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## Executive summary

**Rob Gründemann, Sandra Geelhoed, Roel Bax**

This report deals with the evaluation of the Dutch case of urban farming. Two gardens have been selected, both situated on ground taken care of by the Foundation of historical vegetable gardens of Amelisweerd. This place near the city of Utrecht has a strong history and was founded in 13<sup>th</sup> Century. The more recent greenkeeper started in 1991 of both historical gardens. In 2010, the two gardens Amelis'Hof and de Volle Grond made a new start. From that moment two teams work both on growing food and working on social inclusion and care for disabled people. These initiatives are addressing the issue of social inclusion in abroad sense, permitting people to participate in social life through meaningful work and shared responsibility. They offer meeting places between people who need care and people who enjoy to be a volunteer in the garden. At the same time clients are supported to work on their own individual recovery process towards social integration. These initiatives are examples of innovative social investments where they initiate new activities and business (care for vulnerable people) around the core of agriculture production.

Objective of the research is to assess the social, economic, political outcomes, benefits, successes and failures of these urban farming projects. In particular we are interested to find out what the innovative strength of these projects may be with regard to the participation and inclusion of socially vulnerable people.

In this study an anthropological way of working has been used. Through participant observation trust has been gained and this way the group of workers could be acquainted from the inside. Only in a second phase more structured interviews have been conducted.

While working in the garden, the researchers got acquainted with the people working there. Small conversations, small talk, anecdotes have been used to get an idea of the possibilities for documentation analysis, the stakeholder interviews to be taken and to get an idea of the population that is involved in the garden work.

The underlying needs of people working at both Amelis'Hof and De Volle Grond is the wish to be a full-fledged member of society. Finding a regular job and being paid on a regular basis contributes to inclusion within society. The clients of both gardens have some needs in common to reach this objective.

- Safety. Care clients in both gardens need a safe and quiet environment, where they can recover and work on their own process.
- Structure. All clients that come in the gardens, need structure in the daily activities and know exactly what is expected from them.
- The care clients in both gardens also express the need to feel accepted for the person they are.
- They feel the need to contribute to social life with meaningful work, which means very often also the eagerness to work with others, and reach out for others.
- A daily structure and meaningful day activities which they can do in their own tempo. Some of them are working at the gardens to eventually fulfil the need for a regular job.
- Care clients in both gardens want to be appreciated for who they are, not as care clients but as human beings. In fact, they need an environment where they can discover their own potential, interests and regenerate joy in work and life.
- Care clients express a need for guidance and support in their work and in their personal process.

De Volle Grond aims at people with a complex and intensive care needs. Most of the co-workers present at the garden have severe behavioural problems and have failed in several other integration projects. The co-worker needs to feel attracted to the garden, be ready to work in the mud, have a feeling with working outside and they like physical work. Ability to work autonomously is also an important criterion.

The methodology of De Volle Grond is based on a set of ingredients reflecting the basic principles. The program theory is realized in a (1) community based environment, constructed around the garden and natural environment. The learning and working approach of De Volle Grond is based upon a (2) human centered worldview. “Being Human” is at the centre of the approach. The other conditions for success are (3) safety and security, meaningful work, small scale activities, provocative coaching and methodic working.

Amelis’hof and De Volle Grond are two very small scale initiatives linked to each other by a Foundation and originally managed by the same greenkeepers. Since the 2008, social care policies also changed the nature of care farming. Whereas in the beginning people could work in the garden with maintenance of their social assistance fee, now the gardens are seen as places where people can work on their own development, activation and reintegration process in society and work. This means that working at the care farm is for a lot of them a mean to integrate into a paid job. If care clients work their own developmental process in the garden, they also need to have support at the garden. This means that former greenkeepers or farmers need to develop skills in social work and social care, in order to be able to reach the goals set by the government. This means a lot of investment and a change of focus and social innovation, including to find new ways of financial construction, food distribution and constitution of flexible interdisciplinary teams who are always able to adapt to the needs of individual clients working on their own personal and professional

development. De Volle Grond has found a balance by separating farming and care, although they follow the same basic principles and vision about care. As long as there is a common vision and meaning, new initiatives and other social entrepreneurs can be included, contributing to the development of a community around the garden, composed of coaches, farmers, care clients, volunteers, trainees, customers, visitors. At Amelis'hof the greenkeepers decided to maintain the initial biodynamical farming objectives. They did not consider themselves as social workers and therefore were not able to fully embrace the combination of green keeping and care. That's why it has been decided to focus the evaluation on the case of De Volle Grond.

The care clients experience positive effects from the program at De Volle Grond. They feel confident, have more self-esteem and develop skills which support them to participate in society. The garden provides a situation where clients can be safe, do meaningful work on a small scale, and get provocative and stimulating coaching (Burger, 2015). Two care clients even managed to move into paid work. Working at the garden has a positive influence on the development of the care clients. It should be taken into account that De Volle Grond has chosen to work with a more difficult target group with a status of long-term care.

The care institutions who deploy people at De Volle Grond are also positive about the way De Volle Grond deals with their clients and the way they are motivated and challenged to personal growth and development.

De Volle Grond is a financially healthy organization. The costs are more than fully compensated by the benefits. Financial results remain as an income for the entrepreneurs and a growth of the capital of the organization. This makes this initiative financially sustainable to the future. It also delivers immaterial benefits. For example to the clients, the volunteers, the partners of the Pergola Association (who have a crop share in the garden and provide a fixed income), and to society. If clients would not get this care they would

give big costs for society, for example, nuisance, vandalism, police deployment, debt, sickness and addiction. Altogether, these costs would be much bigger than the amount of money that's paid to organizations as De Volle Grond in the context of the long-term care act.

## 1. Introduction

**Rob Gründemann, Sandra Geelhoed, Roel Bax**

### 1.1 The program

On vacant lots in urban residents put production gardens, supported by social entrepreneurial professionals from housing associations, welfare organizations, social firms, nature and environmental organizations, foundations and governments. The professionals involved indicate that urban agriculture projects not only contribute to urban food production, but above all provide a boost to self-confidence and self-organizing capacity of (groups of) people who are in a vulnerable position. The professionals also say that they see great opportunities to contribute to the activation of these (groups of) citizens, particularly to vulnerable groups lead to daytime activities, training, work and entrepreneurship. However, the experiences are thus still early and the precise capabilities unclear: what works and what does not and what are the critical success factors? For this reason, they go along with researchers of the HU University of Applied Sciences to do practical research into the conditions under which urban agriculture in urban areas can contribute to the activation of residents who are socially isolated or otherwise in a vulnerable position. As a special point the consortium members focuses on the sustainability question: how can successful activation initiatives acquire continuity and become independent of subsidies and structural funds.

## 1.2 The policy area

The term "urban agriculture" marks a wide range of agricultural activities in urban public space which do not focus solely on food production, but also on the quality of living (together) in the city. With the growth of urban agriculture initiatives and the creation of networks between urban agriculture initiatives, partnerships with local governments, social enterprising professionals, housing, health and welfare organizations and other organizations working neighborhood-oriented, urban agriculture projects get perpetuated and become structural. With declining possibilities for compensation of staying in a care farm, cuts in mental health care, elimination of social workshops, and reduction of subsidized employment pathways, an increasing number of vulnerable groups is going to live, work, learn and recreate in urban districts. Now many community centers and other local facilities close they leave behind a lack in many areas on accessible opportunities for day care, training, work experience and entrepreneurship. New forms of social entrepreneurship provided in the grounds of city farming fulfill a (latent) great need. Social enterprising professionals in the field of community development, health care, labor market and education will have to work with other district professionals and active citizens in integration projects for vulnerable groups. Initiatives in the field of urban agriculture seem to fit seamlessly with the goals of Welfare New Style (Wmo) and the new participation Act (the legislative context will be discussed in paragraph 1.2). In addition to enhancing the quality of life, social cohesion and the shaping of their own environment, accessible forms of day care, education, employment and entrepreneurship are developed that are effective because they intertwine informal and formal networks.

### 1.3 The legislative and regulatory framework

Two laws are particularly important to this initiative. These are the Social Support Act (Wmo) and the participation Act. The government intends to completely revise the long-term healthcare system. Components of extramural care, specifically supervision and the protected residence of mental health care clients, have been placed under a new legislative framework, the Social Support Act (Wmo) of 2015. The Wmo ensures that everyone is able to participate in society and can live independently. It regulates the responsibility of municipalities for social support of their residents. It concerns the supply of services to citizens who need support because they are insufficiently independent or able to participate. Because of the introduction of the Wmo, municipalities can provide flexible care and achieve a greater commitment of caregivers and volunteers. Municipalities have much discretionary power to shape the performance itself so that the implementation can vary widely by municipality. One of the goals of the new Participation Act is to enhance participation in the labour market by people with a disability. From the beginning of 2015 no new entrants have been admitted to the existing Sheltered Employment Act. Municipalities arrange work for people who are only able to work in a sheltered working environment. They are responsible to place people who do not qualify for sheltered employment and whose productivity is less than the statutory minimum wage with an employer. This employer will receive a wage cost allowance from the government amounting to the difference between the wage rate set for the employee and the statutory minimum wage, up to a maximum of 70% of the statutory minimum wage. The employer will pay the difference between the statutory minimum wage and the wage under the applicable collective labour agreement (CAO). In addition, there is an assistance and reintegration budget available to compensate certain associated costs, such as job coaching and workplace modifications. Municipalities are given a central role in the implementation of the Participation Act. It is the municipality that is closest to the individual, that knows

the regional and local labour market, and that can offer the specially tailored services needed.

### 1.4 Financial framework

The introduction of the Participation Act is accompanied by a substantial savings stroke (1.3 billion euros of the total participation budget). As a result of this there will be less money available for assisting citizens with reduced work capacity. This has consequences for the way the municipalities deal with day care, sheltered workshops and sheltered workplaces. Since day care is an expensive form of participation, municipalities try to limit them as much as possible. In addition, only 30,000 structurally sheltered workplaces can be covered in the longer term. Finally, the number of the organizations responsible for sheltered employment will substantially be reduced (from over 90 to 35).

Also the introduction of the Social Support Act (Wmo) has to lead to a structural decrease in spending on social support. In 2010 municipalities received € 1.626 billion for the implementation of the Wmo. By realizing a greater commitment of caregivers and volunteers, public spending on health and welfare should be reduced. These savings (with a target of 25%) should be achieved because municipalities received a limited budget from the national government for the implementation of the WMO. Any shortfalls had to be raised by the municipality itself.

### 1.5 Main actors

The main actors in this initiative are two urban farming initiatives with the social entrepreneurs, the professionals, the volunteers and the participants who are supported to take part in daytime activities, training, work and entrepreneurship. Both gardens (Amelis'Hof and De Volle Grond) are located on the traditional land of Amelisweerd. The

two gardens are supported by the Foundation “Historische Moestuinen Landgoed Amelisweerd” (Historical Vegetable Gardens Amelisweerd Estate). The gardeners have an official role within the foundation and operate as coordinators of the garden. In fact, they realize the work in the gardens needed to exploit the ground by taking the objectives of the foundation into account. They deal with volunteers and care clients in the garden. The exploitation of the garden, the selling of vegetables and keeping of a garden shop are all part of the responsibility of two separate cooperatives, who hire and pay the gardeners. Other stakeholder groups are local governments (municipalities), social enterprising professionals, housing, health and welfare organizations and other organizations working neighborhood-oriented. Finally the initiatives will have close contacts with social insurance organizations (UWV) involved in the (re)integration of young people with disabilities (Wajong) and with organizations for sheltered employment.

## 1.6 Social innovation elements

Urban farming might be a way to tackle a variety of problems and help achieve a variety of goals, such as enhancing the quality of life and social cohesion. In addition they offer accessible forms of training, voluntary work, employment, entrepreneurship, talent development, network support, informal care and education. These activities can be effective because they intertwine informal and formal networks. Urban farming connects people, contributes to social cohesion, social participation and social stability. It contributes to a healthy life style through healthier eating habits and more exercise. In addition it limits the need for transport by producing local or regional food in or near the city.

Urban agriculture networks contribute to the development of inclusive forms of self-organization, viable neighborhood businesses and informal social networks around vulnerable residents of so-called problem neighborhoods. Additionally they contribute to

the activation of residents who are in a vulnerable position, in particular the guidance to education, employment and entrepreneurship. Finally new forms of social value and exchange are developed around urban agriculture projects.

Urban farming can also be seen as an innovative social investment because it promises to connect vulnerable and workless people to training, employment, entrepreneurship and talent development and in this way improves their prospects for future employment and social participation, together with more social cohesion and stability. In this way it also includes a potential of a long-term benefit for society.

### **1.7 Relation to the national context**

The urban farming case is a regional initiative. We will follow the developments within two initiatives located in the Utrecht region. These case have been selected for the following reasons:

- the urban agriculture project is involved with an organization in the field of health care, welfare and/or social services (as co-founder, financier, partner or customer);
- the urban agriculture project aims (also) on guidance to day care, education, employment and/or entrepreneurship;
- the urban agriculture project is actively developing new revenue models.

Nevertheless they are not very special in the national context. Comparable initiatives take place all over the country. For example Amsterdam has 78, Utrecht 30 and Rotterdam 92 urban agriculture projects where residents collectively with social entrepreneurial professionals work together to achieve social, environmental and economic goals.

## 2. Literature review

### Dirk Postma

#### 2.1 Introduction

On vacant lots in Dutch cities we find production gardens, supported by social entrepreneurs, housing associations, welfare organizations, social firms, nature and environmental organizations, foundations and governments. Neighbourhood gardens, generation gardens, multifunctional farms, food coops, roof gardens and other urban farming sites not only serve as sanctuaries where residents with 'green fingers' can enjoy themselves, but also as sites for community events, as recovery places for people with mental health problems, as providers of day care arrangement for residents with disabilities, as providers of schooling and employment support service for unemployed citizens and as places where people with small incomes grow their own vegetables. By bringing together many social and economic functions, urban farms often seem to create 'communities light'; informal social networks that are meaningful to people in social isolation, poverty or otherwise vulnerable positions.

Long before the term "urban farming" came into vogue social professionals started to work with their clients, students and residents in 'community gardens' in order to empower people in vulnerable situations and increase the self-organizing ability of individuals, groups and communities.

The term "urban farming" (or "urban farming") now marks a wide range of agricultural activities in the urban public space that not only focus on food production, but also on the quality of living (together) in the city. According to the Dutch city farming networks there

are 78 urban farming projects in the city of Amsterdam, about 30 in the city of Utrecht and 92 in Rotterdam. Along with the growth of urban farming initiatives, the creation of networks of urban farming initiatives, the partnerships with local authorities, social enterprising professionals, housing, health and welfare organizations, urban farming projects develop a more structural base for their activities.

Due to the decreasing possibilities for a compensated stay in care farms, the cuts in mental health care, the elimination of sheltered working places, and the transfer of residential care for mentally disabled people to regular neighbourhoods, more 'vulnerable residents' will be looking for possibilities to socialize, work, learn and recreate in regular neighbourhoods. At the same time, however, many community centres and other local facilities close. New forms of social entrepreneurship in the field of urban farming thus meet a (potential) great need. Social entrepreneurs in the field of community development, health care, labour market and education will have to work with other professionals and active citizens in integration programs for vulnerable groups. In addition, they will engage in cooperation with local organizations and entrepreneurs from other fields.

Initiatives in the field of urban farming seem to fit with the goals of the Dutch *Wet Maatschappelijke Ondersteuning* (Social Support Act), *Welzijn Nieuwe Stijl* (Welfare 2.0) and the new *Participatiewet* (Participation Act). In addition to enhancing the quality of life, social cohesion and the shaping of their own environment, urban farming projects offer new forms of day care, education, employment and entrepreneurship that are accessible and effectively because informal and formal networks become intertwined.

The few studies on the social and economic value of urban farming focus on the evaluation of single projects and bring a specific range of effects on social, environmental and economic issues into the picture without examining the conditions under which multiple social impact can be achieved. For this reason we want to carry out practical design research into the different forms of social entrepreneurship that we find in the field of urban farming in urban areas, and the conditions under which they contribute to the activation of residents who are socially isolated or otherwise vulnerable position. In addition, our research will focus specifically on the potential of urban farming projects in guiding vulnerable people to day care, education, work and local entrepreneurship. We also want to look at the conditions under which these initiatives gain continuity and become independent of subsidies from third parties (public or private).

