1 of the initiative. The relevant factors in phase 1 will be analyzed and discussed.

Capacities

The initiators invested a lot of time in the initiative; thinking out the plans and details, writing a project plan, reaching out to other residents. Furthermore, they already had devoted a lot of time in the beginning of 2009 trying to influence the plans of the bicycle route. During this time the initiators acquired technical information about their neighborhood and had conversations with other residents to know what their needs and wishes were, which served as input for the project plan. In the first phase money as individual resource did not play a role.

The initiators seem to have the relevant civic skills available to them from the onset. The different skills mentioned in the theoretical chapter come together in their approach. They were critical about

the reconstruction, involved and organized the neighborhood to take action and set up a project plan to apply for subsidy. One of the initiators about their approach:

“So it was not like: we object against everything no, but oriented to specific things.. ..You know what you are talking about, and do not only look at the problem but also at possible solutions.” (initiator 1)

Presenting these possible solutions they showed the municipality that they wanted to help improve the neighborhood instead of only complain about the reconstruction. About applying for subsidy one of the initiators notes:

“because what we also always did was putting down the amount of hours. The number of hours we spent on it, that is what we did. That was to excite, to excite us but also to excite the municipality like what do I deliver. We put in 300 hours, costs 0 euro, you know.” (initiator 1)

They carefully thought out in which way to apply for subsidy. Explicitly mentioning that the labour they put in was free, the goals they want to achieve, how it would be done and what they needed shows a combination of organization, communication and critical thinking skills as mentioned by Kirlin (2003). Furthermore, the application relates to the bureaucratic skills mentioned by Tonkens & Verhoeven (2011). The initiators devoted time and combined their civic skills to prepare the other projects within the initiative.

Motivation

At the end of 2009 the reconstruction stopped. Schoonenburg was one of the locations that had undergone reconstruction but the residents, initiators and supporters, were not happy with the result. One of the supporters notes:

“It all began when the municipality repaved the neighborhood. Uhm, they did some adjustments here and there and people did not like it...” (supporter 1)

The reconstruction of the neighborhood, the dissatisfaction hereof, and the earlier experiences of the initiators with regard to the bicycle route, created a 'voedingsbodem' for action, where Specht (2012) speaks of. Dissatisfaction with the current situation mentioned by a range of authors (Lowndes et al., 2001; Verhoeven, 2010; Specht, 2012; Van de Wijdeven et al., 2013; among others) relates to the targeted and pragmatic motivation Tonkens & Verhoeven (2011) speak of; citizens want to tackle a concrete problem in their direct environment that they perceive. The dissatisfaction with the result of the reconstruction lead the residents to contact the appointed neighborhood coordinator to discuss how they could change their neighborhood.

The earlier experience of the initiators in taking action concerning the bicycle route resulting in postponement is also a motivation in this case:

“That gives a little strength and support like: we can achieve some things but we need to do it together. Yes, you need to.. you need to uh know what you are talking about because if you do not you are not going to succeed. Because uh, you need to find out everything, we really discussed a lot, did a lot..” (initiator 1)

The result of the debate can be considered as an early win and, as mentioned by Van de Wijdeven (2013), achieving these early wins gives energy. The postponement of the route can be seen as a

specific event that gave the initiators the expectation to make a positive difference as long as they invest time and work together. The successful first project in phase 1 can also be regarded as an early win; the residents achieved the first upgrade of their neighborhood to their liking and proving themselves to the neighborhood coordinator resulted in continued support for the other projects.

Neighborhood network and communication

During the reconstruction and issues with the bicycle route, the initiators visited all of their neighbors to talk about what they wanted for their neighborhood. This resulted in a list with issues important to the residents which they later used as input for the project plan:

“We made an overview of all sixty residents and we knew exactly like: okay, there is profit to be made here. If we take on this and take on this, that one and that one and most of the residents will approve. When we did that, we went by again: can we have mandate to make plans? Out the interviews we held plans came up, we want to try and realize them. We come up with the plan and then you can still say yes or no, and if more than 75 percent says yes than we will proceed.” (initiator 1)

By interviewing every resident separately the initiators bundled individual needs into a bigger, jointly supported plan. Their approach ensured that they knew that their plans would face minimal resistance from the residents. According to Dekker (2007, p.360) social network are often found to be helpful in facilitating participation by the bundling of individual needs and capacities. Social networks reflect the degree of social interaction within communities. One of the initiators notes about the social network and ties within Schoonenburg:

“You knew everyone here and it was always 'hello'. Not everyone is friends so to speak but it was a real tight group.” (initiator 1)

A supporter mentions:

“It is quite open and accessible here. You feel at home quickly.” (supporter 3)

It can be argued that the social network of Schoonenburg facilitated participation; it made it easier to address on another and bundle individual needs. However, inclusiveness of the initiative is explained by the common locality and not directly by the social network. The initiators involved everyone who lived in the neighborhood and using a democratic procedure the neighborhood voted on each separate plan:

“And then we all could vote. Well, what do you like, do you agree, if you do not agree what are your pro's and con's?” (supporter 3)

Voting ensured that the plans were widely carried. The initiators got mandate to decide on the details of each project to avoid spending hours of deliberation. However, it was still possible for others to influence the plans. One of the supporters recalls a specific moment about the flower pot on the central square:

“We came, I remember very well, together with Initiator 1 on the square.. .. in response to some neighbors who thought it was too big, we literally looked at the pavement and downscaled it to what was still a reasonable flower pot in his opinion. And what others thought was small enough.. .. in the end democratically decided with each other, so this is fine.” (Supporter 2)

Deliberation on details was possible; some wanted a smaller flower pot and the initiator and other residents democratically found middle ground. Although the initiators had mandate to avoid long during deliberation they were flexible to make sure the plan was supported by all. This specific moment also reflects civic skills such as collective decision-making (Kirlin, 2003) and social skills (Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2011). Voting on the different projects invited residents to actively think about the redevelopment of their neighborhood. Residents thought the democratic approach was fair and that their voices were heard.

Government approach

The municipality, in the form of the neighborhood coordinator, was approached by the residents of the Schoonenburg. The neighborhood coordinator about his role and the first contact:

“My personal view is that as municipality you try to provide a service. And also go back to your core tasks. So where citizens come with initiatives, you listen and connect with that but also look at what they can do themselves. (neighborhood coordinator)

The neighborhood coordinator took on a clientelistic role; engaging in a direct way in the lives and needs of local actors which creates opportunities for bottom-up practices (Healey, 2006 in Meijer et al., 2015). Connecting with the needs and wishes of the residents using an open style of communication, expressing expectations to qualify for financial support of the municipality, offered perspective for the dissatisfied residents. Furthermore, the neighborhood coordinator facilitated the initiative by granting subsidy and helping the initiators set goals:

“We made agreements about the continuation. We visualized which projects would happen after another in relation to the size, risks and things like that. I always said: we will see how it goes per project.. ..I have enough examples of residents who want to do something but in the end do not manage to get it done because they were really good in thinking of what they wanted to do but not so much at the execution. Uh, in time you get better at recognizing that.. I never think that you then should handle it like: 'well, I see those people cannot do it, so I will not support it.'.. ..and then I try to make the steps in which they take the initiatives smaller. Not that they cannot reach their end goal, but in smaller steps.. ..because then you have nothing and you have to fix it as municipality. Not only that, then your residents who were really enthusiastic and energized at first become disappointed when they realize it will not succeed.” (neighborhood coordinator)

Purposely, he suggested splitting the initiative up in different projects to make sure the end goal was achievable. This relates to the instrumental approach, complementing citizen power, mentioned by Oude Vrielink & van de Wijdeven (2011).

