Accountable Do-ocracy

An exploratory study of the accountability practices of active citizens

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Summary

Increasingly, active citizens are taking on a role in voluntary public service provision. This development is referred to as 'do-ocracy', a type of participatory democracy, in which citizens are '(co) creating the public sphere, not by deliberating, voting or bargaining, but by realizing concrete projects in the public domain of their neighborhood' (Van de Wijdeven, 2012). These active citizens are applauded for their contribution to local issues, but also raise some questions regarding democratic legitimacy, as their actions influence the public sphere, often using public resources in the process. What interests do these citizens serve? Who do they answer to if they want to create projects in public places that affect those around them? Who holds them accountable? This research explores the question of democratic legitimacy through precisely this aspect of accountability. The study sets out to investigate *what practices of public accountability citizen initiatives engage in, and evaluates how these contribute to do-ocracy's democratic legitimacy?*

In order to answer this question, a systematic literature review and a series of semi-structured interviews with active citizens - selected based on diversity of their initiatives - were conducted, supplemented by document analysis and interviews with public servants. From the data, practices of public accountability were identified using an analytical framework of accountability, in which public accountability is conceptualized as *'a relationship between an actor and a forum, in which the actor has an obligation to explain and to justify his or her conduct, the forum can pose questions and pass judgment, and the actor may face consequences'* (Bovens, 2007, p. 450).

In order to evaluate the accountability practices from the perspective of *democratic legitimacy*, a normative framework for representative democratic accountability (by Bovens, Schillemans & 't Hart, 2008), has been applied. This research, argues, however, that do-ocracy not only requires democratic anchorage in the aggregative representative democracy in which it is nested, but it also needs to be democratically legitimated *in its own terms*. Therefore, a new, additional normative framework is developed, for understanding and reviewing accountability from the perspective of do-ocracy. This framework is based on democracy as self organization, rather than hierarchical coordination, and borrows from the idea of 'reflexive accountability', in which the possibility to revise a decision made earlier is built in as a way to sanction bad decisions (Trechsel, 2010). As its central criterion for evaluation, the framework reviews '*whether the local community members affected by an initiative, and the users of the initiative's service are able to judge whether they would want an alternative decision, and whether an alternative is possible.'*

The main contribution of applying these frameworks, is that there is actually a lot going on with accountability in the world of do-ocracy. Firstly, citizens' initiatives generally engage in some form of

an accountability process towards their community. Unlike the existing literature suggests, these processes can be structural, sometimes even formal, rather than merely loose and informal. Secondly, whereas do-ocracy in the literature is criticized for a potential accountability deficit, a more systematic look at the empirical literature and data obtained in this research actually shows that municipalities in general seem to be able to judge whether an accountability process is in place, and indeed demand accountability if this is the case.

These accountability practices contribute to democratic legitimacy in a number of ways. Firstly, by ensuring that the local community – both the users and potentially affected neighbors - are informed about their plans and can make up their minds. Secondly, as the initiatives are small, approachable and organized close to the community, neighbors confronted with negative externalities can easily approach the initiatives and engage in direct dialogue with the project groups. Unintended consequences thus can be solved quickly. Thirdly, in the case of the cooperative associations, arrangements arise in which service users are structurally placed in the position to debate the effectiveness and course of action of the initiative, and to demand change if they feel the current approach is ineffective.

The normative analysis, however, has also pointed out some potential accountability problems. A first issue is that the accountability towards the neighborhood remains voluntary in nature. Even though this research shows that issues regarding small, unintended consequences are resolved easily, it remains unclear what happens when initiatives are more fundamentally challenged by their neighbors. The second main issue concerns the dilemma faced by local government, between regulating the activities of active citizens by using standard accountability arrangements on the one hand, and creating space for active citizenship on the other, running the risk of an accountability deficit. Fortunately, the analysis has also pointed out some new, tailor made, forms of accountability, that emerge between local government and initiatives, that form a potential middle ground in this dilemma. Future research may investigate these risks and opportunities more thoroughly, by applying the normative frameworks in a more in-depth approach, including multiple perspectives, data sources and/ or observations, to cases in which these risks and opportunities arise.