## 2.2 Definitions and functions

Because of their cross-sectorial and multidisciplinary nature urban farming issues are discussed from a variety of scientific perspectives. The agricultural sciences focus on the functions of urban farming in the chain of food production. Environmental scientists are interested in urban farming as a link in the transition to a sustainable society. In urban geography urban farming is handled as a spatial dimension of urban planning. Economic scientists point to new forms of entrepreneurship and value creation that emerge in these markets. Urban sociologists study the processes of self-organization and social networking that arise around urban farming. Public management and political scientists have paid attention to urban farming as a social movement and the shifts in the relationship between citizens, organizations and governments. And finally, social work researchers explore the possibilities urban farming provides for social learning processes, environmental awareness and civic education.

Definitions of urban farming also differ depending on the social perspective. Urban farming can be defined from the perspective of consumers, the entrepreneurs, the policy makers or non-profit organizations with a social agenda. Depending on the perspective, the relationship of urban agriculture with the city is described in terms of trade and economic relations, production (both food and non-food products), jurisdiction, land use and/or involvement of residents.

This study focuses on intra-urban farming (Mougeot, 2000, p. 16). The main criterion of definition is not the location inside or outside urban areas, but the extent to which urban farming is distinct from conventional agriculture by the influence of urban conditions. A distinguishing feature is that urban farming is integrally part of the urban economy and its social and ecological system (Veenhuizen and Danso, 2007). The added values of urban farming emerge from the immediate connections its practices restore between agricultural services and communities of city dwellers. These restored connections are supposed to contribute to sustainable urban living, both economically, physically and socially. It leads to innovations in the field of food production, but also to new forms of self-organization among citizens, to new contexts for education, health care, recreation, welfare, employment and entrepreneurship. In short, urban farming brings new dynamics in our social system and food system (Veen, Breman & Jansma, 2012).

For these reasons we define urban farming as ‘the production of food and green environments in and around the city in pursuit of city welfare functions. Urban farming connects agricultural food production to urban needs of recreation, inclusion, health care, employment, education and co-creation of the urban environment’ (Janssens, 2010).

Urban farming takes many forms that can be distinguished by method, type of product,

service provided and/or the relationship to urban functions. The scale can range from plants on a balcony to medium sized arable farms on the outskirts of cities. Furthermore, urban farming projects range from informal to institutionalized, from individual to collective enterprises, from temporary to permanent, from production- to process-oriented initiatives, from highly idealistic to commercial in purpose.

An urban farming project is usually characterized by a specific combination of products and services. It means that different forms of urban farming support different functions in the city. To clarify this diversity, Veen, Breman and Jansma (2012) distinguish ten different functions of urban farming: food, energy, recycling, leisure, education, community, care, management, short chains and biodiversity (Veen, Breman & Jansma, 2012 ). In practice, urban farming or urban green is often multifunctional. In other words, an urban farming initiative often performs multiple functions and provides multiple services.

### **2.3 Methods for the empowerment of 'vulnerable groups' towards education, employment and entrepreneurship**

The Explorative meta-research of the Dutch social expertise centre Movisie states that group targeted activation methods are promising in activating citizens who are socially isolated or in an otherwise vulnerable position, "Becoming active in their own neighbourhood is for people often the smallest step to participate again ' (Verschelling-Hartog, 2009, p. 30). In particular they mention the approach of Asset-Based Community Development. In the field of urban farming, the 'ABCD-method' is also recognized as a source of inspiration, but how they occur in practice and works remains unclear.

Asset-Based Community Development is an originally American method for mapping local talents and mobilizing collaboration in pursuit of vital neighbourhoods. This approach is

distinguished from other methods in that it does not look for problems, but for opportunities. The ABCD-method is 'asset-based'; Individuals and groups have capabilities that can be employed by the neighbourhood. The method emphasizes self-reliance and self-organizing ability of citizens. Citizens are seen as owners of visions and as equal partners of (government) institutions in the development of the neighbourhood. Collaboration is essential in the ABCD-method. The ABCD-method is also aimed at increasing the economic, political, cultural and social capital of residents. By continually shaping relationships between people, groups and institutions participants create a social network from which new initiatives for neighbourhood development emerge. Citizens become more involved in the neighbourhood and see that they can do something for their district. They will hold a less dependent attitude towards the government.

In their description of group-oriented activation methods social entrepreneurs also refer to the methodical terms derived from the theory of social learning in Communities of Practice, as has been brought to term by Etienne Wenger (Wenger, 2000). The premise of Communities of Practice (CoP) is that learning is an integral part of everyday work. A CoP is a group of people who share a common interest or passion and exchange knowledge, insights and experiences. The function of a CoP is to encourage people to share experiences and connect them together to achieve shared and/or new insights. Wenger analyses social learning on the basis of three-dimension, that of the domain (questions guiding the work), the community (in which mutual trust, recognition and appreciation are central to everyone's contribution) and practice: professionals and participants are practitioners who share a repertoire of actions, experiences, stories and methods. (Wenger 2000).

The Participation Ladder developed by a number of Dutch municipalities in cooperation with the Association of Dutch Municipalities (VNG) is a tool to determine to what degree

citizens participate in the labour market. The ladder is divided into six steps, from social isolation to working without support:

- Level 1: Isolated;
- Level 2: Social contacts outside the door;
- Level 3: Participation in organized activities;
- Level 4: Unpaid work;
- Level 5: Paid work supported by public arrangements;
- Level 6: Paid work.

This participation ladder differs from other (re-integration) ladders and the older versions in that it measures what someone is doing at the moment. By repeated measurements the in/decreased degree of labour participation can be made visible as well as the conditions that have been achieved for sustainable participation (Terpstra, 2011, Van Gent et al., 2008).

In this study we will investigate the possibilities of enhancing the conditions for the empowerment of urban farming participants towards education, employment and entrepreneurship by utilizing the potential of Communities of Practice, the ABCD-method and the Participation Ladder.

## 2.4 Urban farming as panacea?

As previously described, researchers attribute many social functions and goals to urban farming initiatives. Urban farming initiators, social professionals and policy makers

themselves formulate their goals on the macro level of society, the meso level of their district, neighbourhood, village or city as well as at the micro level of the (group) participants. According to them urban farming could contribute to:

Social objectives at the macro level of society:

- A sustainable society (circular economy);
- An inclusive society (caring society);
- An entrepreneurial society (big society).

Social objectives at the meso level of district, neighbourhood, village and city:

- Opportunity for meeting and exchange;
- Viability of public space;
- Vitality of the local economy and civil society;
- Participation arrangements for vulnerable residents;
- Identification of residents with their neighbourhood, district, town or city;
- The reputation of a neighbourhood, district, town or city;
- A green learning environment for children and young people;
- Food sovereignty of a neighbourhood, district, town or city.

Social objectives at the micro level of (group) participants:

- Feel 'at home' in the area;
- Activation of (groups of) citizens;
- Learning about nature, sustainability, food and health;
- Developing a healthy lifestyle;

- Training opportunities, (volunteer) work and entrepreneurship;
- Informal support structures around vulnerable citizens;
- Promoting self-sufficiency of vulnerable citizens;
- Therapeutic and spiritual purposes.

(Postma, 2014)

In our case study we want to focus on the meso level, in the first place because urban farming professionals, -investors and -partners formulate their objectives predominantly at this level of their district, neighbourhood, village and/or city. Moreover, social processes at the meso level appear to perform a key function because of radiation to other levels (multipliereffect). Studying the impact at the macro level often becomes speculative, while the outcomes of impact assessment on a micro level often proof to be less meaningful to similar projects in (slightly) different contexts (generalization problems).

## 2.5 Policy assumptions

In correspondence with these functions and goals of urban farming projects we are able to analyse urban farming from a policy perspective. The main policy question is not which products and services urban farming produces, but to what extent and how urban farming adds value to the quality of living (together) in the city, and how they can contribute to achieving policy objectives of urban governments. Since there are so many different types of urban farming and urban farming can perform multiple functions, it has the potential to add value to several policy issues. In their policy exploration researchers of Wageningen University (commissioned by the Ministry of Economic Affairs), point to a number of policy assumptions that asking for (further) investigation (see table below ):

### 1. Assumptions about the supposed contribution of urban farming to employment:

- Urban farming operates as a ‘crowd teaser’ in urban environments, creating jobs for recreational functions;
- Urban agricultural products and services can often be sold for a higher price than through regular distribution channels, especially when the products are distinctive;
- Working along these lines requires different (additional) skills of agricultural entrepreneurs.

### 2. Assumptions about the supposed contribution of urban farming to the revenue opportunities of entrepreneurs:

- Urban farming create stronger business models by combining food production for the world market and the development of other services as education and retail on local farmer's market;
- Retail by a short market channels as local farmers markets provides a higher yield per product;
- Urban farming projects stimulate local economic activity and employment by inviting food-related activities in and around the city.

### 3. Assumptions about the supposed contribution of urban farming to the empowerment of citizens:

- Urban farming contributes to connecting people, it brings people from different backgrounds together;
- Urban farming creates indirect benefits that cannot be capitalized;

- If people grow their own food this can contribute to their self-reliance and self-esteem;
- A multifunctional garden can strengthen a neighbourhood through the various activities that take place.

#### 4. Assumptions about the supposed contribution of urban farming to health and welfare:

- Urban farming provides people with inspiration in addition to their regular work. For others it is a form of day care or a way to reintegrate into the labour market;
- Urban farming projects create a place to learn, to develop competencies and earn certificates. Participants for instance develop social skills and collaborative competences which are not only useful in leisure time, but also increases the participants chances in a transfer to (structural) regular employment;
- Urban farming contributes to an alternative economy; a temporary 'safety net' for employees in between jobs or those with a burnout;
- Urban farming provides opportunities to bring contact between high potential creative people and those with lower chances. These connections lead to urban vitality and social cohesion;
- Tactile contact with the green environment has positive effects on the health, well-being and recovery of people.

#### 5. Assumptions about the supposed contribution of urban farming to participation and cohesion:

- Working in the green environment causes people to meet. And joint work leads to greater social cohesion and contributes to civic neighbourhood commitment;

- Neighbourhood projects create room for all residents to participate.
- Food has a binding value; everyone eats and it is easy to talk about food across cultural differences.

(Veen, Breman & Jansma, 2012)

Urban farming thus seems to have the potential to provide added value for all aspects of sustainability and a broad range of policy issues. This survey of policy assumptions illuminates something else; the development of urban farming in the Netherlands is surrounded by a multitude of claims and questions that are in many cases not sufficiently substantiated and answered. This applies to both the direct and the indirect benefits. One of the main challenges for the further development of these urban farming initiatives is the further support (if any) of these claims and to seek answers to the unanswered questions (Veen, Breman & Jansma, 2012).

## 2.6 Supporting evidence for the social impact of urban farming

In recent years four academic field research concentrated on the social impact of Dutch urban farming projects at the meso-level of their district, neighbourhood and city. These studies started with hypotheses derived from sociological theories in the following fields:

- Social capital: social networks contribute to bonding, bridging and linking;
- Communities light: the strength of weak ties;
- Selective processes of self-organization;
- On-site identification processes of belonging and 'place making';
- Public familiarity through repeated encounter: intimate strangers;
- Processes of inclusion and exclusion at the community level.

The research group of Alterra (2010) carried out a qualitative research based on secondary data analysis of six neighbourhood green projects. According to this study the presence of neighbourhood gardens and green outdoor activities contribute to (1) a higher frequency of social contact between residents, (2) to mutual understanding, appreciation, exchange and sometimes adjusting values, and (3) higher security and less degradation. (Alterra, 2010).

This qualitative research was paralleled by a quantitative survey research based on statistical analysis of data on social cohesion and the presence of nearby green (N = 318). A significant positive correlation between the presence of 'nearby green' and social cohesion was found. (Alterra, 2010).

Conclusively, the research group of Alterra (2010) distinguished four social mechanisms in bringing about the desired social impact:

- Usage: neighbourhood green is used as a meeting place and as a backdrop for joint activities;
- Management: green neighbourhoods serve as sites of joint activities;
- Advocacy: green neighbourhoods act as a source of common interest;
- Identification: green serves as a source of attachment and identification.

(Alterra, 2010)

The Dutch Social and Cultural Planning Agency (2011) carried out a literature review and qualitative survey of seven informal neighbourhood groups engaging in urban farming activities. The participating groups were diversely composed, but men and young people

were in the minority. These groups were supported by local authorities, housing associations, welfare organizations and organizations in the field of nature conservation and environmental education. Participants appear to be motivated by the activities themselves, the exchange of ideas and nonverbal working contact. It is mainly by means of external valuation that the importance of these activities transcend the recreational meaning for its participants. For many of these groups continuity of the activities appeared to be difficult, especially in neighbourhoods with mainly rental housing. Internet and social media however play an important role in keeping the group together. A higher frequency of contact does not lead to more satisfaction. Groups mostly attribute management roles to a leader from among themselves. According to the qualitative survey the autonomy of garden groups is often limited because of the conditions landowners imposed. These conditions for instance require garden groups to formalize their organisation into a legal association, foundation or an enterprise. (SCP, 2011).

A recent social cost-benefit analysis of three promising urban farming projects – performed by researchers of Alterra – shows that particular arrangements in health care and employment can be crucial elements in a viable business model. A social cost-benefit analysis is a cross-sectoral assessment tool in which the costs and benefits of an investment for society as a whole are weighed against each other and monetized. The three studied urban farming initiatives appear to be socially profitable. They contribute to a sustainable social development of town and country. Urban farming provides a higher production rate for farmers, creates jobs for lower educated residents by reactivating low-skilled labour and improves the physical and social quality of the neighbourhood, thus the researchers conclude. According to them it is however too early to conclude that all forms of urban farming at all locations in the Netherlands show a positive balance between investments and measurable impact. In their recommendations the researchers state that further

research is needed to gain a clearer picture of the conditions for success of urban farming projects and the required design criteria. (Abma, 2013).

Finally, Cees Bronsveld evaluated more than twenty characteristics of 16 urban farming projects in the city of Rotterdam. His literature review, document analysis and comparative qualitative research showed that urban farming projects contribute to social cohesion in neighbourhoods and districts: a) meeting between residents, b) binding of residents in the neighbourhood, c) the reputation of neighbourhoods. Furthermore, urban farming projects contribute to participation and employment on all steps of the participation ladder. Finally, Bronsveld found a positive impact of participation in city farming projects on the health of participants, especially the social determinants of health. Older people and migrants were however underrepresented in the evaluated projects. According to Bronsveld best practices are carried by best persons: key figures who know how to connect people and organizations in a rewarding project. (Bronsveld, 2014).

## 2.7 Conclusion

After we have discussed the four case studies we can look back at the list of social objectives at the meso level of their district, neighbourhood, village or city that city farming projects are supposed to contribute to. We can now draw provisional conclusions with regard to the proof we found in the described studies:

Urban farming contributes to:

- Opportunity to meet and exchange (some proof);
- Viability of public space (some proof);
- Vitality of the local economy and civil society (no proof);

- Participation arrangements for vulnerable residents (no proof);
- Identification of residents with their neighbourhood, district, town or city (no proof);
- The reputation of a neighbourhood, district, town or city (some proof);
- A green learning environment for children and young people (no proof);
- Food sovereignty of a neighbourhood, district, town or city (no proof).

In sum, urban farming projects appear to be promising in adding value in various urban fields: social, economic and ecological. The major part of this value however does not yet flow back to the city farming projects themselves – leaving many projects in a deplorable state after a start up with heavy funding. For the entrepreneurs the challenge is to include all value stakeholders and partners as co-investors in their project (in cash or in kind): a circular economy. Research can help the entrepreneurs to convince the value stakeholders and partners of the added value of their project as worthy to invest in.

To us it is obvious that after a phase of exploratory research - prevalent among believers - there is a need for action-oriented design research that brings together all relevant stakeholders in co-creation. This research is in our view necessary to illuminate the specific possibilities of urban farming in the transition from an old style welfare state to a green participation society.