5.3 Phase 2: execution of the plan

5.3.1 Narrative phase 2

After reconstructing the edges of the plant areas and preparing plans for the following projects, the residents of the Schoonenburg made a flower pot for the central square. The flower pot had heightened, smoothly crafted edges where people could sit on and had light decoration. Besides a

physical upgrade of the environment, it would also have a social function as meeting place. The initiators invited other residents in the neighborhood to help with the construction. Helping out was on a voluntary basis. Sometimes the initiators asked residents face to face, but also put a note in the mailbox of all the residents. The different projects were mostly executed by a group of six to ten people. Expenses made for the construction of the flower pot were paid for by the neighborhood coordinator.



Photo 5.2: The flower pot and meeting place

The next project was the reconstruction of the park (see figure 5.1). This project was quite a lot bigger; a huge amount of soil was needed because of the three ramparts the residents wanted to construct. They rented an excavator for the construction. None of the residents had prior experience working with excavators. Knowing the risks involved, the neighborhood coordinator made the judgment that considering his previous experience with these residents it would work out. Nevertheless, they discussed risks working with such a machine, how to manage these risks, what would happen if it did go wrong. In the development of the park, the initiators needed advice on planting. Via the neighborhood coordinator they contacted the foreman of the neighborhood, who was responsible for the maintenance of public space in the neighborhood. They asked him for technical advice on their plan for the park and trusting on his judgment they adjusted some features of the plan. In the project plan it is mentioned that they would follow the expert advice from the foreman. During the execution of this project the foreman also provided practical advice and support. Practical advice on planting was not just limited to public space but also extended to the private yards of residents. After the park was finished, it was agreed upon that children could play in the park, but that older children could not play football in order to protect the plants.

The parking lot was the last big project the residents constructed. Eight parking spaces and some road would be added to the existing parking lot because of a lack of parking space. A part of the existing bicycle path needed to be removed and in the ground there was a cable that provided the power supply for a large part of the neighborhood. Before they could start with this final project, the neighborhood coordinator had to discuss different aspects internally, with the department of Traffic and project

leader of the reconstruction of the adjacent area, because of the risks involved. The neighborhood coordinator had quite some difficulty dealing with department of Traffic and the project leader but managed to make sure the project could proceed.

During the construction of the parking lot one of the supporters made an error with the excavator and flipped over. He injured his hand badly and was taken to the hospital. After this incident only one of the initiators and his son drove the excavator.

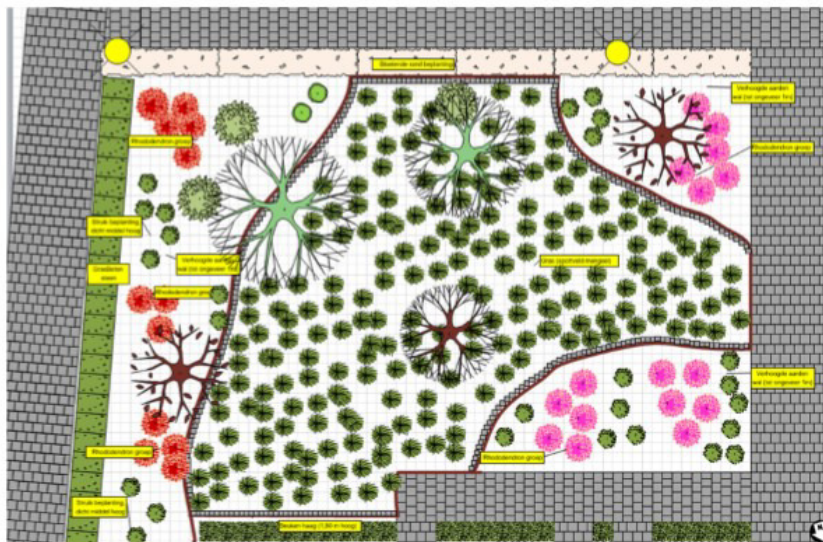


Figure 5.1: Drawing of the park (Projectplan Schoonenburg, 2011)

The final project was the wall of the garage boxes, which is located next to the parking lot. Nearly through their budget, the initiators wanted to paint the wall. After some research, they found out that all streets in Veldhuizen are named after castles and noble mansions. With their last money they hired a painter which painted the castle of Schoonenburg. Other parts of the neighborhood took over this idea and contacted the neighborhood coordinator. This resulted in six castles being painted across Veldhuizen A.

Over the course of one and a half year all projects were realized. During this time the initiators spread several newsletters with updates to keep other residents informed and involved. After each day of work the residents celebrated the achievements together and when all projects were finished the initiators got a present from the other residents in the neighborhood.

The municipality organized several tours for public officials from their own and other municipalities and institutions. The initiators spoke to them about, and showed the results of, the initiative.

5.3.2 Relevant factors phase 2

Motivation

As mentioned in phase 1, the residents of the Schoonenburg were motivated due to dissatisfaction with the current situation and wanted to improve their neighborhood. A supporter perceived another problem:

“The municipality does, and I think it is unfortunate, increasingly less maintenance..” (supporter 1)

Not only the dissatisfaction about result of the reconstruction but also the upkeep of the neighborhood motivated this supporter to help out with the initiative. A supporter can have different motivations, as this supporter mentions about helping out in the execution of the park:

“So then I would have all those weeds in my yard. So I was also a bit of self-interest. If you keep that clean than those weeds do not blow into my yard.. ..Because of this you get to know your neighbors, and uh yeah, you drink some coffee afterwards and uh yeah, then it is easier for you get to know your neighborhood.” (supporter 4)

It was in his self-interest to protect his yard against weeds, but as newcomer in the neighborhood the initiative also provided this supporter to get to know his neighbors by working together. The initiative had a clear social goal, as was also mentioned in the project plan written by the initiators. The division of the projects within the initiative also influenced the motivation:

“You get really motivated when you see and hear from others about the result, that shows some appreciation, that is nice.” (initiator 1)

The division ensured early, but also mid-term, wins. Seeing the result and getting appreciated for it motivated this initiator to pull through with the following projects. The different motivations from the initiators as well as the supporters support the conclusions of Denters et al. (2013) who state: 'there is a diverse range of motivations which in different forms and contexts can prevail.' For example, the context of the reconstruction formed the motivation of dissatisfaction among the residents and working together on the physical upgrade of the environment had a social and targeted goal.

Some supporters did not help out in the construction of the parking lot. A supporter reasons:

“..Consciously not involved.. because I find that the construction of the parking lot is not something residents should be concerned with. I think if it is an improvement, that could be an improvement with more space for cars, but has uh does not have priority for me. The improvement of the living environment like uhm flower pots, of just something you look at, I think that is more important than a parking lot. I think that is something that should not be a part of citizen initiatives, or citizens helping with that. I think that is a thing for the municipality.”(supporter 2)

Several authors (e.g. Specht, 2012; Denters et al., 2013) only speak about motivation to participate but not about why residents do not participate. In this case, some supporters thought the parking lot should be the responsibility of the municipality and did not feel that it had priority.

Invitation

The initiators went door to door to explicitly inviting all residents of the Schoonenburg; asking for mandate to work out a plan, inviting them to vote on the plans and motivating them to help out during the execution. They reached out to and involved everyone who lived in the proximity. One of the supporters notes:

“They invested a lot of time.. ..Also to get neighbors motivated to help out. That was always voluntary, they always said like: 'would you like to join us, all the help is welcome.’ (supporter 2)

The initiators invited other residents in the neighborhood to help with the construction:

“They just asked: we are going to fix up the neighborhood, do you want to help? ..and then you can say yes or no, and then you help or you do not, like that.” (supporter 3)

The voluntary character of the initiative relates to implicit invitation; giving neighbors the feeling that they would appreciate their help without pressuring them. This supports the conclusions of van de Wijdeven (2013) that invitation is about more than just explicitly being asked to join the initiative. The appreciation shown with implicit invitation acts as a motivation for others to help out. One of the initiators about recruiting supporters:

“I was especially good at the execution. I knew how to motivate people and it went.. And than we just had a few people, six or seven here who all had those qualities. And I do not need more than seven people, but if there are ten people I like it, if there is twenty people I also like it.. ..And we always worked it out, and it always comes down to a couple of men which do it every time, when we called. But we only needed to make a request to the residents and there they came..” (initiator 1)

There was always a core group of supporters that helped out. The initiators just worked it out with the supporters they could get, which varied per project.

