

Citizen participation in a non-restructured Dutch post-war neighbourhood



Erik van Marissing
Utrecht University
16 March 2005

Content of the presentation

- Introduction
- Backgrounds
- Research questions
- Social cohesion
- Citizen participation
- Research neighbourhood
- Preliminary results
- Conclusions



2/16

Backgrounds

Dutch Urban Restructuring Policy (GSB)

- Physical measures alone are not sufficient to solve the problems in post-war areas
- Policies are integrative, targeted at specific problems and area-based
- Social cohesion is regarded as an important precondition to improve the quality of life in distressed neighbourhoods
- Citizens should become more responsible for both the maintenance of their dwellings and the community

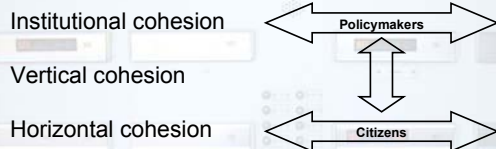
3/16

Research questions

- To what extent does cooperation between the local government, stakeholders and citizens increase social contacts and feelings of attachment to the neighbourhood?
- What is the role of citizen participation in this respect?

4/16

Social contacts



- Do citizens know each other?
- Do policymakers know each other?
- Do policymakers know citizens?
- Do citizens know policymakers?

5/16

Place attachment

Van der Land (2003):

1. Spatial attachment (built environment)
2. Social attachment (people)
3. Mental attachment (emotion)



6/16

Citizen participation



- Involvement in processes of cooperation that aim to improve (the quality of life in) the neighbourhood
- This can either be:
 - short-term or long-term
 - on a regular basis or occasionally
 - with or without clear goals
 - top-down or bottom-up

7/16

The case of Liendert



8/16

Figures for Liendert

- 7,500 inhabitants
- 3,300 dwellings
- 29% owner occupied
- 65% multi-family dwellings
- 37% ethnic minority groups
- 43% single-person households
- 9% single-parent families
- 'Priority Neighbourhood'



9/16

Case Study: El Fath Mosque



- Since 1980 located in Soesterkwartier
- New location will be in Liendert
- About 400 members (families)
- Cooperation between the local government and the new managers
- Citizens were only consulted at the end of the planning process
- Unpredicted positive side-effect: discussion about the quality of life in and throughout the whole neighbourhood

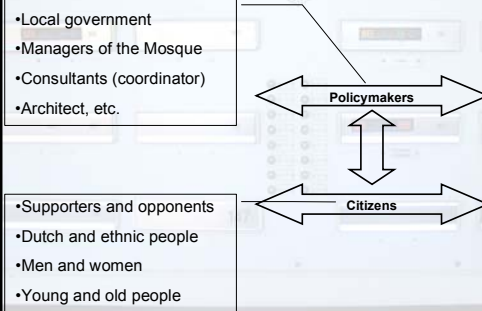
10/16

Planning process

1. Writing of a concept plan
2. First meeting: informing the residents of the whole neighbourhood about the Islam
3. Consultancy of the residents from the surrounding blocks
4. Formal participation for all residents
5. Continuation of discussion through working group "Goede Buren"

11/16

Who were involved?



12/16

Possible effects

- Contacts between residents of all backgrounds
 - Possible partners for other, new projects
 - Social and physical attachment to the neighbourhood
- Contacts between residents and professionals
 - Residents might realise that they can actually do something and that there is money available for initiatives from the community
- Institutional cooperation
 - Experiences can be taken into account to optimise the forthcoming restructuring process

13/16

Preliminary results

- Social contacts between residents can be enhanced or discouraged by processes of cooperation
- Citizen participation is very important with respect to both social contacts and attachment to the neighbourhood

14/16

Discussion

- How to ask people about their social contacts without being suggestive?
- How to measure the impact of citizen participation on social cohesion?
- Is it useful to compare the motives of participants and non-participants?
- How to compare different cases with different contexts?

15/16

Questions & Remarks



The screenshot shows a website for Erik van Marissing, a member of the 'Tubantia Club'. The page includes a green header with the club's logo, a photo of Erik van Marissing, and contact details such as phone and email. Below the photo, there is a section titled 'Persoonlijke biografie' with a small text block. At the bottom of the page, there are social media icons and a footer with the year '2016'.

<http://www.geo.uu.nl>

<http://www.erikvanmarissing.nl>

16/16