## 3. Needs assessment

**Sandra Geelhoed, Roel Bax**

### 3.1 Introduction

Drawing further on the literature study, in this chapter the needs for urban farming projects Amelis'hof and De Volle Grond will be described, in order to formulate an answer the sub question which is guiding the needs assessment:

*What were the needs for urban farming projects Amelis'hof and De Volle Grond in 1991 and further on in 2010?*

No needs assessment study on the Urban Farming projects De Volle Grond and Amelis'Hof have been realized in the past. This means that there are few studies and documentation available. We draw our description mostly on our presence in the gardens and the conversations with volunteers and workers in the garden. The Questions that have been addressed for the needs assessment are as follows:

1. What are the nature and magnitude of the problem to be addressed?
2. What are the characteristics of the population in need?
3. What are the needs of the population?
4. What services are needed?
5. How much service is needed and over what time period?
6. What service delivery arrangements are needed to provide those services to the population?

These questions will be addressed in the following sections.

### 3.2 What are the nature and magnitude of the problem addressed?

In 2011, the Utrecht municipality mentions Amelis'Hof and De Volle Grond as being 'Care farms' (Gemeente Utrecht, 2011). The Federation of Agriculture and Care indicates (2015) the target group and the role of care farms in present society: "Standing at the side-line of society because of drug addiction, mental or physical disability, dementia, autism... There are many reasons why people are at a side-track. From there, they often come in a negative spiral. Only with great difficulty and a lot of efforts it is possible of getting out. For this group of people it is important to find peace and rest, rediscover their own strength and to build self-esteem. These are necessary conditions to take care of themselves, to lead a meaningful life, with family and friends". Between 1998 and 2009, the number of care farms in The Netherlands grew from 75 up to 1088. In fact in the 1990's, small farms did not have opportunities to survive any more. Small farmers needed to search for new sources of income such as a bed and breakfast, a rural campsite or a care farm. Furthermore, small-scale care was also developing fast. The main target groups for this type of care are clients with a mental disability, psychiatric background, youth and elderly. Every very year, 12.000 care clients work in (a kind of) care farm, to meet their needs for social inclusion, participation or meaningful day activities (Hassink, 2009; Landbouw en Zorg, 2009)<sup>1</sup>.

However, Amelis'Hof and De Volle Grond cannot be defined as care farms in the proper sense. They should be seen as hybrid initiatives. Michel, involved as a gardener since 1983, stated in 2003 in a newsletter of the former Foundation of the gardens "De Aardvlo" that their business should not be perceived as a formal care farm: "[Being a care farm] involves

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.landbouwzorg.nl/index.php?pagid=55&hb=72>

more than getting extra financial resources, De Aardvlo should spend more time for extra support, reporting and meetings, [dealing with care]. Furthermore, the culture and atmosphere in the garden would change.” According to Michel, the balance between volunteers and care clients should be taken into account. Yet, since the start in 1979, the gardens have a social care function. Since 2010, both Amelis’Hof and De Volle Grond work with care clients. Amelis’Hof continued to work along the informal lines set in the eighties, and only made small adaptations. De Volle Grond more meets the definition of care farms, as a mixed staff is working in the garden, composed of a social worker (Gertjan), a creative therapist (Marieke) and a gardener (Mieke). Gertjan even calls himself “a care farmer”<sup>2</sup>. Nevertheless, also Gertjan doesn’t call De Volle Grond a care farm. He regards the garden as a market garden in which care clients are working.

In fact, the Amelis’Hof and De Volle Grond are meeting places between people who need care and people who enjoy being a volunteer in the garden. Both gardens are perceived as healing spaces for people who for different reasons drop out of the social system and who would like to participate in social life through meaningful work. Some of them, after a period of work in the garden, would like to reintegrate in society and / or in the regular labour market.

In Amelis’Hof, the gardeners work already since 1983 in the garden. They work with a group of volunteers eager to work outside with love for nature and for food production.<sup>3</sup> The need of this group is to work with their hands in the earth, in a natural environment. They seek peacefulness and quietness, away from daily stress. Next to this group of volunteers the gardeners also work two days a week with ‘care-clients’. These care-clients

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<sup>2</sup> More about these changes will be described in the chapter on theory of change.

<sup>3</sup> Interview, 22 juni 2016

are persons who seek reintegration on the labour market after a depression or a burn out. They are send by a welfare organization or a reintegration office, who pays for the services given in the gardens.

The gardeners of Amelis'Hof experienced that some regular volunteers were having mental health problems too and turned out to be hidden care clients for the gardeners. This meant that they could not meet the expectations. They were less steady and strong to support the real care clients. The gardeners spent a lot of time doing extra on extra care and had real problems getting the work done. In fact, also volunteers are having needs for mental support and care clients ask for even more attention. Marielle and Michel are gardeners no social workers: "I could fill the whole garden with depressed people, but that does not make me happy"<sup>4</sup>

De Volle Grond started in 2010 as a separate garden with a double focus. Besides, they also work with volunteers and care-clients, who would like to participate in society through work. These clients work often on a long-term process towards reintegration. These clients are often living in social and accompanied housing projects.

In any case, people who work as volunteers in a garden seek for meaningful occupation in a calm and natural environment. Working in an informal setting such as these empowers them and gives them opportunities to work in a structured way on every day basis. In the gardens all workers, regular volunteers and care clients, cooperate to get the work done in time, to produce fresh, local vegetables and flowers.

De Volle Grond, the newer garden where a traditional herb garden is being developed was taken over by a social entrepreneur, GertJan. He is educated as a social worker specialized

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<sup>4</sup> Interview Marielle

in accompanying people with psychiatric problems, mental disorders or light mental disabilities. Starting in 2011, he was eager to find ways to give people time and space to recover and to find ways to reinsertion to working life and society. Since the summer of 2015, GertJan works together with a creative therapist who is a coach for care clients while they are working in the garden. Besides, she is planning to organize other activities to give other people the opportunity to get to know the garden. GertJan is the team leader. His team of workers is composed of volunteers and care clients. The latter are people who have light or severe mental and psychiatric disabilities, who have a past as a drug addict, homeless or other difficulties. Most of them live or have lived in a protected housing environment.

GertJan works closely together with Mieke, who is educated in the agricultural sector. She is the 'farmer' and responsible for the exploitation of the ground and her focuses is on the production of vegetables, herbs and flowers. Together they offer time and space to work so that people can work on their self-esteem and recovery, strengthening them to reach for the social participation or reintegration on the labour market.

### **3.3 What are the characteristics of the population in need?**

As it was already clear in the former paragraph, the characteristics of the people in need are not the same in both of the gardens. Although both gardens are managed and monitored by a common foundation, they both focus on different groups. As far as the care clients are concerned, the people in both gardens have difficulties to live and work connected in society. The common characteristics of the target group are that they all have difficulties to cope with stress in present day work situations. They have often difficulty in working with others or to be accepted by others.

In 2015, Michel and Marielle, the gardeners of Amelis'Hof have a team of 20 volunteers and 2 trainees working in the garden. Volunteers work preferably 2 full days from 8:00 to 17:00 per week and at least two half days. The group of volunteers is steady since a couple of years and they are able to give structure to 7 care clients. This means that the group is experienced now and well performing. The volunteers all prefer to work in the garden. Since a couple of years, a volunteer makes soup twice a week for the whole group, a volunteer driver distributes 'veggy bags' and a volunteer webmaster helps out with management of the website. A beekeeper who every now and then gives courses about beekeeping, is also attached to the gardens.

Marielle and Michel are dealing with 7 people who are followed by social care institutions or by medical services related to their working situation and condition. These clients receive or have received social benefits because of long term illness or burn out. In order to prepare reintegration in their regular job, they work on recovery through working in the garden. In theory everybody may apply for a job as a volunteer in the garden. This means that they can support the clients needing care. There is a waiting list for volunteers who want to work in the garden. Sometimes when working with new volunteers, Marielle and Michel discover that these people also have social issues and that they can be less reliable in the work than expected.

All volunteers and care clients need to have a passion for nature and for being outside, also when the weather isn't nice. As the gardeners run a business they need to be able to work in time and reach targets every day. Reliable workers are therefore important. Because of this, the green keepers of Amelis'Hof do not want to have too many care clients.

Furthermore, they are not educated as social workers, however they do not treat the

regular volunteers and the care clients in the same way. In fact care clients need another approach, more direction in having the work done. While volunteers have to be fit to work more or less independently in the garden and be responsible for the daily results, care clients have other objectives and they receive other treatment: “Sometimes, I put clients in front of the heater with the cat on their lap.” The gardeners of Amelis’ Hof work together with reintegration agencies such as Wij 3.0, specialised in jobcoaching and reintegration in the labour market of long term unemployed or formerly detained people.

In De Volle Grond, the population in need can be defined as people who are eager to contribute to social life but who have difficulties in making connections with others at the moment. In 2016, De Volle Grond has 18 care clients. GertJan, the coordinator and social worker at the garden, describes the clients who come and work at De Volle Grond as “people who are all for one reason or another left out [...] They are people with a mental disability, psychiatric past or behavioural problems, sometimes addicted, or a combination of these”.

In The Netherlands, clients qualified for the Long-term care act (Wet langdurige zorg), are indicated in different *care profiles* like physical disabilities or mental disabilities. In every sector, care is graded from *some treatment* to *intensive or full treatment or care*. In a care profile it is specified what kind of care a client needs. At de Volle Grond, the majority of the clients are indicated in the more intensive grades for mild mental disabilities<sup>6</sup>.

Jolanda Baars, who is a Jobcoach at “Amerpoort” for people who want to reintegrate in regular work adds: “They do not succeed in regular work, but they do want to work. They can’t make it to keep their commitments or to get out of bed on time. One client had

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<sup>6</sup> See also: [http://www.zorgkantoor-zorgzekerheid.nl/ik\\_wil\\_zorg/zorgprofielen\\_zzps](http://www.zorgkantoor-zorgzekerheid.nl/ik_wil_zorg/zorgprofielen_zzps) (in Dutch)

experiences of failure since her childhood. She has gone through a lot, what made her get used to fail. This client has a mild mental disability, she doesn't understand the world very well. She has been diagnosed with some psychiatric disorders and behavioral problems, which makes she doesn't succeed in society."

Jaap Dondorp is a psychologist working at "Abrona", a health care center for mildly mentally disabled clients who suffer from additional problems. According to him, the mild mental disability means that their intellectual age is at the level of a child in primary school. The level of the emotional age can even be lower. "These clients got stuck because of their disabilities. Due to addictions, they are physically disabled as well. Because of their experiences, they have a low self-esteem"

Gertjan also underlines that some of the clients are "people with higher education diploma's, who are stuck in life. Confronted with burn out symptoms, they discover that they also have borderline." All these people are 'care clients', but to Gertjan, the care taker and coordinator, they all feel like colleagues. The persons working at De Volle Grond have a background of multiple problems, such as drug addiction, prostitution, psychosis, debts, homelessness, light mental disability etc. or a combination of these. This group of people work on a process of reintegration in society and work. Working in the garden is meant to be a period in their lives to sort out things, to recover, to reconnect to social life. Next to these socially vulnerable people, there are also volunteers who come and work in the garden next to their regular job. In fact, there is a thin line between 'care clients' and regular volunteers. Gert Jan says: "Volunteers working at the garden often have their own social or psychological problems and for some it is not clear whether they are a care client or a volunteer? Recently I had a group of volunteers of whom quite a number should have

had official care and social support. They had no medical indication or record but they had real needs, but no budget to receive the assistance needed.”

Patrick, a volunteer who is responsible for the keeping of the herb garden at De Volle Grond, is one of these people. He worked as a freelance chef in restaurants, but was making too much working hours for a long period of time. After an injury he couldn't work anymore. He also discovered that he could not bear the stress anymore. Eventually, he received social allowance. But, when the allowance was cut because he did not want to cooperate with the social services, he got a depression, started to use a lot of drugs and nearly became homeless. He received social care from therapists and then he discovered at the age of 37 that he had ADHD and that he was highly gifted.

Most of the care clients of De Volle Grond do not live on their own, but they live in a mixed or protected housing environment. The ultimate goal for a number of participants would be to find a regular job and be able to live on their own. For some of them it is not clear yet whether they focus on full independency and a regular job. For disabled people this might be not a reasonable goal. However, it could well be that they dream of the same independency and having a regular job and a regular salary. In fact, all people who for some reason are left out of the social system, would like to be part of the 'normality'. Having a house and a job symbolize this normality.

### **3.4 What are the needs of the target population?**

The underlying needs of people working at both Amelis'Hof and De Volle Grond is the wish to be a full-fledged member of society. Finding a regular job and being paid on a regular basis contributes to inclusion within society. The clients of both gardens have some needs in common to reach this objective.

- Safety. Care clients in both gardens need a safe and quiet environment, where they can recover and work on their own process. They need to feel secure and work in a quiet environment with no stress and incentives from outside.
- Structure. All clients that come in the gardens, need structure in the daily activities and know exactly what is expected from them. The need for structure is also related also to the need to be expected somewhere, to be part of a collective and the feeling that your presence is needed. However, the structure needs to be set in such a way that there is still freedom to choose what you like or don't like. Or to take a rest whenever they feel the need to.
- The care clients in both gardens also express the need to feel accepted for the person they are. They express the need to work on self-confidence and confidence in others.
- They feel the need to contribute to social life with meaningful work, which means very often also the eagerness to work with others, and reach out for others. However, care clients in both gardens, also have a need to learn how to deal with others and to develop social and communicative skills.
- A daily structure and meaningful day activities which they can do in their own tempo. Some of them are working at the gardens to eventually fulfil the need for a regular job.
- Care clients in both gardens want to be appreciated for who they are, not as care clients but as human beings. In fact, they need an environment where they can discover their own potential, interests and regenerate joy in work and life.
- Care clients express a need for guidance and support in their work and in their personal process. They find it difficult to organize the work by themselves, or they do not know exactly how to work with others. However, guidance and need to be

loose, so that they can grow in working independently and grow in taking care of themselves.

Although the needs of clients in both gardens are in a way similar, there is a clear difference in intensity of needs. In fact, the care clients at Amelis'Hof dropped out of regular work because of depression, psychosis or burn out. In general, most of them are still embedded in social structures such as a family, marriage, etc. For different reasons, they have difficulties to work in a regular professional environment. In the garden, they find a substitute for regular work or they are working on reintegration after a burn out or long term illness.

Wouter, for example, found out that he couldn't deal with pressure and time efficiency of regular work. Because of a psychosis, he lost his job. He took on several occupation afterwards, but then, via a welfare organization called Geinwijs, he started to work at Amelis'Hof. Geinwijs is an organization working on reintegration to work and offers job coaching to people like Wouter. Wouter works two halve days in the garden. Besides he works with technics in an activity center. Wouter needs to work without pressure. That way, he will have a stable life. He wants to learn how to set boundaries, in his connections to other people.

Linda started in 1987 at "De Aardvlo" after getting a burn out at her work as a teacher. "I had no expectations. I didn't know what I could do or learn in the garden. But for me, it was great just to be busy. I didn't have to think. After a while, I discovered my talents, I learned about working together and to deal with failure. And I developed my endurance and perseverance".

At de Volle Grond, especially since the coming of GertJan, 5 years ago, the target group has often multiple problems to deal with. This means also greater complexity and a need for

clear development paths and action plans, so that the clients can develop themselves, step by step.

The garden can be seen as a 'space in between', a place where they are offered the time and space to work on their own individual recovery process towards social integration. Leo explains: "In the past, I worked with hustle and bustle: too much pressure. My head got full". In the garden he can work quietly. He may work alone and he is learning to work together with others. After a difficult period in his life, a divorce, a lot of debts, psychosis, he started a process to reintegrate in society fully. Now he is still in an accompanied housing project and he works at de Volle Grond. He focuses on taking up his former profession as a tiler and prepares for this. In the garden people learn to deal with each other normally. There is no pressure. Working at the garden offers Leo the possibility to spend a nice day.

Mark underlines that he develops self-confidence and he is gaining trust in other people. He would like to live on his own again and not in a protected housing facility. He would like to work and have 'normal friends'.

There are some differences between the clients' needs in Amelis'Hof and de Volle Grond. The needs of the clients in the market gardens of Amelisweerd can also be compared with the needs of the clients at the Green Sticht, the other Innosi case study in The Netherlands.

Both clients at the Green Sticht and in the urban farming initiatives need safety, security, peace and social networks. However, the needs of both projects are found on different levels. Clients at the Green Sticht are all homeless. The essence of their needs can all be traced back to the need for shelter or housing. Clients in the urban farming initiatives do have a place to live. Their needs for reintegration are not related to housing. They have needs in relation to a daily structure and to work.