Neighborhood collaboration and social cohesion

The factor of neighborhood collaboration is shown in the fact that the residents bundled their individual capacities by working together. One of the supporters about the division of tasks during the execution:

“and then you gather early in the morning and yeah, then it was asked who can do what. Most people know that about each other. Yes, you just get on with it. There is not really a clear task division, there are two people (the initiators) who uhm take charge a little and keep things in check and all that, and know how things should look. For the rest it works out itself. There is not really a division.” (supporter 3).

Again the social network of the Schoonenburg plays an influencing role; people know each other well and this made working together easy. The foreman who practically supported the residents notes that constructing the park was just like 'working together as you would with friends'. Another supporter mentions about working together:

“Investing a couple of hours and afterwards being together. And for the ones who do not like it; we drink some coffee, one stays three hours, the other leaves after an hour.” (supporter 1).

There was some steering from the initiators to make sure the project worked out as planned. Nevertheless, the notions of the supporters above support the idea of working together as you would with friends; helping each other out voluntarily, with no real hierarchy and celebrating the achievements afterwards.

In relation to social cohesion, some residents argue that social cohesion stayed the same arguing it was always a sociable neighborhood, where others say it improved. One supporters notes:

“That gives a feeling of togetherness, that has uh, in that way, it has had a positive effect on the neighborhood in general. By making sure together, yes together, that everything looks a little bit nicer.” (supporter 2)

Improvement of the neighborhood had a positive effect on social cohesion and the public moral. Improvement of public moral exclusively says something about the nature of the initiative, and not about the diversity of social capital of the group, as mentioned by Tonkens & Verhoeven (2011). The incident during the construction of the parking lot negatively influenced the public moral, as a initiator notes:

“We were, and other residents also, quite shocked. They said: 'this actually went too far'. Then you see how something that is such a success can turn around.” (initiator 1)

The incident changed the view of the residents. Where some supporters did not help out with the construction, other residents, in hindsight, indicate that the project was 'too big to handle'.

One of the goals of the initiative, as mentioned in the project plan, was to strengthen the social function of the central square, and with that the social cohesion. One of the initiators says about the central square:

“Always the same eight people hang out, the rest swings by now and then, sometimes that one, then that one. There is no strife, but that is kind of the atmosphere around here. They also call this 'our Schoonenburg square'. If you look on Facebook then you have the Schoonenburg square page where you see parties, constant invitations so they still do that. So the contact is really good here. Just on the basis that not everyone is friends but everybody knows each other.” (initiator 1)

A supporter adds:

“I think it is a group of eight.. who like to encounter each other a bit more often, to drink some coffee or get a drink in the weekend, meeting each other.. ..Well, the rest of the people apparently are not as interested. Or it has to be once a year with the annual barbecue, yes, that is a set thing.” (supporter 2)

A core group of residents meets regularly on the central square and others occasionally join them. There is a Facebook group where people share photo's, times to meet and ask for help with maintenance once in a while. As mentioned by Tonkens & Verhoeven (2011), most initiatives focus on improving social cohesion and the forming of social networks. The initiative of the Schoonenburg chose a specific physical adjustment to foster this improvement.

Government approach

One of the aspects of government support in the case of Schoonenburg was the subsidy that was granted by the neighborhood coordinator. The initiators applied for other subsidies and they were granted. The neighborhood coordinator took on the role of accountant; the initiators could send every bill regarding the initiative and he would pay them. One of the initiators about the contact and role of the neighborhood coordinator:

“Very direct: this is what I need, this is the idea. The neighborhood coordinator trusted us completely. He let me figure it out. Yes, he discussed with us. But overall he was like, this will work out great.. ..There was only one problem with him, he never communicated if the bills were correct and if we

were still within our budget. So, I had to figure that out myself haha.. ..If there was money in the pot, he would pay every bill.” (initiator 2)

With regard to the costs, the initiators had all freedom to decide where they would want to spend the money on. This relates to the instrumental approach mentioned by Oude Vrielink & van de Wijdeven (2011), complementing citizen power without taking over the initiative. By managing the funds, the neighborhood coordinator could control the expenditure and give advice whilst at the same time giving the initiators the freedom to decide.

With regard to the park, practical knowledge was provided by the neighborhood foreman, one of the initiators explaining about the contact:

“At a given moment, we discussed with him based on his arguments why we should not do certain things, asking him which plants we could use instead which did not have those nasty qualities but still would fit into the image of the neighborhood we wanted. The foreman is like an encyclopedia.” (initiator 2)

In the project plan it is mentioned that the initiators would follow the expert advice of the foreman due to the lack of knowledge about plants. Furthermore, the foreman also helped out during the construction of the park:

“If I look back, it mostly was cutting, giving advice, sometimes I went into a private yard.. ..I think that is also a part of citizen participation, otherwise you are drawing a line. You want to have those citizens in the public space, often those citizens have questions about their own yard. And you are walking there, walk into that yard then. And then you give advice and those citizens are often quite appreciative.” (foreman)

Just as the neighborhood coordinator, the foreman follows the clientelistic logic which is mentioned by Meijer et al. (2015). The way in which the foreman gave advice and practical support show how he relates directly to the needs and wishes of the residents without taking over the initiative. Communication between the initiators and neighborhood coordinator and foreman was experienced as positive; contact was easy and direct.

Although having some trouble, the neighborhood coordinator took away institutional barriers so the residents could proceed. The barriers mainly had to do with risks involved as the projects got bigger. These risks were minimized by thoroughly discussing them with the initiators and hiring a professional paver. It was the responsibility of the initiators to keep an eye on the supporters during the initiative. Despite knowing the risks involved one of the supporters got hurt during the construction of the parking lot. Residents mention about the response of the neighborhood coordinator after the accident:

“Because of your inexperience and you are trying to do your best, it goes wrong.. ..The man of the municipality came by: ‘well yeah, that is horrible.’ But that was it.. ..But it would be logical if people would call you like: ‘How are you? Are you injured?’ If necessary some flowers or a card or something, you know? But you hear nothing. But I am like, it is okay, I am not doing anything for them (the municipality) anymore.” (supporter 3)

“I explicitly asked him (the neighborhood coordinator) a couple of times. He said; ‘well yeah, get a fruit basket.’ But I thought: you should do that, not me. Yes, I find that very poor.” (initiator 2)

Both the initiator and the injured supporter were disappointed about the lack of involvement the neighborhood coordinator showed after the accident. This negatively influenced the view of some residents about the neighborhood coordinator. During the initiative there was no communication between the neighborhood coordinator and the supporters, all contact was with the initiators. With regard to the incident the neighborhood coordinator could have shown some more involvement, showing support and recognizing the effort made by the supporters.



Photo 5.3: The painting of the ‘castle of Schoonenburg’ and the parking lot

5.4 Phase 3: maintenance and giving back the park

5.4.1 Narrative phase 3

After the different projects were finished and the maintenance was the responsibility of the residents. The park was of high standard and would cost the municipality too much time to maintain. The initiators made a deal with the neighborhood coordinator that they could use different machines. Although these machines were still owned by the municipality they were stationed in the garage of one of the initiators. The residents had the proper tools to maintain the park, central square and surrounding area. The initiators took a leading role in the maintenance. After a while supporters of the initiative were getting less committed to maintaining the park, it increasingly came down to the initiators. The other parts of the neighborhood, central square and surrounding area, were maintained by the initiators and supporters two or three times a year.

