

Title

Van buurt tot bord – (from neighborhood to plate)

Short description

The project started from the perspective that everyone has the right to live in a green environment and to eat healthy foods. The project lasted two years and had the following goals:

- To provide accessible education on nature and environment for children (and their parents) from disadvantaged neighborhoods;
- To inspire the social welfare and environmental sector regarding education on nature and environment for children/families from disadvantaged neighborhoods;
- To increase the local living quality, among others via the creation of green space in disadvantaged neighborhoods;
- To encourage children/families with a low socio-economic status (SES) to produce/consume sustainable, healthy foods;
- To convince the (local) government about the need for participative projects focused on nature and environment.

Despite of the limited insight into the effectiveness, this practice might be promising in reaching and changing disadvantaged children and families their lifestyles and health, the physical environment (i.e., green space) as well as the social cohesion in the neighborhood.

Topic

Consuming – food

Living – Green spaces

Characteristics (type, level)

Neighborhood

Intervention

Country/Countries of implementation

Belgium

Aims and Objectives

The project started from the perspective that everyone has the right to live in a green environment and to eat healthy foods. The project lasted two years and had the following goals:

- To provide accessible education on nature and environment for children (and their parents) from disadvantaged neighborhoods

- To inspire the social welfare and environmental sector regarding education on nature and environment for children/families from disadvantaged neighborhoods.
- To increase the local living quality, among others via the creation of green space in disadvantaged neighborhoods
- To encourage children/families with a low socio-economic status (SES) to produce/consume sustainable, healthy foods
- To convince the (local) government about the need for participative projects focused on nature and environment

Target Group

The project focused mainly on low SES children but also activities were organized for their families, and other disadvantaged individuals

Status

Completed - follow up plans

Start and Completion dates

The project lasted for two years. It started in 2013 and ended in 2015.

Lifestyle and Behavior Change

The project focuses on providing education on nature and environment, improving the local living quality, encouraging the production and consumption of sustainable and health foods so an effect on the lifestyles and behaviors, and subsequently on health indicators, could be expected.

Effects on:

<p>Health and Wellbeing</p>	<p>The project focuses on providing education on nature and environment, improving the local living quality, encouraging the production and consumption of sustainable and health foods so an effect on the lifestyles and behaviors, and subsequently on health indicators, could be expected.</p>
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<p>Vulnerable populations</p>	<p>The project targets children, families, individuals with a low socio-economic status as they are most vulnerable and often have the lowest (perceived) accessibility to a green environment and healthy foods. Taking into account the project goals and the used strategies, this practice has a high likelihood to impact on the knowledge, skills and behaviors of this low SES group, as well as the social cohesion in the neighborhood.</p>
<p>Environment</p>	<p>The project focuses on providing education on nature and environment, improving the local living quality, encouraging the production and consumption of sustainable and health foods so an indirect effect on the environment can be expected.</p>

Initiated and/or implemented by

The organization 'Leren ondernemen' (new name: 'de ruimtevaart') initiated this practice via a participative approach with the target group, and worked together with different partners for this (see next point).

The project started from the perspective that everyone has the right to live in a green environment and to eat healthy foods. However, the literature and reality showed that for low SES individuals a health living environment and healthy foods are not always easily accessible. The project wanted to change this and also aimed to create more social cohesion in the neighborhood.

Stakeholders and sectors involved

Leren ondernemen/de ruimtevaart was the initiator of this practice. a social welfare organization that supports low SES families/individuals and provides a physical environment where disadvantaged families/individuals can meet each other, use the social restaurant and social grocery store or enjoy the green environment that is created by the organization on the patio of this building.

The following stakeholders were involved:

- JNM: youth club on nature and environment
- KVLV/Boerenbond: the female party of the Farmers' Union
- Velt: association on sustainable living and gardening

Financial support

The project got funding from the King Baudouin Foundation and the Flemish government, this supported the two year project. Currently, the organization is searching for new funds to continue the practices but encounters some difficulties.

Evidence-base

The initiative was started based on a participatory approach and did not focus on the scientific evidence. However, earlier studies indicated the positive effects of urban gardening.

Main activities

The project duration was two years. In this project, the partners tried to reach five goals. Below an overview of the five goals is given together with the used strategies to reach the goals.

1. To provide accessible education on nature and environment for children/families from disadvantaged neighborhoods or with a low SES, workshops in small groups were organized for children (and adults/parents) to provide education on the nature and environment. During this workshops, the children (and parents) went on active trips through the green that the local environment provided and learned and worked in the urban gardens. The children came to the organization after school, on Wednesday and during the holidays.
2. To inspire the social welfare and environmental sector regarding education on nature and environment for children/families from disadvantaged neighborhoods/with a low SES via collaborations, information exchanges via symposia/meetings/seminars, development of a book with good practices of this project,
3. To increase the local living quality, among others via the creation of green space in disadvantaged neighborhoods. Urban gardens were created at several locations in the city of Leuven on unused acres. The side effect of these urban gardens was the increase in social cohesion when children/families/individuals with different background/ethnicities were working together in these gardens.
4. To encourage children (adults/families) with a low socio-economic status (SES) to produce/consume sustainable, healthy foods. The workshops in the urban gardens were organized to create more insight into the (sustainable) food system. By cultivating the own vegetables, the step to consume these vegetables becomes smaller. In addition, cooking workshops were organized for the children (and adults/families) with these vegetables. The cultivated vegetables were also provided to the social restaurant and social grocery of the organization in order to reach more disadvantaged people. In addition, a calendar with healthy and sustainable recipes was developed and provided to the participants and customers of the social restaurant and grocery.
5. To convince the (local) government about the need for participative projects focused on nature and environment, the organization is also involved in several workgroups of the local authorities on urban gardening, community gardens, and other climate-related issues/solutions.

Evaluation

Only a limited evaluation is available. Opinions were gathered during the activities about satisfaction/appreciation, the project was not evaluated in a structured way.

Main results

Both children and parents were enthusiastic about the project. It also increased the social cohesion. Because of this project, the collaboration between the organization and the city of Leuven also improved and recently they received an acre from the city to use for urban gardening.

Key success factors and barriers

- The bottom-up approach, the participative development of the initiative, made it possible to create a project that solved the needs of the people in that neighborhood.
- The financial part is a barrier for the continuation of this project. The project got funding for two years but after those years, it was difficult to sustain the activities.

INHERIT Perspective

The project has been included as a promising practice given its potential impact on health, equity and climate. The project focuses on providing education on nature and environment, improving the local living quality (i.e., more green space, more social cohesion), and encouraging the production and consumption of sustainable and health foods. The practice aims to reach and change the BEHAVIOR of disadvantaged children and their families, as well as to improve the PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT and EXPOSURE/EXPERIENCE for the disadvantaged.

More information

In attach, the guideline booklet is added (in Dutch).

<http://www.deruimtevaart.be/>

Contact

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