The motivation theory of Maslow (1943) distinguishes five sets of goals for basic needs: physiological (e.g. food, sleep), safety (e.g. housing, jobs), love (social relationships), esteem (e.g. to feel competent and recognized) and self-actualization. The basic needs can be ordered in a hierarchy, also illustrated as a pyramid. When the “lower” needs are satisfied, the “higher” needs will be people’s dominant motivation.<sup>7</sup>

Taking Maslow’s theory of needs into consideration, both needs of the clients in the urban farming initiatives and the Green Sticht can be classified under the basic need for safety: the clients of the Green Sticht need housing and shelter; the clients working in the gardens need work and daily structure. As the clients in Amelisweerd do have a place to live, their need for safety could be more satisfied. Having already a shelter, they can also be motivated to satisfy the need for love (belonging to a group) or esteem (to be skilled for work).

### 3.5 What services are needed?

Clients need a safe environment to grow in and to work on their own process. Clients do feel safety and clarity in the garden. Both gardens offer a secure and safe environments. However, the way services are needed are different in both gardens. There is already a physical difference in the way the gardens look. Amelis’Hof is a garden has a fence, a greenhouse and a big old shed. At the entrance there is a little building that serves as shop on Saturdays. The garden still has an open character. towards the surrounding fields and woods. The garden is calm and the birds are singing in the large trees around the garden.

De Volle Grond is protected by old stonewalls. When entering the garden, the security of the place is felt right away. A protective energy is present in the garden. The doors and the gate to the garden are always open during the day so that people feeling welcome to have a

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<sup>7</sup> Maslow, A. H. (1943), *A theory of human motivation*. Psychological Review (pp. 370-396) Vol 50(4), Jul 1943.

look. GertJan says: “I chose to work in this garden five years ago because the garden produces vegetables, it is close to the city and also because it is protected by a stonewall. Especially this makes that it is a safe place without incentives from outside. This offers a very rich context to do many different things with clients. It offers many possibilities for experience”.

As showed above the target groups of the gardens are different and although the needs are quite similar, the services needed in both gardens are different. Amelis’Hof offers a quiet environment. The group of volunteers working in the garden offers a protective and supportive shell to the more vulnerable care clients. The gardeners work two days in the garden coaching care clients and being there to support them whenever they have questions or needs. The garden itself brings the structure most of the time.

Amelis’Hof mainly focuses on clients who dropped out of their paid jobs after burn-outs, De Volle Grond have a target group in a broad range of psychiatric and social problems.

The difference in clients also create different service needs. In Amelis’Hof, clients need to recover from their stress of work. Therefore, they need a quiet environment.

At Amelis’Hof there the natural environment and personal attention are central to personal development of care clients. When they arrive at the garden, most of the time they work with an action plan set with a social or welfare organization: “The objective we set were that I could set boundaries with regard to others. Now, I do not have a clear working plan anymore. Working here offered me stability and regularity. If there is no regularity in my life, I will have problems again, although I also have medication for this.”

Relational elements and “presence” are of great importance for people working in the gardens. They could be seen as part of the service delivered. Presence is a social work

method developed by Andries Baart<sup>8</sup>, offering an attentive and personal centered approach putting the capacity of the client at the heart. The service stemming from this approach is in fact that care clients feel respected and they are invited to discover their own capacity through an action plan that is developed together with social services outside of the garden.

Leo underlines the service he needs at De Volle Grond: “What I need is someone whom I can rely upon and ask questions when I have doubts.” GertJan has adopted this type of approach in his way of working.

It is also needed that there is a clear plan and related behaviour and attitude towards clients. Clients need to know exactly what expectations are. Clarity with regard to reciprocal expectations is directly linked to the development of a safe environment.

Flexibility with regard to the targets and the project they develop is also important. A care client would say: “If I don’t feel like doing the job proposed, I am not obliged to do it. I can choose another activity. Or I may take a rest. I can take my time to realize my work.” Pressure and hurry are excluded in that way”.

Nina says: “Being assisted by GertJan is really intense. In the beginning, I needed to get used to his ways. He mirrors a lot about the things you find difficult. It is sometimes difficult to face that. However, I can learn, it makes me strong. GertJan spends a lot of time. He is patient and present. I never met someone who can be such an intense coach and at the same time simply be together with you in the garden. He fights with us to see what you can really do in life. He always thinks that there are more possibilities. He really gets the best out of us”.

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<sup>8</sup> Baart, Andries (2001), *Een theorie van de presentie*, Utrecht: Lemma ; English translation: *A theory of presence*

Although most of the persons working in the garden find it meaningful and rewarding, structure and discipline is needed to actually come to the garden. De Volle Grond offers to collect most clients from their home. This helps them to structure their lives. “At the garden users have a meaningful occupation during the day. We give extra service to some of them by picking them up from home. Between the will to go or not to go to work there are so many things that can hold you back...” By organizing the pickup of people himself, GertJan shows that he needs them to work in the garden.

Another important issue is to create an environment based on mutual respect and dialogue at all levels. Between clients, volunteers, social worker, green keeper and creative therapist. Reciprocity and dialogue are key. In that sense mutual respect is shown and care clients also learn about themselves in relation to others. Self-esteem and respect for difference are learnt. Equal treatment and respect differences is part of the working culture: “At another daytime activity, I saw a clear difference in behaviour: They are clients and we are personnel. They made distinctions, I saw it in their attitude. In the garden there is no distinction, no difference. We are all equal. Working in a group is nice that way. You can recognize things in the other and you can talk about that. I also learn to respect others and to understand that everybody is a person with a story. This makes that I do not judge others”<sup>9</sup>.

Marieke, the creative therapist also underlines that next to the action plan developed for each client there is also the need to be able to let go and give the care client confidence, that he can do it by himself. Too often other social workers dealing with them want to arrange everything and do not take them as equals. The problems they are facing now at De Volle Grond is that the basic attitude and human interaction is not shared by the social workers from the place where the clients live. This is sometimes an obstacle in the service delivered

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<sup>9</sup> Interview with M.

to the clients. Gardeners from both gardens would like to establish deeper contact about the development of a plan with the client and the other social institutions involved.

Jaap Dondorp (“Abrona”, a health care center for mildly mentally disabled clients) has 3 clients who work at “De Volle Grond”. According to Jaap, nowadays care is aimed at independently living and short-term care. This way of working is not fair for this kind of clients: intellectually, they are at the same level as children. Without support, they won’t succeed. “By definition, these clients need natural and permanent care. The steps are very small, learning takes place through routine. The clients need safe support, time to try out, to dare to, and to understand. Don’t immediately think: he can do that! When a client is learning by a lot of practice, the next step is to learn something similar, but never something which is more difficult”

### 3.6 How much service is needed and over what time period?

The service needed is that people have time and no pressure to recover and to reintegrate social life. Nina. says: “I am here for 2,5 years now. It is real fun. I am working on the next step now. I do some short internships now to find out what job fits me best. In fact we are looking for a possibility to find a paid job for me and how this job can be adapted. I worked for three months in a shop one day in the week. I liked it but you know the world has more to offer, so now I will work in a restaurant of an elderly home”.

Depending on the individual needs and process of every care client, they spend the time they need in the garden to find enough self-confidence to live an independent life, a house or a job. Working in the garden is part of a process. In fact, Gertjan makes an action plan with the individual clients and seeks ways to get the best out of each of them. So that they can reach for new goals. The unique thing of De Volle Grond is to take a way stress factor of time and intensity of the service provided. In fact, time and space is offered, and presence

and personal coaching are important to make new steps to participation in society. For each client the duration of the process differs.

At Amelis'Hof some care clients work already for 5 years or more at the garden. However, they are not sure whether they can stay now that the social system is reorganized.

### **3.7 What service delivery arrangements are needed to provide those services to the target population?**

In a way the garden, the seasons, the weather and nature contribute to the establishment of structure. Gertjan underlines that structure is needed, especially for care clients. "Weed grows faster than the ground can bare. The garden screams to do something about it. I do not need to explain to the users/ care clients in the garden, that they need to be there in spring and summer. They see it by themselves. The garden brings structure naturally."

The gardens can be seen as natural delivery arrangements. All workers in the garden, gardeners, volunteers, care clients, everybody needs to follow the rhythm of the day, of the seasons. The ongoing necessity to take care of the garden, the plants, the ground gives structure in time and space. Both at Amelis'Hof and at De Volle Grond, the gardeners, the care clients as well as some stakeholders, indicate the poor communication with other services, for instance the housing accommodation of clients working in the garden. There is a strong need for a common actions plans that are worked out together with the client, the workers at the housing facility and the workers at the garden. This arrangement is at the moment only an arrangement "on paper". Cooperation would benefit all parties and especially the clients.

### 3.8 Conclusions

The care clients working the care clients working at the market gardens of Amelis'Hof and De Volle Grond are people who are not able to work in a regular job. Either because they are fallen out of their jobs with burn-outs, or they have other mental or psychological disabilities which make it hard for them to cope with regular work.

In this chapter, the needs of the care clients working at the market gardens of Amelis'Hof and De Volle Grond have been assessed. After interviews with the gardeners, clients and other stakeholders, several needs are deduced from the data: safety, structure, acceptance and appreciation, contribution in social life, meaningful day activities, guidance and support in their work and in their personal process.

The client's needs can be ordered Maslow's (1943) basic needs for safety, love and esteem. On the one hand, they have needs for daily structure and work (safety), on the other hand, they have the need for belonging (love) and to develop needed competences (esteem).

To satisfy their needs, clients need a safe environment to work and to learn. "presence" is method which give them the attention to work at their own skills. They can try to do the work their own way at their own tempo, coached with flexibility and low expectations. The gardens themselves seem to deliver the services they needed. It's the place in itself which gives peace and quiet and the daily structure needed.

## 4. Theory of change

**Sandra Geelhoed, Rob Gründemann, Roel Bax**

### 4.1 Program Theory Urban Farming case study (TOC)

In order to get a clear insight on the goals and social changes that are envisaged in the case study, we will look for the theory of change and underlying goals for the setting up of two urban farming projects in Amelis’hof and De Volle Grond.

The initiative is stakeholder-led and not research-led. Theory of change, action research and developmental evaluation methodologies are useful in order to find common ground and a common idea around the goals to achieve.

The Research Centre on Social Innovation has a specific expertise in theory of change-like methodologies, called “developmental workshops”, aiming at defining common goals for solutions of problems. This type of participative research focuses on bottom up approaches. The urban farming case study develops in an organic way. We therefore needed to adopt ethnographic research methods and participant observation as research tools in order to be able to get necessary data.

The emphasis of the TOC is on the social change that one wants to enable. As an approach the TOC’s aim is to arrive at a measurable description of this change, and this is the link between TOC and evaluation.

Elements TOC/questions: (based on NESTA [Guidance for Developing a Theory of Change for Your Program](#)):

According to Connell and Kubisch (1998) a TOC should be:

**Plausible:** there must be available evidence that sustain the assumptions, and hence that support the change potential of the activities to be implemented.

**Doable:** the necessary resources – from financial to intuitional – must be in place to ensure that the TOC informed initiative can be operationalized.

**Testable:** it must be specific and complete enough for the evaluator to assess progress and evaluate contribution to change.

The questions we are able to answer with regard to Theory of Change:

*What are the planned activities to promote the intermediate outcomes? All the things that a program does directly for its beneficiaries, or that the beneficiaries do as part of the program?*

*What are the causal links between the activities, intermediate outcomes and goals?*

Causal links should show which activities lead to which intermediate outcomes, which intermediate outcomes lead to which other intermediate outcomes, and which intermediate outcomes lead to which ultimate goal.

*What are the assumptions that underpin each causal link?* Our urban farming case is actually in the formative phase. The theory of change is recently been established, and is still being developed and fine-tuned. The above-mentioned questions will serve as a guideline and will be answered whenever it is appropriate to the actual state of the project.

## **Introduction**

The urban farming case has been studied to some extent retrospectively but mostly prospectively. The two gardens deal differently with the systemic changes that occur in the social field since 2008 in the Netherlands. New laws were adopted redefining the

organization of care and social assistance allowances. Urban farming and participative care schemes started to emerge as new ways of reintegrating people in the labor market.<sup>10</sup> The municipality of Utrecht also mentions the two gardens as being “care farms”<sup>11</sup> in the new area development programme of the Amelisweerd, an important green area for recreation in the Utrecht urban agglomeration. In this changing political context, the green keepers needed to change their internal policy, management strategy and business models. Hereafter, we will briefly work out the Amelis’hof case, where the green-keepers decided to stay close to the initial biodynamical farming objectives. We will focus on the De Volle Grond case, where newly combined objectives for farming and care emerge as a new theory of change. This corresponds to objectives of the overall InnoSi project, dealing with innovative social investment and the strengthening of communities.

### **Amelis’hof**

The green keepers who initially worked in both gardens decided to continue the work only in one garden, Amelis’hof, as of 2010. This decision was made by the green-keepers who worked closely with the Foundation for Historical gardens of Amelisweerd, which manages volunteering work for both gardens. In 2009, one of the green-keepers stated in an internal document that the gardens were no care farms<sup>12</sup>.

The green-keepers of Amelis’hof focused as of 2010 on the initial objectives of the garden: grow biological dynamical food and sell the food in local stores, on markets and to a network of clients. They would mostly work with volunteers and a few long-term unemployed, who are working in the garden as a replacement to reintegrate in the working process. Only a few of them (5) are care clients. The green-keepers are not educated as

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<sup>10</sup> Elings (2011)

<sup>11</sup> Gemeente Utrecht (2011)

<sup>12</sup> Document STICHTING!

social workers, as they say, and they would not take on too complicated cases. Furthermore, in the interviews they expressed that they expect the care organizations to do the follow up with the clients. In practice, expectations from social care institutions are quite different: they expect the client to organize his own workplace for reintegration and coaching. This means that the green-keepers are in practice dealing a great deal more with social assistance and coaching. However, both green-keepers of Amelishof prefer to work as gardeners/farmers and are not ready to change their way of working, combining farming and care totally. Two days a week there are no volunteers and care clients in the garden: they work the two of them in the garden.

The two green-keepers stay focused primarily on the gardening. They do not have a vocation to make a change for care clients. They receive care clients in the garden but there is no clear theory of change about how the garden would be able to contribute to the reintegration of these people into regular work for instance. This is also what we concluded from the interviews done with some social workers working with the Amelis'hof garden<sup>13</sup>. We therefore work out the theory of change related to the development of De Volle Grond to becoming a care garden.

### **De Volle Grond**

In 2010, Mieke took over the work at the Volle Grond. De Volle Grond makes a new start on the same model as Amelis'hof. The first objective was still to produce biological food, with help of volunteers and some care clients, and sell vegetables at the local market. The social and caring objective was not a real focus yet. After two years of working, the new green-keeper and her partner did not succeed in combining farming and care. The assumption was that care could be easily integrated into the on-going farming activities in the garden. However, Mieke recognized that it was a totally different occupation, that should be

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<sup>13</sup> Interview with Buurteam, august 2016

considered and developed in resonance with farming, but it should be organized separately. She decided to look for a business-partner specialized in care and farming. Thus only as of 2012, when Gertjan (social worker) and Anton (healthcare worker) integrated De Volle Grond as job and learning coaches, a new and innovative theory of change could evolve. The theory of change was developed gradually with trial and error.

The theory of change evolved from a fundamental critique of the actual care system and the treatment of care clients. This value driven standpoint was also in resonance with policy change as stated in the introduction and it was also a financial push, as the municipality would pay for learning and coaching projects for labor activation and reintegration.

The theory of change is based on the possibility of proposing another and innovative type of care to vulnerable people, who dealt with multiple problems and who did not succeed to get out of a negative spiral. They failed most other activation and reintegration programs.<sup>14</sup> The garden is the ideal environment in which this new type of reintegration project to social life and work could be developed. The new way of working is very much related to the inability of regular care institutions to propose personalized developmental and reintegration plans for clients with multiple problems.

## 4.2 The Basic principles of De Volle Grond

The two care farmers that got involved both criticized the social and healthcare sector and the organizations they worked in: “Care was no longer developed to assist and coach people in difficult periods of their lives but it was more like running a business. I [Gertjan] got involved with innovative projects, related to the development of new ways of caring. I liked it. However, we did a lot of talking, but we did not put it in practice. Then I got in touch

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<sup>14</sup> See also the Process report.

with De Volle Grond. At the start, people were skeptic. They thought it would not work. Now our business works pretty well.”