In 2014 the municipality restructured their organization. This entailed that the function of the neighborhood coordinator changed to neighborhood director which meant that his focus shifted more to policy. The foreman retired and maintenance of the neighborhood, physical projects and citizen

participation became the responsibility of the neighborhood manager. The neighborhood manager started in january of 2015.

In the beginning of 2015, children started to play football on the grass in the park despite the agreement made. The agreement entailed that children could play there, only not with a ball because this would damage the plants. The initiators spoke to the father of the children, but he refused to agree with them on this matter. This caused a divide within the neighborhood; some thought the children should not play football there, others thought it should be possible.

The neighborhood coordinator asked the neighborhood manager, because of the function change, to help the residents with this issue. The neighborhood manager spoke first with the initiators and then with the father of the children who were playing football. After the conversation with the neighborhood manager, the initiators thought that the manager made a commitment to help them with the issue. After speaking to the father, the neighborhood manager decided to organize an evening with all residents to discuss the issue. The initiators felt betrayed; initiator 2 did not go to the meeting and was not prepared to do the maintenance of the park anymore.

The result of the evening was that the father and another resident would ask around to change the function of the park and look for people willing to take on the maintenance. Their inquiry yielded that nobody was prepared to take on this responsibility. Without anyone willing to take care of the park the municipality, in the form of the neighborhood manager, decided to take back the park. This meant that the park was to be altered so it became a basic park again, taking away two of the ramparts, to make maintenance more easy.



Photo 5.4The park was given back and became a basic park again

5.4.2 Relevant factors phase 3

Motivation regarding the maintenance

Maintenance of the redeveloped area was the responsibility of the residents. One of the supporters notes about the maintenance in general:

“At a given moment there was a lot of positivity. And at a given moment that reduces, because yeah, people want to enjoy their own home and garden. If you organize something two or three times a year, they will do it. But if it is more than that, they will say: ‘the municipality must.. must do it.’” (supporter 1).

Organizing the maintenance more often than two or three times a year was difficult. Another supporter about the maintenance of the park:

“And because it is maintenance.. ..difficult to plan. So it was mostly up to them (the initiators). At a given moment people say: well yeah, then they will just have to do it. But it cannot be that just two or three people will do all the work, of course.” (supporter 3).

In the time that followed, up to 2015, maintenance of the park increasingly came on the shoulders of the two initiators. One of the initiators about the efforts of the other initiator:

“You only have one like that in the neighborhood.. they (initiator 2 and his wife) make sure the flower pot is lit and pay for that. They give water where water is needed. That comes from their tap.. he went far with that. If you would do that collectively, that would be better, then you water everything together.. ..giving water just outside your own garden is asking for too much. You know, because it costs money, they really think like that, they do. For some part I get that, but I know that initiator 2 was a big exception in that regard.” (initiator 1)

Long time commitment to maintenance from other residents than the initiators was difficult to ask for. Having constructed the park, the initiators had a sense of ownership and were committed to keep the park in good shape, maintaining it more often than a couple times a year. Children playing football in the park influenced the motivation of the initiators regarding the maintenance:

“Those plants died because they were playing football there, the father too.. ..I said to the municipality: with football, I do not feel like it anymore. Thereafter, people started whining to the neighborhood manager like: it does not look good in front of my door.” (initiator 2)

And when the initiators spoke with the neighborhood manager they explained:

“And we said: ‘you know, if this man plays football with here with his kids, it is fine, but we are not going to worry about something that keeps being damaged behind our backs. We are annoyed with it, we are getting into arguments and this will not turn out good like this.’” (initiator 1)

The initiators and the father of the children disagreed over football in the park, because of this the children would not stop and this negatively influenced the motivation of the initiators to take up the maintenance. The approach of the neighborhood manager also negatively influenced the motivation of the initiators and eventually the park was given back to the municipality. This approach will be further discussed down below.

Government approach

After finishing the different projects the neighborhood coordinator provided practical support in the form of different machines:

“We asked like: can we have a swipe.. sweeping machine? We got a sweeper and a shove machine for the snow, so we made the neighborhood completely free of snow when it snowed.. ..We had leaf blowers, we had a lawnmower.. We used them and they were property of the municipality.” (initiator 1)

The initiators had all the tools to properly maintain the neighborhood. The neighborhood manager, who is now responsible for supporting initiatives, had his own view about this:

“a hedge cutting machine, a lawn mower, and a big sweeper, all to maintain that small park. Well, if you see what kind of machines those are, uh, we now have them stationed at a central location so the whole neighborhood can use them. They just got them to maintain that small park. I think that is really excessive.” (neighborhood manager)

The neighborhood coordinator and manager had different views on this matter, the manager would not have provided the machines in the way the coordinator did. When the disagreement over the park resulted in giving the park back to the municipality, the machines were also given back.

As explained above, the disagreement over the park directly relates to the motivation regarding the maintenance of the initiators. The initiators contacted the neighborhood coordinator about the disagreement. The neighborhood coordinator about his approach:

“I asked myself: what is the role of the government in this? Are we going to facilitate? After all it is a citizen initiative. Own responsibility. I think they could figure it out themselves. So I did not take a very active role in this, prepared to do something but not play referee.. ..At that moment in time, it looked like a small annoyance and not a real commotion.. ..I think it is a pity that we as government intervened, had to intervene. I thought it was a beneficial citizen initiative. And yes, I hoped that they would figure it out themselves, but in time it appeared not to be tenable.” (neighborhood coordinator/director).

The neighborhood coordinator purposely took a reticent approach hoping that the residents would find a solution by themselves. When after some time the disagreement was not solved he asked the neighborhood manager to step in. The neighborhood manager first spoke with the initiators:

At a given moment we had a conversation with the neighborhood manager: 'there playing football continuously, my stuff in the yard is being kicked of the walls. At some point you are fed up.' Initiator I was there. (neighborhood manager:) 'we are going to make sure that they cannot play football here anymore.' Well, agreed, done. He walks over to the one who is complaining that the plants are dead in front of his door and talks with him. Hereafter, he starts with completely other plans; football is not made impossible.. ..I said to him: fine, if you want to do it this way, then I quit.” (initiator 2).

From the conversation the initiators got the idea that the neighborhood manager stood on their side and would support them. However, after talking to the other resident the neighborhood manager

decided to organize an evening where the matter would be discussed. The neighborhood manager about his role:

“Two things. A. when I came the conflict was already in advanced stage. Initiator 2 did not even wanted to be at the conversation I organized. So that already was too advanced. And second, you need to ask yourself if you as municipality must play the role of a policeman and say to people what they can and cannot do. Something that people agreed on, that is an agreement between residents themselves. They made a plan, we want to construct it like this, and we agree on this. And I think that as municipality if you see that something does not go well, that you can start the conversation. That is what I did. But I do not think that as municipality you must say: ‘you cannot do that, because you agreed on this.’” (neighborhood manager)

The neighborhood manager took a facilitative role; starting a discussion about the function of the park, trying to see if other residents would take initiative and take up the maintenance. This approach relates to the personal approach mentioned by Oude Vrielink & van de Wijdeven (2011), vitalizing the neighborhood community; provoking residents to take initiative. As mentioned in the narrative, two residents asked around but nobody was prepared to help them which resulted in giving back the park.

