



Community gardens in Overvecht

How citizens of Utrecht can be inspired and empowered to create more community gardens in Overvecht

Introduction

- Our material prosperity and modern technology has alienated much of humanity from the natural environment
- One of the most effective ways to counteract this development is to engage in community gardening
- This has the added benefits of increased food security, physical health, and social cohesion

Research aim

- This research aimed to find out what incentives and disincentives citizens currently experience to create more community gardens in Overvecht
- To this end, the research question was: How can the municipality of Utrecht inspire and empower citizens to create more community gardens in Overvecht?

Theory

- The results are based on the COM-B model
- The intervention strategies are based on the behavior change wheel

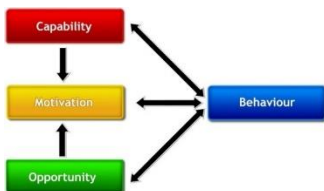


Figure 1: COM-B model

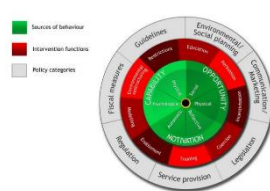


Figure 2: Behavior change wheel

Methods

- Interviews and literature review
- The interviews have provided results from nine participants:
 - Two community gardeners
 - Five food experts
 - One municipality employee
 - One citizen
- The literature review has provided results from three sources:
 - Popular articles
 - Policy documents
 - Scientific reports

Results

COM-B categories	Incentives
Psychological capability	In Overvecht are eleven community gardens with many experienced community gardeners who can educate and support community garden initiators
Physical capability	Gardening does not require much strength or stamina
Social opportunity	Many citizens and organizations have growing interest in local and organic food
Physical opportunity	The municipality and many other organizations can provide much knowledge and support
Reflective motivation	Gardening improves food security, health, social cohesion, biodiversity, and water management
Automatic motivation	Gardening relieves stress and increases well-being

Table 1: Overview of the incentives of citizens to create more community gardens

COM-B categories	Disincentives
Psychological capability	Many citizens have insufficient knowledge and skills
Physical capability	Some citizens have physical disabilities
Social opportunity	Some community gardens experience theft and vandalism
Physical opportunity	Parking spaces, archeologic grounds, cables, pipelines, soil quality, and competing interests
Reflective motivation	Community gardens are less efficient than industrial farms and require a lot of time and effort
Automatic motivation	Community gardens could appear unorganized and attract noisy teens

Table 2: Overview of the disincentives of citizens to create more community gardens

Intervention strategies

Guidance

- Create and distribute a report that provides all required information to create a community garden in Overvecht:
 - Overview of advantages of community gardens
 - Map of locations of current community gardens
 - Map of locations of potential community gardens
 - Required steps to create a community garden
 - Relevant funds and subsidies
 - Relevant experts and organizations

Rules

- Remove any legislative barrier that hinders the creation of community gardens unless it is at the cost of crucial interests
- Create more long-term certainty about the preservation of community gardens

Resources

- More and higher subsidies for community gardens
- Direct material support, food ambassadors, food network

Community gardens in Overvecht

Nr.	Community Garden	Description	Organization
1.	Voedseltuin Overvecht	Collective garden	Foundation
2.	Buurttuin de Dreef	Collective garden	The Salvation Army
3.	Amazonetuin	Collective garden	Health center the Amazone
4.	Burezina	Collective garden	Community center Burezina
5.	Stadstuin Klopvaart	Collective garden	Utrecht Natuurlijk
6.	Stadstuin Plutodreef	Collective garden	Utrecht Natuurlijk
7.	Flora's Hof	Individual gardens (76)	Association
8.	De Doordouwers	Individual gardens (130)	Association
9.	Ons Genot	Individual gardens (183)	Association
10.	Vitoriadreef	Planters on a grass field	Four citizens
11.	Stadstuin Gagel	Urban farm	Utrecht Natuurlijk

Table 3: List of community gardens in Overvecht

Community gardens in Overvecht



Figure 3: Map of community gardens in Overvecht