The basic principles adopted at De Volle Grond by all partners are the following:

- Everybody is able to learn;
- Everybody is able to work;
- Everybody who is unable to do this independently (for a period of time) has the right assistance;
- Every human being has the right to his singularity and subjectivity.

The care clients present at de Volle Grond are not called clients or patients; they are referred to as “co-workers<sup>15</sup>”. Referring to care clients as being co-workers shows in vocabulary that everybody has an equal position, mutual respect: everybody is fully part of the team and of the community. Gertjan, the coach, underlines in an interview: “I consider them as my colleagues and not as clients”.

The program of De Volle Grond has been developed in the first years after arrival of Gertjan and Anton and was developed with trial and error. In the work program of De Volle Grond care takers/coaches, co-workers, volunteers, farmer and other participants work intensively in the garden. The project is still being transformed and adapted<sup>16</sup>.

### *Target group*

De Volle Grond aims at people with a complex and intensive care needs, who have an ambition to reintegrate social life and regular work. Most of the co-workers present at the garden have severe behavioral problems and have failed in several other integration projects. The co-worker needs to feel attracted to the garden, be ready to work in the mud,

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<sup>15</sup> The Dutch term is “mee-werkers”

<sup>16</sup> See report on process.

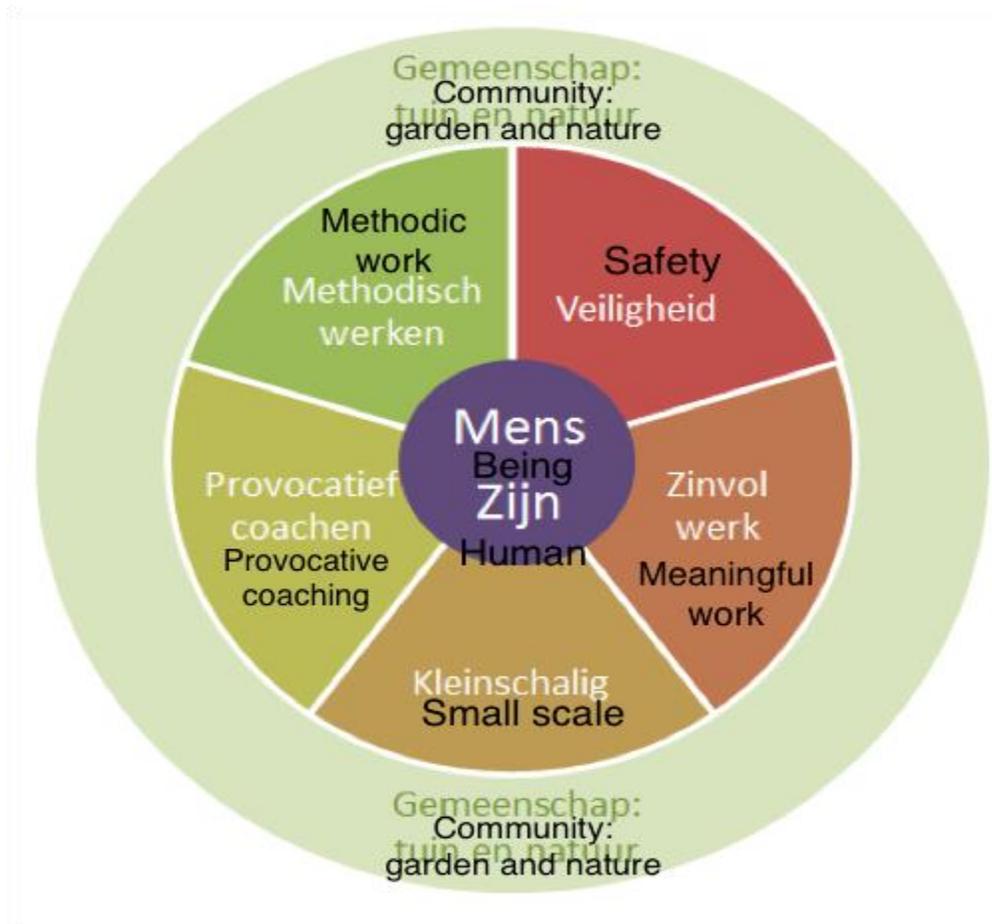
have a feeling with working outside and they like physical work. Ability to work autonomously is also an important criterion. All co-workers have a try out day. Only after that, there will be a decision whether they are ready to work in the garden<sup>17</sup>.

### 4.3 The ingredients of methodology at De Volle Grond

The methodology of De Volle Grond is based on a set of ingredients reflecting the basic principles set out in paragraph 1.1. In the following picture the approach of the Volle Grond is visualised. The program theory is realized in a (1) community-based environment, constructed around the garden and natural environment. The learning and working approach of De Volle Grond is based upon a (2) human centered worldview. “Being Human” is at the center of the approach. The other conditions for success are (3) safety and security, (4) meaningful work, (5) small-scale activities, (6) provocative coaching and (7) methodic working. Hereafter we will get deeper into the ingredients of De Volle Grond approach.

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<sup>17</sup> Zie Burger p.3



*Community based (garden and nature)*

The garden is very well protected with stonewalls. All the persons present constitute a community, where equality and mutual respect between coaches, farmer, co-workers volunteers, and trainees are common ground. This community approach is clearly present in the way clients are treated. Also customers who receive veggie bags are part of the community. Newsletters are written to keep them informed about the vegetables, the

animals, and in general the work in the garden. The garden also organizes every now and then visits or meetings for citizens of the Utrecht urban area. The garden fence is always open. Accidental visitors are always welcome, also to give a hand. Marieke, who arrived recently as a coach in the garden underlines the importance of community: “ The group is important. It changes every day, but... the atmosphere is always the same... It is an open atmosphere. Gossiping is not done and when an outsider is joining, the discussions and exchanges are not changing. This makes the garden transparent and safe, throughout the seasons.”

This sense of community is close linked to some of the other basic principles, because human centeredness, safety and small-scale work are also characteristics of a community.

### *Human centered*

The approach at De Volle Grond is holistic and human centered. This means that the coaches and farmer consider the full person and not only the problems. Through this view they are able to focus on the capabilities and skills of people, their dreams and often hidden ambitions. In many large scale care and welfare organizations clients are patronized and dependent on care givers. This is a kind of power and control that is developing more and more in times of reducing expenditure.

De Volle Grond on the contrary works from person to person.

Another element for the theory of change is to create an open space where also volunteers and passing persons feel free to participate. Involvement and participation are at the heart of the work. “When I bought new trees, I would take clients to pick them up.” Involvement with each other and making connections are central. Improvising and flexibility in work is also a learning aspect: work is often also to do what is needed in a given situation.

### *Meaningful work*

Care clients, volunteers and trainees work together with farmer and care farmers. Gertjan underlines that the garden screams for attention, as herbs and vegetables are growing quickly. The garden needs to be taken care of. The demanding environment makes that care clients feel needed. They develop a sense of responsibility for the garden. They experience their work at the garden as being meaningful. Also Gertjan as the coach shows them that he needs them to do the job. He picks his co-workers/ care clients up from home, waking them up if necessary. He shows them physically that they should be in time because the garden cannot wait to be taken care of. “Between the willingness to work and going to your work, there are a lot of things that hold people back” ...

### *Methodic working*

At De Volle Grond adopted the principle of methodic working. This deals with the coaching of care clients in particular but can also be linked to the cooperation between coaches and farmer. The clients need clear rules. Also the regular coaches, volunteers and other people working in the garden are learning and need to be open for feedback. Everybody is involved in a learning process to make the work better. It is also linked to clear division of roles and tasks, so that everybody knows what to expect.

### *Provocative coaching*

Starting point is the potential of each person that comes in the garden. The result of a learning-coaching scheme can be different for each co-worker. All discover their own potential, improvement of concentration, making contact and the ultimate goal/dream to reintegrate social life and regular work. The result of learning-working trajectories is dependent on aspects of personal development and learning<sup>18</sup>. It is important to trigger people. Gertjan developed a method for this he calls the rubber stretch method; this means,

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<sup>18</sup> Burger, 2015.

if the rubber does not break. I am constantly looking for tension with our clients. What are they able to do? How much can they cope with? Clients may make mistakes and learn from them”.

### *Small scale*

Working on a very small scale (maximum 25 care clients spread over the days) makes that new forms of care and a real learning and working program can be set up adapted to the needs of each individual client (co-worker), volunteer. Small scale also permits to be flexible, to observe little progress and interact with care clients directly when feedback is needed and they are encouraged to develop on their self esteem and empower them to organize their lives themselves.

### *Safety and security*

Clients need a safe environment to grow in and to work on their own process. They have had a lot of disappointing experiences and they did not succeed many things in life. When entering the garden, the security of the place is felt right a way. A protective energy is present in the garden. The doors and the gate to the garden are always open during the day so that people feel welcome to have a look. Gertjan says: “I chose to work in this garden five years ago because the garden produces vegetables, it is close to the city and also because it is protected by a stonewall. Especially this makes that it is a safe place without incentives from outside. This offers a very rich context to do many different things with clients. It offers many possibilities for experience”. The environment permits them to concentrate on their own socialization process and cooperation with others.

“Our co-workers do not understand the world like we do and they are not understood by others. Therefore it is important to organize a world in which they feel safe, where they can make mistakes. This was an important time investment for us to create a safe environment, with the clients, with parents and other persons involved”. In fact, until now the

involvement of the larger network of clients is still limited. Development of cooperation around the client and the adoption of one attitude and program would be beneficial for the personal development of care-clients.

#### 4.4 The ultimate goals of De Volle Grond

The ultimate goal of De Volle Grond is to offer meaningful work to persons, who have both a strong need for care and for learning and working environment. They can work on social recovery after an intense period, for instance homelessness, drug addiction, mental illnesses such as psychosis etc. De Volle Grond aims at reintegration process both into social and working life. This means that De Volle Grond is environment both integrating learning and working objectives for the “co-workers”.

A second goal and at the same time impact on beneficiaries envisaged by Gertjan and Mieke at De Volle Grond is *‘that co-workers develop positive self-image, enabling them to live a meaningful life in our complex society, understand themselves and the world around them. They are ultimately able to act autonomous based upon their own capacities and strength’*.

For the future, It would be nice of our *‘rubber band method’* will become recognized. <sup>19</sup>

#### *Intermediate outcomes of the project?*

The intermediate outcomes are related to the personal wellbeing of people, and especially to their learning process. Outcomes are always mentioned in terms of development, what is needed the moment new challenges occur. In fact, the ultimate goal is to assist people in finding a position in society and in work. This is an ongoing process, a learning process. When clients achieve goals, they determine a new one. In the end, De Volle Grond would also coach them to choose other work, when a person is ready for a change and to a regular

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<sup>19</sup> Interview Gertjan dd

paid job for instance. De Volle Grond shows other organizations what a personalized and human centered approach can achieve for the personal development of vulnerable people dealing with multiple problems.

#### **4.5 The assumptions underpinning the causal links**

The assumptions underpinning causal links are quoted in the basic principles of De Volle Grond as mentioned in 4.2.

#### **4.6 A New TOC in 2016?**

There is not a clear view on adopting a new Theory of Change in 2016. As stated above, the project is still in the formative phase. New ideas and projects are being developed, now that Marieke, as second care coach, is on board. She arrived at De Volle Grond as a volunteer, cutting flowers. She is educated as a creative therapist and therefore she was asked by Mieke and Gertjan to join the team, as a coach. She sees great potential in the garden not only to work within nature, growing vegetables and flowers, and care for animals, but also to work with art based methods, such as painting and writing. The garden is an inspiring place: “You could draw or paint what you see, you can observe so many things. It is beautiful here and it has a lot to offer. Creativity is also writing.” She will start developing external trainings on mindfulness, storytelling etc. and bring outsiders of the Utrecht city to the garden.

However, the starting point for new initiatives is always related to the basic principles and methodology. Both farmer and care farmers and also clients are looking for closer cooperation with other social workers or organizations, so that, where possible these work principles can also be applied in the private context of the care clients in the garden. Furthermore, the theory of change is carried by three social entrepreneurs each of them working from a specific perspective in the garden: Mieke who takes care of the garden, and runs a farming business; Gertjan who proposes a new reintegration project for care clients; Marieke who offers trainings in the green to urban Utrecht population.

## 5. Process Evaluation

**Sandra Geelhoed, Rob Gründemann, Roel Bax**

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter will primarily evaluate the key processes of implementation of the Urban Farming projects, since in particular 2010, the moment that a clear Theory of Change emerged at De Volle Grond, becoming a formal care farm. For a process evaluation, it is necessary to ask whether the realization of the project was done as planned or that adaptations were made in the realization of the project plans. How did the project succeed in realizing the objectives for change formulated in the project plans? What were the main mechanisms to achieve the objectives? How has it been experienced by the target population? And what have been the successes, failures, and adaptations of the initial plans?

To answer the main process evaluation questions formulated at the start of this section, this chapter will answer the following sub-questions.

1. Have all project activities been accomplished, or in other words: Has the intervention been implemented as intended? And if not, what activities were not carried out and what have been major adjustments?
2. What were the mechanisms by which the program achieved its goals? In particular what was the distribution of the policy, social and managerial roles between public, private and third sectors and the legal framework used?
3. Has the intervention reached the target population?

4. How has the intervention been experienced both by those implementing it and receiving it? How well were program activities implemented, in their opinion?
5. What contextual factors were critical to effective implementation? In particular, what is the interaction and complementarity with broader social welfare policies? How have external factors influenced program delivery?
6. What were unintended or wider delivery issues encountered during implementation?

The evaluation of the two urban farming initiatives in Amelisweerd (Amelis’hof and De Volle Grond) show there is an important change in objectives as of 2010. The process of becoming a formal care farm is at the heart of the process of both gardens. Before 2010 the two gardens were run as a small green keepers business by a cooperative, De Aardvlo, with main objective growing biological vegetables. De Aardvlo was registered as a care farm at the Steunpunt Zorg en Landbouw (a national agency for care and farming), although the greenkeepers did not define the gardens as care farms. In a document (2003)<sup>20</sup> one of the green-keepers mentions that the question of the garden being a care farm has popped up regularly throughout its existence since the late seventies. In the eighties, the question was whether the gardens should become more therapeutic or not. Volunteers working at the Aardvlo cured from illnesses, such as burn out, while working in the garden. A representative of the province of Utrecht, Mr. Bert Rotmensen observed the activities at both gardens in 2003 and concluded: “If I observe what type of persons work here, what kind of work you do and how you are organizing the work, I can only make one conclusion: The cooperative De Aardvlo operates as a care farm. In other gardens or farms people get paid for this type of activity. You are not. That is quite strange.” Despite the recommendation to become formally a care farm, the green keepers, decided not to

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<sup>20</sup> De Aardvlo... een zorgboerderij? Internal document, October 2003.

specialize in care farming. In fact, being a formal care farm would not only generate extra income, but also extra work: assistance and coaching of care clients, process reporting and evaluation, meetings. The care component would need to be developed considerably. For the green keepers this would imply extra stress and too much pressure, so they decided in 2003, not to become a formal care farm. They preferred seeking a balance based on the interdependence between volunteers and garden; volunteers and cooperative; volunteers and green keepers. This balance should be based on trust and be realized without spending money or administration. However, in the internal note (ibid. 2003) it was also stated, by quote of the representative of the province of Utrecht that: “If cooperative *De Aardvlo* is not becoming a care farm formally, then it is necessary to watch out that it is not becoming one in practice.” This last quote is interesting: in 2016, when the evaluation takes place, Amelis’hof receives 5 clients in the garden coming from the organization for labor reintegration Wij 3.0. Although they did not want to be care farmers, the greenkeepers of Amelis’hof act like them. Before 2015, this organization had job coaches who would follow these clients, but now the coaching becomes entire responsibility for partners such as Amelis’Hof. They receive payment for this<sup>21</sup>. This is a direct result of the major welfare reform and decentralization to the municipalities in 2015. In fact, whereas before that time job would be done by welfare and care organizations such as Wij 3.0, now they would only deal with the administrative part. The coaching of the client, the supervision of progress and development on a daily basis is taken up at the workplace.