The initiators say about the approach of the neighborhood manager:

“We did not feel support from the neighborhood manager in the way we hoped for.” (initiator 1)

“It was purely communicative from the neighborhood manager. That is the reason in my opinion. And yeah, I reacted to that in my own way... ..Let me put it like this, if he approached it in a good way, then it still would have been maintained.” (initiator 2)

The dissatisfaction of the initiators with the neighborhood manager is the result of a miscommunication. The two initiators were the core, or ‘kartrekkers’, of the initiative. The miscommunication caused them to withdraw and the initiative stopped.

5.5 Transcending factors

In this final section of the results the influencing factors that transcend the individual, neighborhood and government level and phases of the initiative will be analyzed and discussed. It was found that trust and communication played a central role throughout the initiative.

Trust and communication

Trust and communication played a role in a number of ways. The initiators’ trust in self played a role before the initiative started. Dissatisfied, the initiators decided to take action and involved local council members to influence plans for the bicycle route and parking lot. This resulted in (a bicycle tour for the whole council and) an interpellation debate on the bicycle route where the responsible alderman had to answer questions about the concerns of the residents and not adequately informing the council. The council voted unanimously for postponement of the original route. One of the initiators on the result of the debate:

“That gives a little strength and support like: we can achieve some things but we need to do it together. Yes, you need to.. you need to uh know what you are talking about because if you do not you are not going to succeed. Because uh, you need to find out everything, we really discussed a lot, did a lot..” (initiator 1)

The result of the debate, which can be considered as an early win, gave the initiators trust and confidence in self; trust in achieving their goals as long as they put in time and effort. About trust between the initiators, one initiator said:

“Yes. You know each other very well. Therefore, we trusted each other. Who handled what, and how it would be handled.” (initiator 2)

Living in the same neighborhood and knowing each other for a long time, and working together on projects, the initiators know the strengths and weaknesses of one another and communication was direct and easy. Trusting on the skills of the other, they complement each other in achieving their goals.

Dekker (2007) concludes that trust in co-residents is positively related to participation when analysed separately but when combined with other variables of social capital this relationship is no longer significant and therefore must be considered as not directly influencing participation. The strong social network of Schoonenburg, as explained in phase 2, and the way in which the initiators involved other residents can explain the trust that other residents in the neighborhood had in the initiators which is in line with the conclusions of Dekker (2007). This is shown through the almost unanimous vote on the plans for the initiative:

“So the rest of the people were all in favour, it was not just 75 percent, it was just, the biggest part was completely in favour, only one did not.” (initiator 1)

The democratic approach ensured that all residents could let their voice be heard and they trusted the initiators with the details. The effort of the initiators was appreciated:

“I know that I think it is good what they did, therefore I went through the neighborhood. To, with the notorious neighborhood barbecue, to thank them a little bit, for their initiative.. ..A little bit of appreciation uh which they deserve for quite a lot of work and initiatives that they showed, so I think that is needed, yes.” (supporter 3)

“Well, others went through the neighborhood to get some money together to thank me and initiator 1, for the work we did.” (initiator 2)

The appreciation the initiators received means that the trust and expectation was not betrayed.

In the relationship between the initiators and the neighborhood coordinator trust had to grow. The neighborhood coordinator reflecting on the first contact with the residents of the Schoonenburg:

“The people there were angry about how the process with the project group (of the reconstruction) went.. ..There was a lot of energy, so they had great involvement in their neighborhood, and how they looked at it and what they wanted. That is a great starting point because that energy is.. only it was translated in a lot of dissatisfaction. Being angry about, well not liking the municipality, which they

do not see as a wonderful party because of their experiences.. ..my role was to, well, to be objective. So to hear their side of the story.. ..and then to work more from a relationship of trust with them, like: well, okay, the situation is what it is, but to turn that energy around in.. a way to take positive action.. (neighborhood coordinator)

Recognizing the dissatisfaction as well as the energy of the residents, the neighborhood coordinator positioned himself between the municipality and the neighborhood; discussing frustrations without taking sides. This relates to conclusion of Walker & East (2014) that the nature and process of the dialogue between residents and government is valuable for participation. Speaking with the residents as equals, leaving time and room to discuss past hurts and frustrations, the dialogue increased understanding and created possibilities for a renewed relationship between residents and government. The neighborhood coordinator and the residents agreed that there were a few small things that could be changed with financial support from the municipality. He wanted to see how the residents would approach such a project and see what they were capable of. The neighborhood director explaining about communication towards the residents:

“I could express this nicely, that I found it useful to see how they would approach it, to move from smaller to bigger projects.” (neighborhood coordinator)

The open style of communication, expressing expectations to qualify for financial support from the municipality and offering perspective, presented a chance for the dissatisfied residents. The residents grabbed this chance to change their neighborhood and started with the edges of the plant areas. The neighborhood coordinator wanted to provide the materials but the initiators refused. They wanted to get the materials themselves and send the bill to the neighborhood coordinator. Within a week the materials that the initiators ordered were delivered and together with other residents in the neighborhood they realized the first small project. One of the initiators explains how a relationship of trust was established:

“He (neighborhood coordinator) gave us that, to do.. to let us do it. That was a piece of trust he had to give and he did that. But for him, he said later, that was the measure, the signal to see: what you are capable of.. .. That that went so quickly. And everything properly on paper: with bills and stuff, about everything, about the number of hours we spend working, with many people, and yeah.. .. and that was the signal for him to like: when they come with more things than I have the trust that it will turn out good.” (initiator 1)

With the first project of the initiative, the initiators and other residents proved that they were capable and earned the trust of the neighborhood coordinator. The relationship of trust which was established through this first project meant that other projects within the initiative would receive financial support from the neighborhood coordinator., or in other words the municipality. With regard to making expenses for the initiative one of the initiators reflects:

“Well yeah, the neighborhood coordinator had the utmost confidence in it. In that regard, I was completely free. Yes, he discussed with us. But for the rest he was like, this turn out good. Anyway, he was not afraid to look stupid because it would not be finished or anything like that.” (initiator 2)

As put before, during the other projects, the trust of the neighborhood coordinator in the initiators ensured that the initiative was not taken over. It was an interaction of trust; the initiators trust on the neighborhood director for support be it financial, listening and actively help setting goals, practical,

being taken seriously and the neighborhood coordinator has trust in capacities and commitment of the initiators and therefore outcome of the initiative. About the contact with the municipality one of the initiators notes:

“The manager was not part of the whole success story.. ..We always just had the same people who helped us.. ..The foreman was part of that, he was part of it with the neighborhood coordinator, for the rest we as residents did everything.” (Initiator 1)

During the initiative, the relationship between the initiators and the neighborhood coordinator and foreman mutual trust was built in small steps. The direct and open style of communication is central in this development. This supports the conclusions of the WRR (2012, p. 11) that citizen involvement is based on mutual trust but that this trust is not self-evident and is something that needs time and effort to develop. After the different projects were finished the neighborhood manager got involved. A new relationship had to develop and because miscommunication about the disagreement over the park trust was immediately lost. One of the initiators notes:

“He made a deal and he deceived me.. ..(to make things right) Well, he has to work hard for that and he does not do that!” (initiator 2)

A relationship of trust between specific individuals takes time to establish and is easily lost, as becomes clear in the case of Schoonenburg.