I.   Introduction

Public accountability in 'do-ocracy'

'How are we to do it, do tell us! … I believe that that is what it means to be an early adopter as a care cooperation. We put people in charge, empower them by inviting them to think with us about the simple things in life we have forgotten to ask them. '

'Really, it is the most democratic form there is, a cooperative association. I have an accountability meeting twice a year, you could say.' (respondent 2)

Increasingly, active citizens take on public tasks and develop valuable initiatives dealing with concrete issues in their neighborhoods. These hundreds, possibly even thousands, of citizens' initiatives cover all sorts of issues ranging from healthcare to integration, from safety to sustainability, culture to small scale spatial planning. They provide, like the care cooperation above, care to the elderly that would otherwise have to move to a nursing home in the big city, they take over the community centers at the verge of being shut down and they develop small scale housing projects for refugees in their neighborhoods. This trend of active citizenship has not gone unnoticed by national and local policy makers. In 2013, the Dutch government introduced a policy created to *'make room for and have faith in'* such citizen initiative, in order to actively contribute to the transition to what they called 'do-ocracy' (Ministerie van BZK, 2013).

These 'do-ocracy' initiatives not only take over public tasks, they develop new democratic processes along the way. They are held accountable by their service users organized in a general assembly, involve clients in decision making, or build in ways for their organization to be approachable and accountable to their neighbors. They create new, community based accountability processes, but they are also confronted with the old:

'All laws and procedures that are in force for large institutions, such as hospitals and nursing homes, where also declared in force for a small scale housing project for people with dementia. All these demands impair the homeliness and the life in such a small home. … The State Secretary may say it should all be small scale, but there all kinds of processes impeding that development… so we do what we can and sit close to the rules.' (respondent 2)

The care initiative managed to meddle through and even build their own, small scale nursing homes for elderly people with dementia in their village, attuned perfectly to the ideas and preferences of their clients and members. Who do you go to, though, if they plan to build their homes in your backyard?

'When conflicts arise, handle them in the general assembly immediately. If there are ten people in the room making a fuss, you can only withstand by behaving appropriately and let the democratic process do its job.' (respondent 2)

In short, active citizens take on a new role in public service provision. In the process, they develop new forms of public accountability, challenge the old and create new challenges to accountable governance. This research studies the accountability practices of active citizens emerging in what is called 'do-ocracy', and assesses them from the perspective of democratic legitimacy. It aims to learn from the new and the old, in theory and practice.

Accountability and the democratic legitimacy of do-ocracy

Do-ocracy, describing both the practices of the active citizens and the policy perspective, refers to a type of participatory democracy, in which citizens are *'(co) creating the public sphere, not by deliberating, voting or bargaining, but by realizing concrete projects in the public domain of their neighborhood'* (Van de Wijdeven, 2012). In do-ocracy, the initiative for and implementation of public policy lies with active citizens, whereas government's main role is to stimulate and facilitate their initiatives – for example through information, advice or subsidies. And *'the political system only plays a background role'* (Tonkens, Trappenburg, Hurenkamp & Schmidt, 2015, p. 9). Do-ocracy, in this definition, is not just a new form of citizen participation, rather, it reflects a new mode of public decision making and implementation. It is governing by doing, a form of direct rather than representative democracy, in which decision making and implementation are concentrated with the same group of people and decentralized to the level of individual neighborhood issues.

As do-ocracy is presented as a new mode of public decision making without voting or deliberation, it is unsurprising that it raises some questions regarding democratic legitimacy. Active citizens, through their concrete projects or initiatives – often funded by public resources - influence the public domain, and affect the lives of others living in the neighborhood (Van de Wijdeven, de Graaf & Hendriks, 2014). By patrolling their neighborhood, maintaining a park, managing a community center or renovating their streets, they are making political decisions, affecting *who gets what, when and how* (Laswell, 1936). The do-ocracy trend, therefore reflects what Bovens calls a 'relocation of politics' (1995), from formal politics in city councils to the 'sub politics' of active citizens at the neighborhood level. It is unclear, though, who these active citizens represent. What interests do they serve? Who holds them accountable, if traditional mechanisms of accountability in public policy – elections and hierarchy (Posner & Shahan, 2015) – do not apply? (Verhoeven, Van de Wijdeven & Metze, 2014). Who do they answer to if they want to create projects in public places that affect those around them?