Already in 2003, the green keeper underlines the difficulty of keeping the balance: in practice his wife and he are offering more care and assistance than they can deal with. When, in 2010, the decision was made to split the two gardens and find a new farmer/ green keeper at De Volle Grond, the arguments were mainly individual. However, it could

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<sup>21</sup> Interview with M. Wij 3.0, October 2016.

be argued that due to the changes in social policy since 2008<sup>22</sup> and especially the participative approach adopted in the field of labor activation and reintegration, traditional volunteering and finding a 'natural balance' between volunteering and farming, 'light' informal care, became difficult to maintain. Volunteers at the garden were already since the nineties unable to do a volunteer job with maintenance of social assistance fees. The reasons for separating the management of the two gardens are not only due to the amount of work for the green keepers, but also to the changes in the political and social context in which the gardens operate. The greenkeepers of Amelis'Hof try to maintain their informal and natural way of working, based on the balance between farming business and volunteering. However, they are also pushed to take also some care clients on board: it represents a necessary extra source of income.

However, as we already stated in the Theory of Change, at Amelis'Hof the green keepers resist the new social policies to a certain extend as they wish continue doing what they love most: being green-keepers and gardeners. Whereas De Volle Grond as of 2012, was engaged an innovative process and production of new types of action, integrating farming and care in an innovative way adopted to the new current situation.

We decided therefore to work only as of 2010 and focus on one garden: De Volle Grond.

## 5.2 Methodology

### 5.2.1 General approach

To answer the evaluation questions, we will make use of qualitative research methods, consisting of participant observation and semi-structured interviews with stakeholders and users. Where possible we will also apply analysis of documentation. However, there is

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<sup>22</sup> In voeten WMO referentie en Welzijn Nieuwe Stijl

not so much documentation available at both gardens, as they are small scale initiatives and informally organized. The two initiatives are relatively small initiatives, which serve as exemplary cases, which enables to show from a micro point of view the effects of changing social policy at municipality – and national level. The number of stakeholders involved is limited. As the Theory of Change is recently stabilizing, we will be focusing on development of new approaches on the level of individual learning and the establishment of organizational learning<sup>23</sup>.

## 5. 2.2 Specific focus: Urban farming projects as innovative micro initiatives

### **Evaluating De Volle Grond as innovative micro initiative**

Developmental Evaluation (Quinn Patton, 2010) offers possibilities for adapting the scheme of “classical” formative and summative evaluation. Quinn Patton underlines that developmental evaluation is not on going formative evaluation, based on continuous improvement. In fact, developmental evaluation, supports and documents development. The core question of evaluation would then be: “What is getting developed and what are the implications of what gets developed?” This viewpoint upon the evaluation of De Volle Grond initiative opens up new insights that could bring new ideas for future development of the project and the people involved in it.

Also, the outcome and impact of the initiative are measured in terms of learning and development for all stakeholders involved in the project.

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<sup>23</sup>The latter will be explored in a focus group meeting, including all stakeholders around De Volle Grond urban farming initiative. It was impossible to organize this meeting before meeting the deadline of 26<sup>th</sup> of October. We will organize the meeting later, and we will confront stakeholders with the results of the research as presented in this draft report and discuss whether the results are in accordance with their practical knowledge and experience

The final aim of the project is being formulated by the care-farmer and coach Gertjan: “I hope that our way of working with clients will become recognized as a method that works and that also these people find ways of reintegrating society and work”.

### **5.3 Has the project been implemented as intended?**

In 2010, Mieke and Marieke maintained the same business model as Marielle and Michel at Amelis’hof. They did not think out a theory of change or a plan around the care farm. The initial formative phase in this micro project was based on a method of trial and error. It was only after two years that Mieke developed with Gertjan and Anton a theory of change, a plan for their care farm and coaching. After one year of experimenting, one of the care farmers (Anton) decided to quit.

#### **The start : 2010-2011**

Mieke tells the story of the split up between the two gardens. I was looking for a bigger piece of land and the cooperative De Aardvlo was dealing with two gardens. It became a big business with the care part included and the little shop. They wanted to split the gardens. So in 2009, they asked me if I wanted to take over the responsibility for this garden...they were really looking for a successor not a project leader. They really wanted to get rid of one of the gardens and of the selling point at the market. So that is what I took over from them. They wanted to focus on the (Amelis’hof) garden. This (Volle Grond) garden was the main garden. It was neglected. In fact, they worked for instance in the morning at Amelis’hof and in the afternoon they would work at De Volle Grond. It was too much... I really asked myself how they did it. It is really so much work!

#### **The first year 2010-2011**

Mieke started the work at De Volle Grond in 2010 with a partner, Marieke. After 1,5 years she quit. It appeared to be impossible to pay two salaries on the benefits of the selling of

vegetables; being a care farm would generate more income. Marieke was the one who would develop the care branch of the farm. But she did not succeed. She was also a farmer. Marieke: “We underestimated it. I did not want to deal with the care part. She wanted to give it a try. I knew that I am totally incapable of coaching care clients. I can work with trainees and volunteers but not with people who need special treatment. She tried it and it did not work”. Mieke understood the complexity of this type of projects and she started to look for a new partner, another entrepreneur with specific competences and interest in developing the care branch of the garden.

### **The second year 2012-2013**

She met Anton and Gertjan who were both specialized in care and in farming. For nearly a year, they worked together. The distribution of roles between the two men was initially as follows: Anton would work fulltime as the client’s coach and Gertjan would be the networker and business developer. He tells about this: “When I arrived I had another role. I was in it like a real entrepreneur, not so much as a social worker. However, when Anton left, it became my project and I became the care farmer. It became my project”. At that time Anton and Gertjan worked out their theory of change.

The first care project they took up, with a care organization did not really succeed. Mieke says: “We had an agreement based on a fixed price that 6 persons would work at the farm for 6 months. In return we would receive 40.000 Euros. We did not get the 6 clients and Anton was unhappy about that. We did not generate enough income.” He left in 2013. Since that time, Mieke and Gertjan developed De Volle Grond together.

### **Third year 2014-2015**

It is only in the third year that De Volle Grond as an independent care farm starts to work as designed in 2012. As stated in the TOC De Volle Grond developed a new method for taking care of people who for various reasons were not able to participate in society and in

regular work. They were also a group of people who would not succeed in the realization of regular reintegration to work options. It is difficult to answer at this stage whether the project has been implemented as intended. In fact, implementation goes a long way with permanent innovation.

As stated in the theory of change report, the project is value oriented and starts from a human centered view and not a problem centered view. In fact, the whole project is based on personal development and learning processes both of clients and De Volle Grond as organization. This approach corresponds pretty well with the views for a new social policy established in the Welfare act of 2008<sup>24</sup>, in which empowerment of persons and stress capabilities instead of problems are key elements. Self development, self management are at the heart of the new perspective on social policy. Citizens and care clients should take up their own care, by mobilizing their network before asking professional assistance. Social workers needed to adapt their ways, becoming coaches guiding and advising clients, instead of social assistants and care givers. Seen from the positive side, this would mean that modern care system would offer new freedom and plenty of possibilities for everybody. However, the government also decided for an important budget cut. Not everybody would be able to receive care or help and organizations would not be able to deliver the same services. Care services should be taken up by the community or the family in the first place. This means for many people sometimes too much extra efforts and responsibilities.

In the interview with Gertjan, new terms and ideas are expressed. He talks about “the rubber band method”, when he explains his specific way of coaching. A rubber band symbolizes elasticity and flexibility. Growing and learning can only happen if you stretch

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<sup>24</sup> WMO act (2008); Welzijn Nieuwe Stijl (2010)

for new initiatives and learning. In the report written by Nils Burger (2011), it is called provocative coaching (see also theory of change).

In this third year of work, De Volle Grond started to focus. Mieke got rid of the market stall. It was a time consuming activity and financial return was low. “Friday was the market day. That meant that I (Mieke) was not able to work in the garden for an entire day. On Thursday we were already harvesting for Friday. I was busy ordering other vegetables at the wholesale, making pricelists. We needed to do this every week as the price of vegetables is strongly fluctuating. The market personnel needed to be instructed, timetables and work schemes needed to be developed. It was so much work. It was not profitable. On top of that, there was a lot of waste. Not all vegetables were sold. And the market professionals needed to be paid.” This decision was also made because of the stronger focus on care. In fact, care clients could prepare veggie bags but they could not work at the market stall to sell the products. De Volle Grond focuses on the Pergola project, based on a network of clients who receive a package of food regularly.

The Pergola project is easier to handle. Mieke prepares a planning and she knows exactly how many veggie bags she needs to prepare. The network of clients is stable and sure. This means less waste and more profit, as the organization does not need to pay people at the market.

## 2016

This year marks the arrival of Marieke as new job coach.

### Organisational structure

Being a micro initiative De Volle Grond is still building up structure, systemized working and administration. In fact, Gertjan and Mieke, work as individual entrepreneurs. They

work together in a formal partnership. However, neither the individual businesses, nor the partnership are heavily structured and administered. “We prefer spending our time with the people than on paperwork”. About documentation and accountability: “I do not want to register too much. We must take responsibility as care organization, but finally I do not want to spend my time with administration. I want to be present for my clients! It would be the best that clients can take responsibility for their own care file... this is also a principle I would like to take on”. This personal and human centered approach focusing on personal development makes that the process is eclectic and creative, and rather difficult to structure.

As researchers we encountered the problem that formal facts and figures are not available. Since only recently, De Volle Grond is working on the setting up of a digital client data system. With the arrival of Marieke in 2016, the setting up and development of an administrative system will be taken a serious step forward. Marieke says: “Last year, De Volle Grond bought a client system. There are no data in it yet. One of my tasks will be to set up this client follow system and maintain it.” Marieke says: “GertJan has discussions with clients whenever it is needed and appropriate to the situation. This is difficult to put in a system”. This way of working is beneficial for the development of individual clients. In fact, they receive attention and feedback whenever it is necessary, so that they can move on and learn from the process. A disadvantage of not registering is that there is a lack of overview, especially on the long run. Now that the number of clients will grow up to 25, it is necessary to keep track of client development. Marieke underlines that both Gertjan and Mieke see it as an important step to structure the initiative: “My work will be to create structure through this IT client system. I will not only put all necessary data of all clients – they are now only registered in the head of Gertjan -, but to note also the objectives/ goals of each client. I would like to establish a three monthly review/ evaluation on progress

made by the clients. That will be an issue I think. It is easily rejected now. But we strive for establishing it”.

This lack of overview makes it complicated to realize organizational learning. Also reporting, monitoring and proof of accountability to external partners are difficult to realize. These data would also be beneficial for evaluation of social outcome and impact of the project. It is clear that De Volle Grond is still in the formative phase of the initiative and that development of the initiative goes with the necessary establishment of administrative units and need for registering. This is a natural process in business development. However, it is also related to the shift in social policy, in which small contractors and social entrepreneurs are encouraged to become direct contractors of Utrecht municipality in the field of activation and reintegration at the labour market. Monitoring, accountability and evaluation are necessary in order to prove that public money of the municipality is well spent.

Another reason for establishing structure and administration is that the care part of De Volle Grond is entirely depended on one person (Gertjan). This construction is vulnerable and linked to the pioneering phase of the project. Founders are eager to establish structure around their way of working, because if one of them is not there anymore, the work will collapse. This new phase in the project development raises also questions about the dynamics between value driven work and system driven work. Marieke says: “It [De Volle Grond] will be more like an institution and he [Gertjan] does not want that. [For us] it is difficult to cooperate with organizations that work with all kinds of protocols and clearly defined methods. It represents totally different way of working”. Marieke underlines that the principles and the values set out by De Volle Grond do not match with the strict and rigid ways of client systems and expectations of existing care organizations. Marieke says: “If De Volle Grond is working out of love [for the people], they often work out of fear”. She

gives an example about a client who wanted to ride a bike. The person who coaches him at home was mad about this plan. They thought he would lose the bike and there was no permission given by the coordinator to do this. Marieke: “They are not confident about the capacities of their clients. They do not support them in their development, like we do.” However, cooperation with big care organizations working with the same clients is needed but complicated, as they work with strict rules, that sometimes gets development of the client in the way.

In 2012 Mieke, Anton and Gertjan would work in a common business, but Mieke could not recall exactly what type of business, most likely a cooperative. They decided to change the initial business structure and look for a business form that would permit them to cooperate and to keep individual freedom. They set up each of them an individual business, social enterprise. Thus, for juridical and financial reasons, they decided to work out a partnership agreement. This agreement would be dealing with only the main issues and fits on only two pages A4. It deals with the basic juridical matters, such as for instance: When someone is ill, how long he will be receiving payment, how to arrange for people leaving the partnership, etc.

As far as the financial administration is concerned, Mieke makes an operational budget, to keep overview on the income and expenditures. In the annual financial statement, the accountant makes a formal report about the financial status.

As far as income is concerned: de Volle Grond receives two third of its income (100 000 Euro) out of care and one third (50 000) out of the garden (in 2015). In 2012-2013, De Volle Grond had far more expenses dealing with job coaching, as Anton and Gertjan needed

to be paid and Anton received salary on the basis of a payroll construction. In 2015, Marieke is paid for two days, which are also important costs in 2016<sup>25</sup>.

#### **5.4 Mechanisms by which the goals were achieved: distribution of roles**

Since 2014, De Volle Grond has found a balance in the distribution of roles and tasks in the project. Mieke is the farmer and Gertjan deals with care clients (co-workers), Marieke deals with urban citizens of Utrecht. All three have their own specialty. Mieke: “I like my role. I can play the boss. I am the farmer and I tell everybody what needs to be done”.

Gertjan and Marieke deal with clients and volunteers and make possible that all the work is done at the end of the day. They actually make things work with the people. In the project, Mieke represent the outside world. She does not need to deal with the coaching. Mieke’s role is rather distant with regard to the care clients. This does not mean that she is not having conversations or discussions with them. However, Mieke’s role is to manage the team of volunteers and give them clear instructions. She sees that as her responsibility. She is not feeling responsible for the care clients at all. If they have a problem, that is the responsibility of Gertjan. In this way there is a balance and also a clear division between volunteers, trainees on the one hand, receiving instruction of Mieke and the care clients who receive instruction of Gertjan. Recently Marieke, a creative therapist, joined the team. She also works with clients on their personal and professional development. Marieke underlines that one of her roles is to bring structure in the care branch of De Volle Grond. She is also about to develop a new third branch within De Volle Grond: organize creative workshops, around storytelling, mindfulness, drawing and writing. In fact, with her activity she would like to strengthen the connection with the city, the outside world. This is also one of the objectives of the Foundation on Historical Gardens of Amelisweerd. This project

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<sup>25</sup> For further details on finance and the Pergola project see the Economic Report.

is only in the very beginning. With this activity, she will be the third entrepreneur in the partnership with Mieke and Gertjan. She is working only part time as job coach for care clients (2 days a week). With this new activity, De Volle Grond envisages to develop visibility of the project, and establishing a link with the urban citizens of Utrecht, so that this unique spot will be shared with more people. It also generates a new source of income, through the organization of trainings (Reset-training, Indian storytelling).

Co-workers/ care clients have in practice other type of work than volunteers or trainees. The co-workers would not deal with sowing and harvesting. They do all necessary side activities. Co workers would work on the establishing of veggie bags for members of the Pergola project.

### **5.5 Target population reached?**

De Volle Grond is at the moment no direct care provider but has subcontracts with a number of organizations in Utrecht, Lister, Begeleid wonen, Amerpoort, Wij 3.0 and others.

Leo works two years at De Volle Grond. Time flies. He lost his home because of a lot of debts. Now he is following for 11 years a program to pay these back. He finds it important to learn how to communicate and to cooperate with others. And most important, that “He is considered by other people normally. “I learn at De Volle Grond how to focus on my tasks and to stay motivated. I had a review discussion with my coach in the accommodation I live and I said: Everything goes perfect. I do not want to leave now from De Volle Grond. I give myself another six months and then I am able to go back to my former job as a tiler”. Leo focusses on the objective of active labor market integration. Leo: The coaching is very good here. I am really lucky. Gertjan has a lot of empathy. If you want to tell him something, then he is always ready to listen. He gives me support and I give him support.” There is reciprocity between the needs of the garden and of the greenkeepers on the one hand and

the needs of the care clients. An important lesson learnt is that the most important thing is that you can get along with the people. He also learns how to give support to other people. For instance, if he sees motivated people in the institutions he advises them to contact Gertjan. Maybe they can also be assisted in their own development. “The most beautiful thing I got here was that I met my girlfriend in the garden. We are very happy. We learned to know each other two years ago and since 9 months we are also a couple”. Leo indicates that little by little he can organize his life normally. Step by step he finds out what other things he is capable of doing.