The communication within the municipality also played a role; in order to take away institutional barriers, the neighborhood coordinator had to discuss with different departments within the municipality:

“My role was to, uh, to let municipal interests and doctrine come together with what the residents wanted. In various areas. You got wishes of residents which conflict with the municipal wishes and policy.. ..And my role really was to, with the residents as well as the colleagues inside, to move them towards each other. On the substance as well as the pace, so on the process.. ..And luckily they (colleagues) could comprehend that.. sometimes. One had some more difficulty than another, and those thought it was nonsense we were doing something with a citizen initiative, others were more enthusiastic about it.” (neighborhood coordinator)

It was often difficult to get colleagues to see the value of citizen initiatives. This also had to do with responsibility and risks colleagues experienced:

“People who see obstacles from their own line of work and think: ‘okay, that is nice but what if it goes wrong? Who will be responsible for the costs and problems?’ And then you can say, it is the municipality as a whole but people feel responsible for the part which they stand for, uh, the part they got a budget for.. ..And then say to a colleague: ‘you are right, this can go wrong, that can be constructed wrong. If that happens uh, the recovery costs will be paid for from the neighborhood budget.’ In other words, internally I took responsibility if things were to fail.” (neighborhood coordinator)

So, to take away institutional barriers for the residents, the neighborhood coordinator had to take on responsibility within the municipal organization. It shows that part of the organization is not ready to

let go and leave it up to the residents. The neighborhood manager, currently concerned with citizen initiatives, also experiences difficulty taking away institutional barriers:

“If I would summarize the participation policy it is that on a political level people want participation in Ede but in the execution the different departments are not ready.. ..there where residents get more influence, there where you want to give residents more space, there must be a department who gives that space. That does not say that you must say 'yes' to everything. I still think it is good we have policy, I still think it is good that we look at the bigger picture.. ..I think that people find it difficult if we start doing all these kind of things, than that it is actually policy.. ..Everything is nailed shut with policy when we say: 'well no, that just is not possible.' We do not progress a bit. So, uh, I think there is still work to be done to move the different departments towards the residents.” (neighborhood manager)

The neighborhood manager experiences that colleagues still hold on to policy and are not trying to come up with solutions within the given policy. This makes it hard to support citizen initiatives. In the case of the Schoonenburg, the neighborhood coordinator had faith in the residents and took responsibility to make sure their initiative could pull through. It took a lot of effort to convince colleagues of 'letting go', put their trust in the residents and not taking over the initiative. Although working for the same organization, public officials deal differently with and have different attitudes towards citizen initiatives. On a political level citizen initiatives are feasible but some officials want to minimize risks and therefore do not support initiatives. This relates with the conclusion of the WRR (2012) that the attitude of (local) governments towards third generation citizen participation, the government culture needs to change. This can be done by investing in ties with residents, and creating the culture that policymakers and public officials need to dare to take risks (WRR, 2012). In the municipality of Ede citizen participation is still in development. Without clear policy that is carried throughout the whole organization, government approach is fragmented and some citizens can benefit if they manage to establish a good relationship, others will fail in disappointment.

5.6 Final words results

The narrative of the Schoonenburg shows in which way factors on the individual, neighborhood and government level influence the process of a local citizen initiative. The individual factors of capacities and motivation play a relevant role in each phase in the initiative. However, in each phase they play a different role and differ per actor involved.

The initiators devoted most time and use of civic skills with regard to the initiative. In the first phase the time of the initiators was mostly devoted to coming up with the plans, motivating and involving other residents and creating the project plan to apply for subsidy. Motivation to start the initiative was mostly based on dissatisfaction. However, because of prior experiences of the initiators they had the trust in self and the expectation to make a positive difference.

In the second phase time was committed by both initiators and supporters to execute the plans, but the initiators arranged every project which means that they invested even more time. Motivations of residents to support the initiative varied which supports the conclusions of Denters et al. (2013). Furthermore, celebrating the achievements, or early / mid-term wins as van de Wijdeven (2013) calls them, ensured that energy did not flow out of the initiative and created positivity. However, with the final project some residents decided to not help out because they thought it was not their

responsibility to take up such a large project. Invitation played also a central role in the second phase, where the initiators motivated and invited other residents in the neighborhood to participate. Isolation of social networks does not play a role because everyone was approached and could decide for themselves if they wanted to participate. However, it could be argued with regard to the notion of Dekker (2007) that people who have a stronger position within the social network are more likely to participate. Furthermore, this research supports the conclusions of van de Wijdeven (2013) that invitation is more than just explicitly being asked to join the initiative, implicit invitation ensures successful recruitment of support for the initiative.

In the last phase maintenance of the park increasingly became the responsibility of the initiators when supporters did not have the motivation to help them out anymore. The unwillingness to devote resources such as time and money for the maintenance more than twice a year explains the lack of motivation. The disagreement over the park and how the neighborhood manager dealt with it directly influenced the motivation of the initiators to continue with the maintenance.

The role of neighborhood factors such as network, communication and social cohesion are most relevant in the first and second phase. These factors come together in the way the neighborhood collaborated. By interviewing all the residents and involving them in the decision-making the initiators used the network of the Schoonenburg to bundle individual needs and capacities. The social network of the Schoonenburg is strong and in relation to Dekker (2007) it could be argued that the network has facilitated participation. However, the inclusiveness is explained by the common locality and not directly by the social network. By working together the social cohesion has improved and residents got to know each other better, this supports the conclusion of Tonkens and Verhoeven (2011).

The government approach played a role in every phase of the initiative. In the first and second phase the municipality followed a clientelistic logic mentioned by Meijer et al. (2015) and took the instrumental approach mentioned by Oude Vrielink & van de Wijdeven (2011). This entails the granting of subsidy, actively help setting goals, provide practical advice and support. One of the most important aspects is that the municipality did not take over the initiative and let the residents decide. These are all positive aspects of government approach which allows for bottom-up opportunities to be successful (Hurenkamp et al., 2006; Oude Vrielink & van de Wijdeven, 2011; Denters et al., 2013; Meijer et al., 2015). Lack of involvement after the incident at the parking lot was experienced as negative and can be seen in relation to the conclusion of Hurenkamp et al. (2006) that most initiatives desire more engagement. In the third phase the residents were provided with practical support by the municipality. With the disagreement over the park the municipality eventually facilitated the conversation between the residents to resolve the issue. However, the fact the initiators did not have an established relationship with the neighborhood manager and the miscommunication that happened resulted in dissatisfaction and giving back the park to the municipality. The personal approach (Oude Vrielink & van de Wijdeven, 2011) of the neighborhood manager differed from the neighborhood coordinator, trying to provoke a new initiative which did not work. The 'kartrekkers', as van de Wijdeven, (2013) calls it, stopped and therefore the initiative stopped.

The findings show that trust and communication played a central role in the initiative of Schoonenburg. These factors influence each other directly and transcend the individual, neighborhood and government level and phases of the initiative. Trust in self, in other residents and in the relationship with government influence a citizen initiative. Trust in self is needed as van de Wijdeven (2013) describes to take initiative. The social network plays an explaining role in the trust other

residents had in the initiators, which supports the conclusion of Dekker (2007), and is shown through the almost unanimous vote to give them mandate. This research supports the conclusions of the WRR (2012) that the relationship between government and citizen is based on mutual trust and that it is something that needs time and effort to develop. The initiators had to earn the trust of the neighborhood coordinator during the start of the initiative. Throughout the initiative this relationship developed and the direct and open style of communication is key in this development. When the initiators came in contact with the neighborhood manager, a new relationship had to develop and because of the miscommunication trust was immediately lost. In taking away institutional barriers for neighborhood coordinator and manager experience great difficulty within the organization. This supports the conclusion of the WRR that government culture in the Netherlands still needs to change so public officials dare to take risks. However, because of the faith the neighborhood coordinator had in the initiators and the initiative he took the risks upon himself and therefore the institutional barriers did not had a negative impact on the initiative.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

6.1 Answering the research questions

The aim of this study is to explain in which way factors on the individual, neighborhood and government level can influence a citizen initiative through multi-actor narrative analysis. The three groups of actors are the initiators, supporters and officials. By analyzing the stories and experiences of these actors the relevant factors in each phase could be distinguished and analyzed. The initiative of Schoonenburg was chosen for this research for several reasons. The main reason is that the location of this case is relatively representative for neighborhoods in the Netherlands and because of the relatively long duration in comparison to other local citizen initiatives. In order to investigate the process of the initiative, and the factors that influenced this process, some research questions have been formulated and will be answered in the next paragraph.

The main question of this research is:

How do factors on the individual, neighborhood and government level influence the process of the local citizen initiative of Schoonenburg?

The main research question will be answered through a number of sub-questions, starting with the two sub-questions that because of their theoretical nature are combined. The latter three sub-questions deal with the empirical part of this research.

How did the concept of participation develop? & Which factors can influence a local citizen initiative?

Different forms of participation developed through the years. In the Dutch context, three generations of citizen participation can be distinguished. These generations do not replace each other but exist alongside each other. In the beginning of the 21st century the focus shifts towards the community and citizens to deal with problems in the public domain because the state and market cannot adequately deal with them. This third generation citizen participation is characterized by the informal citizen initiative where citizens determine which ideas are worth pursuing and lead the content as well as the process. In the international literature citizen initiatives often have a formal meaning whereas in the Dutch context the focus lies primarily on the informal character of citizen initiatives. Although it still seems difficult in practice, the state gives citizens the room to develop their own initiatives and facilitates them when asked to.

In general theory on participation and citizen initiatives there is a range of influencing factors. These factors play a role on the individual, neighborhood and government level. Individual factors of capacities, motivation and invitation, varying per person, can be decisive if one participates but also influence the process.

On the neighborhood level the social network, communication, social capital and social cohesion can also influence who participates and how the process progresses.

Most local citizen initiatives come in contact with government. The approach government takes and how they communicate can influence the start and process of the initiative. Government often adopts a clientelistic, facilitative stance which citizens can use to obtain subsidy or other types of support.

However, it is important that government does not take over the initiative and let citizens lead the process.

How did the initiative of Schoonenburg start? And how did the different factors influence the start?

The analysis of the narrative showed that the individual factors of capacities and motivation played a specific role. The social network within the neighborhood and the way in which residents deliberated are factors on the neighborhood level that influenced the start of the initiative. The way in which the government approached the initiative was key for the start and continuation. Furthermore, it was found that trust and communication are factors that transcend the individual, neighborhood and government level.

The start of the initiative of Schoonenburg cannot be understood separate from the context wherein it occurred. The reconstruction of the neighborhood provides this context and created the ‘voedingsbodem’ for action. Dissatisfaction about the reconstruction was the main motivation for residents of Schoonenburg to contact the newly appointed neighborhood coordinator. The residents had their own ideas about what was best for their neighborhood and wanted to do something about it, which can be understood as a targeted or pragmatic motivation. The nature of the dialogue between the resident and neighborhood coordinator was valuable for the start of the initiative and increased understanding. The clientelistic stance and instrumental approach of the coordinator gave the residents the chance to prove themselves with the first project. A relationship of trust between government and the residents began to grow. Two residents, the initiators, were the main ‘kartrekkers’ of the initiative. Due to prior experiences, these initiators had the needed capacities to organize the neighborhood to take action.

Having interviewed the residents prior to the initiative the initiators knew what wishes of the residents were and bundled individual needs into a bigger plan. The residents gave them mandate to create a plan and speak on behalf of the neighborhood. In deliberation with the neighborhood coordinator it was decided to divide the initiative into smaller, achievable projects. This ensured that by achieving early and mid-term wins the energy would not flow out of the initiative. The initiators created a project plan and applied for subsidy which was granted. All residents in the neighborhood voted on each separate project and could still influence the plans but the initiators decided on the details. The social network of Schoonenburg made it easier to address on another. However, inclusiveness is explained by the common locality. The democratic approach ensured involvement and that every voice was heard. Some plans were adjusted but a great majority was in favour of the plans which shows the residents’ trust in the initiators and meant that the initiative would continue.

How did the initiative of Schoonenburg develop? And how did the different factors influence this development?

During the development of the initiative individual factors of motivation and invitation played a relevant role. The neighborhood factors social network and social cohesion were influencing factors during the execution of the different projects. Government support during the execution and communication with regard to the disagreement over the park influenced the initiative greatly.

The initiative was divided in different projects which entailed that each project that would be executed was bigger than the last. The first project was the flower pot on the central square to create a meeting place. The initiators explicitly and implicitly invited other residents to help out with the execution, support was on a voluntary basis. There was a core group of six to ten residents who supported the initiative during the execution of the different projects. They had different motivations to support the

initiative. The park was the second project and the initiators asked for, and received, practical advice from the municipality which entails a clientelistic stance and facilitative approach of government. Working together on the projects, celebrating the achievements afterwards and receiving appreciation strengthened the social ties and improved social cohesion and public moral. The biggest project was the reconstruction of the parking lot and because of risks involved the neighborhood coordinator had difficulty taking away institutional barriers. Within the municipality public officials have different views with regard to citizen initiatives. The neighborhood coordinator had to take responsibility for the residents in order to take away barriers. During the execution of the different projects the neighborhood coordinator took on the role of accountant which relates to the instrumental approach; while managing the funds he could control and advice whilst at the same time giving the initiators freedom to decide and not take over the initiative. Some supporters were not willing to help out with the parking lot, reasoning it was too big to handle and the responsibility of the municipality. The incident during the construction had a negative impact on the public moral and lack of involvement from the neighborhood coordinator afterwards negatively influenced the view of some residents towards the municipality. After the projects were finished the maintenance was up to the residents of Schoonenburg and they received practical support from the municipality. After a while supporters were not motivated to help out with the maintenance of the park which needed upkeep on a more regular basis than the other redeveloped parts of the neighborhood. The initiators maintained the park. Friction arose when children started playing football in the park despite the made agreements. The municipality first took a reticent approach hoping the residents would figure it out themselves. The neighborhood manager got involved and took a personal approach. Miscommunication between the initiators and the manager left the initiators disappointed and unwilling to take up the maintenance anymore. A relationship of trust needs time to develop and is ruined fast. No new initiatives for the park came up because other residents were unwilling to maintain it and the park was given back to the municipality.

6.2 Discussion

All factors that could influence the process of the local citizen initiative were incorporated into research question and theoretical framework in order to not exclude possible factors. However, it appeared that not all factors are relevant and certainly not in different phases of the initiative. This research has shown how several factors on the individual, neighborhood and government level influence the process of the citizen initiative in different ways depending on the phase of the initiative. Factors such as motivation and government approach played a role in each phase whereas it was found that trust and communication transcend the different phases and levels. In line with the conclusions of the WRR (2012), the relationship of trust between government and citizen is central to a citizen initiative. This could receive more attention in the future. It must also be said that the initiative of Schoonenburg was specifically focused on physical improvement. Narrative research on initiatives with different focus and in other contexts could prove valuable to what we already know about influencing factors. Furthermore, the development of a more fitting model for analyzing participation in and the process of citizen initiative could benefit future research.

Authors such as Denters et al. (2013) state that government can stimulate and invite residents to take initiative. However, the question then arises if this can be regarded as ‘real’ bottom-up, third-generation citizen participation. It could be argued that local governments simply show citizens what possibilities for support they have if they decide to take action. If citizens know they can use this

support they start thinking of ideas and take initiative. Thus, it could be said that as long as the government does not take over the initiative and citizens decide which direction and form the initiative takes, it is seen as a bottom-up initiative. In relation to this research it is a bit ambiguous; the residents of Schoonenburg came up with the initiative and made the first contact but without the financial support of the municipality the initiative would not have succeeded. This meant that there was a certain amount of control. However, the relationship of trust that was built ensured that even in deliberation with government the initiators felt free in their choices. Furthermore, although in conversation some plans were adjusted, the initiators had the final decision. Therefore, I regard this initiative as a real bottom-up, third-generation citizen initiative. More clarity on the concept of local citizen initiatives in this regard can benefit future research.