Nina came at De Volle Grond through her former job coach, who worked at De Volle Grond two years ago. She worked in elderly homes and in daycare activities. She did not have any expectations about future jobs. Now, she works 4 days a week. She is picked up by Gertjan every day. After arrival at the garden, they start with a cup of tea. The workload of the day is being distributed in tasks. Every day, Nina has different tasks. She likes that. She works at De Volle Grond about 2,5 years now. Her dream is to find a paid job. To reach that goal, she is doing a couple of traineeships in a restaurant, an elderly home and in a shop, to feel what type of job is most interesting to her. Nina worked on her own personal development with Gertjan as a coach. The coaching style is perceived as being confronting. Nina needed to get used to that. Gertjan takes his time, is patient and he is working with each client on the goals they want to achieve personally. If a goal is reached then a new goal is fixed. “I never met someone who is such an intensive coach and able to be together and also to stimulate everyone of us to discover our capacities or to learn new skills. With Gertjan, there are always more possibilities. Nina former drug addict and abused in her childhood discovers how she can think for herself, chose for herself.

The period in the garden is for most clients a process of discovering oneself and acceptance that: “I should not be impressed by what other people say. I can do better than I think! If

things are not OK, then I can talk things over with someone”. However, Nina also says that there is a big difference between coaching at De Volle Grond and coaching at Amerpoort, a 24/7 care accommodation where she lives. “At home, the coaches do not answer my questions, and they say that it is none of my business. I come too close. They say: Home is home and work is work”. Nina expresses what most clients express at De Volle Grond: they would like to receive a humanly based form of coaching everywhere and be considered as a human being and not as a care client. This could be seen as one of the spin offs of this research project. A focus group with all stakeholders involved could result in better cooperation between De Volle Ground and persons who support care clients at home. Nina: “Now, I am moving on to a new more independent housing project. I have a boyfriend and a daughter. I am getting a new network of friends and want to be a way from the social workers and care takers... I feel suffocated by them!” Step by step, Nina is able to live her own life, have her own house and job. She still needs support, but step by step she is gaining independence. This is De Volle Grond’s way of reaching the target group.

These two examples give an idea about how clients of De Volle Grond evaluate their learning and working trajectory at De Volle Grond. All 5 interviewed clients and volunteers are happy with the results. They all express the ultimate goal they want to reach: have a paid job and live in their own house or flat. These dreams or goals are taken seriously. To evaluate the working process one can say that it is not the quantity of people that are reached by the project. The importance lies in the quality of care given to a small number (maximum 25) of people, who are able to think for themselves and realize their own objectives in life, with support of GertJan and Marieke.

## 5.6 Critical contextual factors to the implementation

The Social Policy Reforms in the Netherlands have given the municipality responsibility for social work and welfare. They are striving for direct contracting with small-scale service providers in the sector of labor reintegration, such as De Volle Grond and Amelis'Hof.

Direct contracting asks for a good working organizational and administrative system and new competences. Doing a farming job or a social work job only is not sufficient anymore. At the moment, both initiatives are too small, lacking administrative infrastructure and personnel, to be able to deal with the paper work asked for by the municipality to arrange for the demands the administration of clients. That is why most of the time the gardens act as subcontractors with big welfare and care organizations such as Lister, Wij 3.0, dealing with activation and reintegration of vulnerable people in society and on the labor market<sup>26</sup>.

De Volle Grond has developed a new way of working, based on community approach and interpersonal relationships between care farmer and clients. The values of this small type of organization are not the same as the values of the big welfare organizations who do not obtain the same results in personal development with individual clients. The achievements reached with clients at De Volle Grond, could be broken if this way of working is not taken over in other organizations where people receive care or support. at work could be broken in other settings. The other organizations the care clients of De Volle Grond are dealing with should know how they are coached to real integration. And actually all social workers involved with the client should at least know about the capabilities of the person involved. If another way of perceiving care, based on the basis principles as set out above, care clients could make stronger improvements.

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<sup>26</sup> Interview Martin Bluijs, civil servant, labor activation and integration, Municipality Utrecht.

Again also in this section we would like to draw attention to the fact that our evaluation of the process is focusing on the development of individual clients and their way of perceiving their own development.

## 5.7 Conclusions

Amelis'hof and De Volle Grond are two small-scale initiatives linked to each other by a Foundation and originally managed by the same green-keepers. Since the 2008, social care policies also changed the nature of the urban farming activities. Whereas care farms already existed before policy reform of 2008 and 2010, the way care farming is organized has changed. Before the reform, persons with a handicap or long term illness could work in gardens or at farms and the gardens or farms would receive compensation for it. Now, compensation of the state and payment of allowance to care farms are only met when an action plan is established with the care client and coaching is provided. Utrecht municipality is happy with these small scale green initiatives. It permits the agency for activation and reintegration to work to propose a wide range of choice to their clients, needing to work on reintegration on the labor market. Now, the gardens are seen as places where people can work on their own development, activation and reintegration process in society and work. This means that working at the care farm is for a lot of them a mean to integrate into a paid job. If care clients work their own developmental process in the garden, they also need to have support at the garden. This means that former greenkeepers or farmers need to develop skills in social work and social care, in order to be able to reach the goals set by the government. This means a lot of investment and a change of focus and social innovation, including to find new business models, food distribution and constitution of flexible interdisciplinary partnerships between social entrepreneurs who are able to adapt to the needs of individual clients working on their own personal and professional development. De Volle Grond has found a balance by separating farming and care, although

they follow the same basic principles and vision about care. As long as there is a common vision and meaning, new initiatives and other social entrepreneurs can be included, contributing to the development of a community around the garden, composed of coaches, farmers, care clients, volunteers, trainees, customers, and visitors.

## 6 Impact Evaluation

**Rob Gründemann, Sandra Geelhoed, Eva Hijmans, Roel Bax**

### 6.1 Impact evaluation: a theory led design for impact measurement

This part of the evaluation scheme deals with the difficult question: did the intervention work. On page 34 and 35 of the Innosi WP4 Case Study Research and Evaluation Guide (Baines et al, 2016) questions are formulated that are important for InnoSi.

As there are many ways to measure impact, we decided to choose the theory led design for impact measurement. At the end of this chapter we will compare the outcomes of de Volle Grond initiative in Utrecht with outcomes from other types of initiatives aiming the same goals. We have found some information about the impact of other initiatives in the literature.

Theory-led designs for impact evaluation recognize that interventions in social policy are complex and that an understanding of context is crucial to explaining impact. This is in contrast to the (quasi) experimental approach which 'smuggles' in a particular set of understandings about what programs are and how they work (Pawson and Tilley 1994).

One example of a theory-led approach is 'scientific realism'. For the scientific realists interventions or programs are not an external, impinging 'force' to which subjects 'respond', but instead work (outcomes) by introducing appropriate ideas and opportunities (mechanisms) to groups in the appropriate social and cultural conditions (context) (Pawson and Tilley 1997). At the heart of impact evaluation is therefore the study of Context-Mechanism-Outcome configurations (Pawson and Tilley 1997). We will use this perspective in comparing the effects of De Volle Grond with comparable initiatives

(paragraph 6.3.5).

Different evaluations will require different design elements and the use of different methods, but broadly the starting point might be to collect 'before' and 'after' data to give an overall picture of outcomes but then the focus is on data which can be used to explore mechanism and context variation with comparisons of variation in outcome patterns across groups. But these would not be the standard experimental-versus- control-group comparisons. Instead, comparisons would be defined by the mechanism /context framework (Pawson and Tilley 1994).

The questions that should be answered for Innosi are the following:

- Did the policy, program or project achieve its stated objectives?
- What were the social and psychological impacts of social welfare reform on individuals and communities, including the ways individuals' sense of identity is shaped by their interactions with welfare policy and its reform (including gender and generational issues)? This is a key question for InnoSi.
- What were the social outcomes and effectiveness of interventions for the various actors, contributors and beneficiaries concerned? This will be a key question for InnoSi.
- From the perspective of recipients, did policy initiatives strengthen or weaken the public sphere? This is a key question for InnoSi.
- Did any outcomes occur which were not originally intended, and if so, what and how significant were they?

These questions will be answered on the basis of document analysis on the one hand and interviews (and focus groups) on the other hand.

We will set out a way of working to find out what the situation was before the initiative of Urban farming started and what social results we can define as of today. In fact, we will use also data on the results of other initiatives regarding care farming in the Netherlands, and compare their results with the results of De Volle Grond.

Central question:

What was the social and psychological impact of the intervention on the direct recipients and broader communities? How has the impact of the intervention been experienced both by those implementing it and receiving it?

Sub-questions:

- 1 Did the policy, program or project achieve its stated objectives? What are likely reasons why the project was or wasn't successful?
- 2 What were the social and psychological impacts of the project on individuals and communities, including the ways individuals' sense of identity is shaped?
- 3 What were the social outcomes and effectiveness of interventions for the various actors, contributors and beneficiaries concerned? Where the project impacts stronger for particular groups of participants?
- 4 Did any outcomes occur which were not originally intended, and if so, what and how significant were they?
- 5 Comparison with comparable initiatives: assess the effectiveness of the project and its implementation: We will compare the outcomes of the initiative with the other Utrecht case study and with the outcomes from other types of initiatives aiming the same goals,

as far as this information is available. This may also provide information to answer the question: How can the design or implementation be changed to improve performance?

## 6.2 Methodology

In order to give answer to the above mentioned questions we decided to work out a mainly qualitative research frame. Only recently, De Volle Grond has been put forward as place for participation and inclusion, and a step up to labour market participation of socially excluded and vulnerable people. This case evaluation has been largely prospective, as new ways of working in the garden were only adopted since about 2010. But it took some time to develop to the current state. Since 2014 the garden is fully operating as a combined biological garden and care facility.

We decided to adopt a the anthropological way of working. Through participant observation we have gained trust and got acquainted to the group of workers from the inside. Only in a second phase, we have been able to conduct more structured interviews. While working ourselves in the garden, we got acquainted with the people working there. Small conversations, small talk, anecdotes have been used to get an idea of the possibilities for documentation analysis, the stakeholder interviews to be taken and to get an idea of the population that is involved in the garden work. This phase has been fundamental in order to design and define the next steps as well as discovering of new more formal information.

The problem assessing the impact of bottom-up initiatives as De Volle Grond is that these cases regularly have not been properly documented. The initiators of these initiatives often have an aversion to detailed documentations, planning and accountability. They like to work in a more associative and creative way and let the initiative develop in a more autonomous way. That's why little documentation is available. You have to interview the

people involved in the initiative to get to the story behind and the results are less quantitative measurable.

The main information source for this impact analysis have been the qualitative interviews. We several times interviewed the entrepreneurs of De Volle Grond (Mieke and Gertjan), the work supervisor (Marieke), three clients, one volunteer and people in the second ring around the initiative (among others two representatives of the board of the Stichting Historical Vegetable Gardens Amelisweerd, a representative of the municipality, two persons from the social district team, three persons from care organizations who deploy clients at De Volle Grond). Additionally we used several (scientific) articles, reports and other documentation (newsletters, etc.) for this impact evaluation.

### **6.3 Did the project achieve its stated goals?**

The ultimate goal of the care activities of De Volle grond is that care clients develop a positive self-image, which enable them to live a meaningful life in our complex society (Burger, 2015). As a result of this they should better understand themselves and the world around them. This should help them to act more autonomous from their own strength.

The principle of De Volle grond is that care clients work according to their abilities. Consequently the results of a working-learning program are quite differently between care clients. Several clients notice for example that they are making better contacts, others see positive developments in their concentration and some have developed them towards paid work. The result of the work-learning programs depends largely on the individual development points of a care client. However, there appear to be a number of recurring results. So several clients talk about more confidence, more self-esteem and in general the feeling to matter more as a human being. According to some clients this is the most basic and at the same time most fundamental impact a care activity can have.

Care clients experience a greater independence. For example they are less afraid to make a phone call and get more structure in their daily life. They develop skills which make it easier to live in our complex society. Several clients had addiction problems and/or collisions with the courts (police). A number of interviewees think that these problems have stabilized or have become better at the time they work in the garden.

These results are not only due to the work at De Volle Grond. Many factors influence how a client evolves, varying from the treatment process in mental health to developments in the housing situation and the contacts with members of their family. But clients themselves and the other interviewees put a clear link between improvements in health and wellbeing of clients and their work in the garden of De Volle Grond.

It is all in all a bit too early to determine whether the project has achieved its stated goals. The initiative is running for a few years and the supporting systems (e.g. a client tracking system) are not yet active. At this moment (the beginning of October 2016) 18 care clients are working at de Volle Grond. One of them is working for a another employer and another is long-term ill. As a result 16 active care clients are at this moment working in the farm.

Health care institutions are responsible for the deployment of clients at De Volle Grond. They have an indication for long-term health care support. De Volle Grond makes agreements on targets with the clients which go beyond daily activities. People are challenged and taken seriously in what they want. These are the work-learning programs.

In the morning the care coordinator of De Volle Grond is coming to the living facilities to pick the clients up and to bring them to the farm. New clients get a wake-up call in advance to support them to be ready in time to go to the garden. The people at De Volle Grond take care that the garden is a nice place to work. The care clients are free to give meaning to their day care. The health care institutions establish that the clients like the work at De Volle Grond. It is a pleasant place to work and clients are enthusiastic and get more energy.

They can learn things in the garden and may fail. They learn new things, but also to work towards their own goals (for example, being on time, dealing with incentives to cooperate, etc.).

#### **6.4 What were the impacts on the target group and communities?**

Before answering this question we will give you some impressions of the work experiences of three care clients and one volunteer at De Volle grond.

Mark works for about three years as a care client at the garden. He was 20 years addicted to drugs and lived on the streets. Gradually he is regaining himself and is more confident. *'I do not have normal friends, so I come here to get acquainted with other people. That's important to me that I see other people and have distractions. This means a lot to me'..... 'I learn how to deal with other people in a normal way, and to trust people again. That was not easy for me'.....'I find myself being more confident and more proud. If you have regular contact with other people, you will see progress and that's nice'....*

Nina is another care client at De Volle Grond. She has been working at De Volle Grond for 2,5 years. She comes from a heavily neglected situation (abuse and addiction). Recently she has done several internships, for example in a health food shop. Her care coach is looking what is most appropriate for her. It is the intention that finally she will do paid work. The most important aspects of her work at De Volle Grond are: *'Here I have clarity and security. I can be who I am and I can be myself'..... 'We are treated equally. We are working with a group. That's fine. You can recognize things with one another and you can talk about it'.* Important effects from the working in the care farm are for Nina: *I am more confident now. I have grown. I was insecure and vulnerable. I have had many negative experiences. I'm a tough fighter. I now feel that I am stronger, bring it on, whatever happens. I have learned this in the*

*garden'.....'I accept myself now as I am. I do not worry what other people think about me. If I have difficulties at home, I do not let me drag by emotions and stay with both feet firmly on the ground. I can do more than I think. I think I'm going to get it done'.*

Leo also works more than two years at De Volle Grond. Before he had a paid job in the construction industry. This work was very stressful. He got ill (psychotic complaints) and lost his job as result of a divorce and related debts. He has been in a debt restructuring scheme for almost 11 years. Leo is very content with his work at De Volle Grond. *'I am proud of my work, I like to do it. You see the vegetables grow. First you see nothing, you think nothing is growing. But still, it appeals to me. Maybe it's because I've got older and I realize more than before'.* Leo expects to do paid work again in the near future. He will try to find a new job in the building industry. But the most important effect of his work at De Volle Grond is his new girlfriend. *'The best part is that I have found my girlfriend in the garden. We have fun together. We met each other two years ago. We are already nine months together now'.*

Patrick is since a couple of months working as a volunteer at De Volle Grond. His background is not very different from that of the care clients. He also had a difficult period with physical health complaints (broken leg) and mental health disorders (depression). He lost his job as a head cook and became depended on social security (welfare). *'I went to different care institutions. I even got myself admitted into a mental hospital. I had time and again I had to overcome my pride, another step down. Until I reached the zero point for myself. I was almost homeless at that time'.* At that time he came into contact with De Volle Grond. He could work as a volunteer and got responsibility for the herb garden. In the garden he has learned not to use too high goals. *'I always set high standards. I tend to set the bar so high that it was not possible for me to get it. I learned that I do not have to do this. Life*

*is not more important or enjoyable if you set the bar so high'. He has already learned a lot during his stay at De Volle Grond. 'From all the rest, I have been able to see how I did it when things went wrong and problems occurred. I'm still working on it. I can tell right now, but I can experience something next week, and make it a great thing again'.*

Also other volunteers at de Volle Grond are positive about the initiative: *'Our volunteers are enthusiastic and want to contribute not only to their own development but also to the development of others, and to the garden as a whole. When I look at shareholders, I have for example a vegetable grower who would like it very much when an care client would get into paid work. That is also the reason why our garden is always open. People are invited to come and with open houses not only volunteers help, but also the clients. Everyone is welcome and we try to involve everyone in all ways and in all that is happening in this garden.'* (Gertjan, social entrepreneur)

It can be concluded that working at De Volle Grond has a positive influence on the development of the care clients. It should be taken into account that De Volle Grond has chosen to work with a more difficult target group with a status of long-term care. That also means that they need a longer period of counseling and limited results.