6.3 Reflection

For this research I analyzed how factors on different levels influenced each phase of the process of the citizen initiative. The narrative research approach ensured full and rich data but also made analysis difficult. There were a lot of different stories and some were not relevant for the main narrative. Furthermore, the context of the reconstruction played a central role with regard to the initiative. The initiators got actively involved in the neighborhood before this initiative because of the reconstruction. On advice of my supervisor I moved the extra phase 'the cause' that was written to the context of the reconstruction which made it easier to focus on the 'real' initiative. Still some parts were incorporated in the results because they were relevant to the narrative and the role of influencing factors. In this research the focus lied on the most important actors involved. However, future research could also focus on the residents who did not participate and their reasons. Furthermore, this research focused on a relatively successful initiative, obtaining greater insight into why citizen initiatives fail and which problems they encounter may be interesting as little is known about these kind of initiatives.

Appendix 1 Literature

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Appendix 2 Interview guide case Schoonenburg

Interview narratief burgerparticipatie - Case Schoonenburg

Mijn naam is Annejan Visser. Ik studeer Sociale Geografie aan de Radboud Universiteit in Nijmegen en ik ben nu bezig met mijn afstudeeronderzoek. Ik doe onderzoek naar de ervaring van bewoners en professionals met lokale burgerinitiatieven.

Het interview is vertrouwelijk en wordt anoniem afgenomen. Om het interview te verwerken zou ik het graag willen opnemen. De opname zal alleen door mij worden teruggeluisterd en verder zal er niks mee gebeuren. Gaat u ermee akkoord dat ik het interview opneem?

Inleidende vraag

Kunt u wat over uw zelf vertellen?:

Leeftijd, werk, hoe lang u hier woont, huur/koop

Kunt u wat over de wijk vertellen?:

Sfeer in de wijk, contacten, voelt u zich thuis in de wijk

Vraag narratief case Schoonenburg, eerste fase

Ik wil u graag vragen om het verhaal te vertellen van hoe het initiatief heeft plaatsgevonden. De beste manier om dit te doen is om te beginnen bij het begin, de aanleiding van het initiatief, en verder te gaan met alle dingen die gebeurt zijn tot en met het einde van het initiatief. U kan de tijd nemen om dit te doen en ingaan op details, want voor mij is alles van belang wat belangrijk voor u is en is geweest.

Tweede fase

- Aantekeningen gebeurtenissen en onduidelijkheden

- Vragen om in meer detail uit te leggen

Voorbeeld: u vertelde me hoe gebeurde / verliep. Ik snap nog niet helemaal hoe dat precies ging. Kunt u me dat onderdeel van het verhaal in meer detail vertellen?

Derde fase

- Beginnen met 'hoe' vragen (hoe heeft u dat aangepakt? Hoe verliep het contact met andere bewoners / de gemeente? Hoe verliepen bepaalde situaties? In hoeverre heeft u ondersteuning gehad van andere bewoners / de gemeente?) - gericht op specifieke momenten en gebeurtenissen

- Eindigen met 'waarom' vragen (Waarom heeft u dat zo aangepakt? Waarom is het zo gelopen?)

Appendix 3 Coding Scheme

The first step of the analysis was to eliminate all non-narrative passages from the text (Flick, 2009). Initial analysis of the narratives resulted in the division of the three phases of the process of the initiative; start / preparation, execution and outcome. Reconstruction of the patterns of the process followed. After the reconstruction of the patterns the material was coded by hand following the coding scheme down below. In this way the process of the initiative and the way in which each factor played a role during the process could be reconstructed and explained.

Level	Factor	Factor elements
Individual	Capacity	Resources (time and money)
		Civic skills
	Motivation	Targeted/pragmatic
		Social
		Duty-bound
		Self-interest
		Expectation to make a positive difference
		Dissatisfaction with the current situation
		Earlier positive experiences
		Early / mid-term wins
	Invitation	Explicit
		Implicit
Neighborhood	Communication	Between residents
	Social cohesion	Social ties and trust
	Social capital	Social network
		Trust in other residents
		Shared norms
	Appreciation	Verbal / presents
Government	Communication	With neighborhood
		Within the government
	Approach	Facilitation / clientelism
		Empowerment
		Recognition
		Attention
		Subsidy
		Taking away institutional barriers
		Establishing contacts

Appendix 4 Flyer concerning the bicycle route

&Groen

Dubbel

N224

Uitgever Gemeente Ede
Redactie Carla Verhaar, Contact, Dienstverlening, Medewerkers, Gemeenteraad, Productie M. medischap, Kanten
Colofon



een derde route?

Suggestie klankbordgroep

In de klankbordgroep Veldhuizen A is uitvoerig gesproken over de twee fietsroutes. De klankbordgroep stelde een derde route voor. Die lijkt sterk op Route 2, maar passeert het water langs de Koelhorst langs de oostkant in plaats van de westelijke in Route 2. We hebben uitvoerig onderzocht of deze variant mogelijk

is, maar dat blijkt niet zo te zijn. Vanwege gebrek aan ruimte tussen het water en de voortuinen van de woningen is er niet genoeg plaats voor een fietspad in twee richtingen. Het fietspad zou veel te dicht tegen de voortuinen aan komen te liggen. Dat betekent dat alleen Route 1 en 2 overblijven als alternatief.



een veilige optie?

Waarom niet onder Het Nieuwe Landgoed?

Om verschillende redenen is het ongewenst om het fietspad langs de N224 onder Het Nieuwe Landgoed door te laten lopen. Ten eerste worden de fietsers en scooters gehinderd door autoverkeer dat het fietspad moet kruisen. Dat kan leiden tot gevaarlijke situaties. Bovendien wordt de weg verdiept aangelegd,

waardoor fietsers in de tunnel steil omhoog moeten rijden. Ten slotte maakt een fietspad langs de rijbanen de overkoeping erg breed. Dat geeft constructieproblemen. We kiezen dus voor een veiliger optie: een fietsroute die deels door Veldhuizen A voert.



&Groen

Dubbel

N224



Nieuw fietspad uw mening telt!

De wijkvernieuwing van Veldhuizen A is in volle gang. De komende tijd zullen Woonstede en de gemeente veel opknappen, vervangen en ook slopen. Daarnaast is de gemeente Ede bezig met de verbreding van de N224. Die veranderingen hebben ook invloed op het fietsverkeer. Daarover gaat deze nieuwsbrief. We willen namelijk graag uw mening horen over de oplossingen die we hebben bedacht.

Andere route fietspad

Door de verdubbeling van de N224 is het nodig om de fietsroute langs de N224 te verleggen. Het fietspad aan de noordkant, langs Kernhem verdwijnt. Aan de zuidkant, langs Veldhuizen, wordt het pad breder

en geschikt voor tweerichtingsverkeer. We hebben twee alternatieve routes voor het fietspad bedacht, die we via deze brief voorleggen aan de direct aanwonenden. Uw mening telt mee in onze keuze voor de definitieve route.

Welke route kiest u?

Geef uw mening op www.veldhuizen.nl

Er zijn twee alternatieven voor de fietsroute. Een daarvan zullen we kiezen. Dat willen we samen doen met u. Als direct aanwonende hebt u immers een goede kijk op de voor- en nadelen. Uw ideeën kunnen bijdragen aan de beste en veiligste oplossing. Daarom vragen we u om voor 1 januari 2009 het reactieformulier in te vullen op de website www.veldhuizen.nl. Als u in het linkermenu op 'Contact klikt', komt u er vanzelf. We kiezen de variant waar de meeste aanwonenden op 'stemmen'. Als uit de reacties geen duidelijke keuze naar voren komt, kiezen we voor Route 2.