### **6.5 Did the initiative strengthen the public participation of the target group?**

The care clients experience positive effects from the working-learning program at De Volle Grond. They feel confident, have more self-esteem and develop skills which support them to participate in society. De Volle Grond provides a situation where clients can be safe, do meaningful work on a small scale, and get provocative and stimulating coaching (Burger 2015). Two care clients even managed to move into paid work. *'We have two people who do paid work now, this is our great success. In other care institutes clients are incredibly*

*pampered and kept small, you make them dependent thereby. This is the power of control and this situation is increasing as result of the financial cuts in health care. Here is the complete opposite and that is a different experience for our clients (Gertjan). We can conclude that the day care activities and the guidance at De Volle Grond contribute to the public participation of this group.*

*Working at De Volle Grond is beneficially according to Jaap (Abrona), namely: daily structure (clients have a rhythm and sit in a system); status (De Volle Grond is a great project, it is a showcase.); they deliver a product and they do it together; appreciation of the clients (clients barely have a social network. They experience this at De Volle Grond. It has nothing to do with work, but they do it); together (clients receive emotional support and have no responsibility).*

## **6.6 Unintended outcomes**

We have no information about unintended outcomes.

## **6.7 Comparison with other initiatives**

We chose to compare the more structural factors and the benefits for the client from De Volle Grond with other initiatives in the field of agriculture and care. For this comparison we used three studies of the Wageningen University:

1. A study among care farms in the Netherlands to find out which characteristics of care farms are important for different client groups and whether care farms can be good examples of empowerment-oriented and strengths-based practices for different client groups leading to an improved quality of life (Hassink et al, 2010).

2. A study about new practices of farm-based community-oriented social care services in the Netherlands (Hassink et al, 2015). In this study four cases are described. All four cases are collaborations between youth care institutions and farmers.
3. A study about entrepreneurship in agriculture and healthcare (Hassink et al, 2016). In this study different entry strategies of different types of care farmers have been compared with the objective to provide insight into the key factors contributing to the development and success of care farms.

## **Context**

The first observation is that care farms are not a rare phenomenon in the Netherlands. There are relatively many care farms active. These initiatives focus on different target groups, for example, clients with mental illness, youth care clients, and frail elderly clients. De Volle Grond is dealing with clients with mental illnesses, and among this group the people with more severe diseases.

In the table below we compare the initiative of De Volle Grond with other care farm initiatives which have been studied in the above mentioned publications. The three youth care initiatives and Novafarm are from the study on new practices of farm-based community-oriented social care services (Hassink et al, 2015). The comparative large study is from the publication on the effects of care farms on the quality of life of the clients (Hassink et al, 2010).

	Volle Grond	Youth Care Overijssel	Youth Care Limburg	Youth Care Noord Brabant	Novafarm	Comparative large study
<b>Initiatives variables</b>						
Annual revenues	150 000	580 000	50.000	1 200 000	1 400 000	
Target group	Psychiatry, addiction, former homeless	Youth care	School dropouts and youth care	Youth care	addiction	On most farms mixed groups Except for youth care
Number of clients	20	110	10	30	125	1-20
Amount of paid workers	2	3,5	1	7	13	
Amount of volunteer workers	10					
Motives for the initiative	To offer meaningful work which has significance and fits with interests and skills	Better services, entrepreneurship, reduction waiting lists, open to change	financial	Better services	Better services, outward orientation	Initiative can be taken by farmers or by care organizations Initiators without a care background face most severe challenges

The table shows that the De Volle Grond is one of the smaller initiatives. The number of clients of De Volle Grond (20), is comparable with the Youth Care Limburg (10) and the farms from the comparative study (1-20). Youth Care Overijssel and Novafarm are much bigger initiatives, with more than 100 clients. The ratio between the number of clients and the number of professional guidance is in most initiatives in the same line, about 10 clients

on each professional. Only the Youth Care Noord Brabant initiative has a more favorable ratio (7 to 30) and is still making a relatively high annual revenue of 1.200.00 euros. This is only a fraction less than the annual revenue of the much bigger initiative Novafarm. De Volle Grond has a much more outspoken motive than the other initiatives. They have really chosen for the interest of their clients (meaningful work and a fit with interests and skills).

### **Mechanisms for success**

Hassink et al 2016 deals with the key factors contributing to the development and success of care farms. The challenge of bridging the gap between agriculture and healthcare appeared to be important to success. Success was defined in this study as achieved goals with respect to size and income. Other important success factors that emerge from this study are: **Multi-functionality**: Multi-functionality in agricultural organizations means that around the core of agricultural production new activities and business is initiated. In the last decade, initiators of care farms have different choices in their entry strategy. Some are embedded in the care sector, others in the agricultural sector. Outsourcing tasks to supporting organizations and choosing strong multi-functionality leads to more success.

- **Experience in care**: many initiators had spouses with experience in the care sector. This gave them a head start and led to success more often than farmer/entrepreneurs without this experience
- **Sociopolitical legitimacy/ financing structures**: Care farms have developed through different stages, with different levels of financing arrangements and sociopolitical legitimacy. Care farms which have recently been initiated can count on
- **A boundary spanner**: In initiatives such as these, one of the main success factors is the quality of cross-sector collaboration. Important factors are i.e. the motives for

collaboration and the presence of a so-called “boundary spanner”. A boundary spanner usually works for one of the partners , but is strategic, entrepreneurial, knowledgeable and communicative. A top-level manager is also necessary as support.

We will now see how these factors are present in the case of “De Volle Grond”

*Multifunctionality:* De Volle Grond combines agriculture with care activities. In the near future they would like to extend their activities. Marieke, the work supervisor, has been trained as art therapist. It is the intention that she will develop creative activities at De Volle Grond. Gertjan, the social entrepreneur and responsible for the care activities is also thinking about other activities, such as small-scale management training, educating children and adults about nature and gardening and experience sessions for people with physical disabilities.

*Experience in care:* Gertjan has a background in care. He has worked in several care organisations in the past.

*Sociopolitical legitimacy:* Although de Volle Grond has not direct contractual relationship with the Utrecht municipality they have contact with the policy department Long Term Care of the Utrecht municipality. They also have been mentioned in the policy document ‘Future vision for the Estates Amelisweerd and Rhijnauwen’.

*Boundary spanner:* De Volle grond has a broad network in the local community. They work together with several care organisations, with the municipality of Utrecht, with restaurants and grocery shops and with other relevant regional stakeholders. They do this on a strategic, entrepreneurial and communicative way. In this way they can be considered as a boundary spanner in this community.

All together we can conclude that De Volle Grond is dealing properly with all relevant aspects of success. This should support the sustainability of this initiative in the future.

### **Outcome (client benefits)**

Hassink et al 2010 deals with the outcomes of the care farm initiatives from a client perspective. They observe that the stay on the care farm makes life good for them. They use the quality of life model to define the degree to which a person enjoys the maximum possibilities of his or her life in three areas: being, belonging and becoming. Being reflects who one is, belonging is concerned with the fit with the environment and becoming refers to activities that a person carries out to achieve personal goals, hopes, or aspirations (Raphael et al., 2001). The care farm can contribute to all three areas of the quality of life model.

Self-determination is another definition found in the literature and was operationalized in the extent of competence, autonomy and connectedness reported.



Reported benefits for clients according to the clients, the farmers and the institutions:

**Table 2**  
 Percentage of respondents mentioning a particular category.

Themes	Categories	MI	Y	E	MI	Y	E	MI	Y	E
		C (16)	C (13)	C (12)	F (12)	F (11)	F (10)	I (11)	I (9)	I (7)
<b>Community</b>	Contacts Security Small scale	<input type="checkbox"/>								
	Family								<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Attitude farmer</b>	Involved, personal	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>
	Respectful Focus on potential Responsibility	<input type="checkbox"/>								
	Authority Norms and values					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Non care context</b>	Normal life				<input type="checkbox"/>					
	Normal conversation Contacts society						<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Freedom to act Experimental space				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>
	Memories			<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>			
<b>Work</b>	Real, useful			<input type="checkbox"/>						
	Animals	<input type="checkbox"/>								
	Diverse	<input type="checkbox"/>								
	Physical					<input type="checkbox"/>				
	Structure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>					
	Own pace	<input type="checkbox"/>								
<b>Green Environment</b>	Activating				<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>
	Rest, space, low in stimuli	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>					
	Being outside, experiencing nature	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>					
	View			<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>			
	Other environment								<input type="checkbox"/>	

MI = mental illness, Y = youth, E = elderly, C = client, F = farmer, I = employee of care institution. ( ) = number of respondents.  
  > 50%.  
 33–50%.  
 Blank compartment: < 33%

The community aspect (contacts, security, small scale) is important in most initiatives. This also applies to a respectful focus on potential responsibility of the farmer and also slightly less for an involved and personal attitude of the farmer. Main reported benefits of the work are the presence of animals and the structure it offers and to make a useful contribution. For the environment the rest, space and low stimuli are the most important benefits.

### De Volle Grond

The clients describe the positive and supportive climate at the garden and the constructive effects of working in the garden for their confidence, self-esteem, and social skills.

Volunteers express comparable experiences. They pleasantly work together with the care clients and the entrepreneurs.

The care institutions who deploy people at De Volle Grond are also positive about the way De Volle Grond deals with their clients and the way they are motivated and challenged to personal growth and development.

The aspects about the benefits for the clients are in line with the benefits coming from the above mentioned study of Hassink et al (2010).

### **Societal impact**

We also looked in the publications for information on the societal impact of the initiatives. Unfortunately the publications did not provide information on the benefits for society, though one study (Hassink et al, 2010) did try to measure the amount of other care that was consumed by clients attending care farms. This however was inconclusive.

### **Conclusion**

On the structural variables De Volle Grond is a recent initiative. It has support in the local community, with the local government and among representatives of the care-organizations from which most of their clients enter. De Volle Grond acts as a boundary spanner and has multiple contacts with a variety of stakeholders.

Their multi-functionality, i.e. that they have income from farm as well as from care, makes them less vulnerable financially and even leads to them having non-paying clients.

The scale of the initiative makes it a bit vulnerable. It seems wise to think about up-scaling or extension of the activities. These strategic considerations are part of the future agenda of the social entrepreneurs involved. In the client-benefits of this initiative our findings match those of the research we studied.

## 7 Economic evaluation

**Rob Gründemann, Sandra Geelhoed, Eva Hijmans, Roel Bax**

### 7.1 Introduction

The urban case study De Volle Grond is a recent initiative. The care activities have been started in 2010 but it took several years to develop these activities. From 2014 De Volle Grond is operating as a combined biological garden and care facility. *Garden De Volle Grond is a small company with a large variety of crops. We believe in care and concern for people, animals, plants and soil. As every human being has a right to his individuality, we try soils, crops and animals to take care of their own nature. This allows the plants to grow in their own way and at their own pace (<http://www.tuinderijdevollegrond.nl/index.php/visie>).*

**The main questions which will be answered in the economic evaluation are:**

1. What have been the financial costs and benefits of the activities of De Volle Grond in 2014 and 2015?
2. What other benefits have been accomplished with the activities within the urban farming initiative of De Volle Grond.

### 7.2 Data

De Volle Grond has delivered us detailed information on costs and revenues of their activities in 2014 and 2015 (exploitation overviews). We have added the information of the impact analyses (Chapter 6) to estimate the other benefits of this project for other types of

stakeholders (the clients, the consumers of the vegetables (Pergola association) and society).

The information has been gathered by individual interviews with the entrepreneurs of De Volle Grond (Mieke responsible for the farm activities and Gertjan responsible for the care activities), the work supervisor (Marieke), three clients and a volunteer working at de Volle Grond, and individual interviews with care organizations who deploy clients at De Volle Grond and an interview with a representative of the municipality of Utrecht (social care policy advisor).

### 7.3 Results

- financial costs and benefits 2014 and 2015

De Volle Grond has two main activities, namely the garden and the care activities. The earnings of the care activities are growing and were nearly twice as big in 2015 as the garden activities (see table below). The revenues from the care activities are the contributions of the municipality in the context of the long-term care act (WMO). These contributions are paid to De Volle Grond via the health care organizations who deploy the clients at the garden. They pay De Volle Grond for the transport of the clients and the daily care activities.

An important part of the income of the garden is realized by contributions from individuals who participate in the Community Supported Agriculture Association Pergola. This association is a partnership between De Volle Grond and a number (about 90) of clients/participants who buy vegetables of De Volle Grond (crop share) through a weekly subscription system. This ensures a basic income for the garden activities (more than € 30.000 income each year). Additional income related to the garden activities comes from

sales of vegetables and flowers at the market, and delivery of vegetables to a nearby restaurant (Veldkeuken).

The main costs are related to the wages (€ 35.000 to € 40.000). The two entrepreneurs get a salary from the results. The rest of the results are used to increase the (reserve) capital of the company.

**Exploitation overview of De Volle Grond in 2014 and 2015:**

	2014	2015
<b>Income:</b>		
• Farm	€ 72.000	€ 103.000
• Care	<u>€ 73.000</u>	<u>€ 54.000</u>
Total	€ 145.000	€ 157.000
<b>Costs:</b> purchasing, production, animals, tools and materials, housing, volunteers, wages, marketing, office expenses, transportation and general expenses	€ 111.000	€ 83.000
<b>Results</b>	€ 34.000	€ 74.000

We can conclude that De Volle Grond is a financial healthy organization. The costs are more than fully compensated by the benefits. Financial results remains as an income for the entrepreneurs and a growth of the capital of the organization. This makes this initiative financial sustainable to the future.

- other benefits

De Volle Grond also delivers immaterial benefits. For example to the clients, the partners of the Community Supported Agriculture Association Pergola, and to society.

From an authentic commitment to their clients De Volle Grond gives care and guidance to two more clients beyond the 18 people they get paid for by the municipality. These care services are not financially compensated by the local government. *'We do not look for hours. What matters is that we bear our responsibility'*.

The partners of the Pergola Association get weekly vegetables of the garden and a newsletter with the latest information about the garden. Twice a year there is a Pergola meeting to discuss recent developments in the garden. Pergola members are also welcome to come to the garden and to see how fruit stand there, or just to enjoy the beautiful place.

Finally De Volle Grond also realizes societal benefits. A representative of one of the care organizations that deploys people at De Volle grond (Jaap, Abrona), stated in an interview: *What will it cost to society as clients would not get this care at De Volle Grond. These are big costs for example, nuisance, vandalism, police deployment, debt, sickness, addiction.*

*Altogether, these costs are much bigger than the amount of money that's paid to De Volle Grond in the context of the long-term care act (WMO). The reason is that clients come into the rhythm, thus have fewer complaints and want to make something of it.*

Although this societal contribution cannot directly be calculated (there are no reliable estimations available), it can be assumed that this benefit would be significant. It is mainly saving of cost that would have occurred in the event that the clients of De Volle Grond would have been outside on the streets during daytime and should not be doing meaningful activities as it was in the past (end of the last century).

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