This research aims to explore the question of democratic legitimacy through precisely this last aspect, namely accountability. Accountability, put simply, refers to an actor's 'obligation to explain and justify his or her conduct', after which the actor may face consequences (Bovens, 2007, p. 450). Accountability is an essential aspect of any democratic process. It allows those who are affected by the decisions and actions of a democratic representative to be informed about, judge and sanction the representative's conduct (Warren, 2015, p. 40). Accountability thereby serves as a key mechanism of democratic control and legitimacy (Bovens, 2005).

If politics are relocated, and the locus of public decision making shifts from one place to another, it follows that the process of accountability should too, in order to maintain democratic legitimacy (Bovens et al., 1995). This research aims to explore whether this is the case in do-ocracy: do the collectives of active citizens engage in practices of public accountability? Do these accountability practices ensure the democratic legitimacy of the initiatives, or are we right to worry about the implications of do-ocracy for democracy? The central question of this research therefore is:

 What practices of public accountability do citizen initiatives engage in, and how do these contribute to do-ocracy's democratic legitimacy?

The question of the accountability of citizens' initiatives has first been brought to attention by Verhoeven, Metze and Van de Wijdeven (2014) in an agenda setting paper on the democratic anchorage of do-ocracy, but has not been studied systematically since.

A systematic inquiry of the do-ocracy literature that was conducted as part of this research, shows, however, that 'accountability' was mentioned in nearly half of the do-ocracy studies along the way, suggesting that it is part of citizens' initiatives routines. An analysis of these studies shows a broad landscape of accountability demands, practices and relationships – which is a picture that will be confirmed in the empirical part of this study.

Another expectation rising while looking at the existing do-ocracy studies, is that the accountability arrangements of municipalities – both internal and external - may not always be attuned to the municipalities new task of supporting citizens' initiatives, and may be experienced as a threshold for active citizenship. This study moves beyond this observation, and differentiates between various accountability arrangements with local government and (the conditions under) which these form a barrier. In addition, most of the existing studies of active citizenship mentioning accountability (e.g. Tonkens & Kroese, 2009; Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2011, Van de Wijdeven, 2012) are based on observations of 'top-down do-ocracy' in which active citizenship and initiative is encouraged by a (financial) government arrangement connected to an accountability system. This study, however,

primarily focuses on purer forms of 'bottom up' do-ocracy, in which initiatives may encounter local government in a later stage of their projects, and accountability arrangements are not designed specifically for these types of initiatives. This leads to a different and more diverse picture of accountability demands and processes.

Finally, when speaking of accountability, the majority of the existing studies refer to the relationship between an initiative and local government. This research adds to the discussion by also paying serious attention to the accountability relationships between initiatives and their local communities.

Competing models of democratic accountability

In order to systematically evaluate the accountability processes in do-ocracy from the perspective of democratic legitimacy, a normative framework is needed. Such a framework is provided in the democratic perspective on accountability developed by Bovens, Schillemans & 't Hart (2008). This perspective can be used to evaluate the accountability of initiatives in the light of representative democracy. Do-ocracy scholars argue, however, that do-ocracy not only requires democratic anchorage in the aggregative representative democracy in which it is nested, but it also needs to be democratically legitimated *in its own terms* (Verhoeven et al., 2014). It can be argued that do-ocracy is a different (complementary) model of democracy, and different models of democracy and public decision making, after all, require different accountability relationships and lead to different accountability claims (Olsen, 2015). The concept of democratic accountability, however, is still 'almost exclusively discussed in the context of representative forms of democracy' (Trechsel, 2010, p. 1050). A second goal of this research therefore is to develop a normative framework for viewing accountability from the perspective of do-ocracy, as an alternative model of democracy.

In addition, as citizens' initiatives are nested in two models of democracy – do-ocracy and representative democracy - it is likely that they are confronted with different accountability claims and processes. Studying the different accountability claims in the context of citizens' initiatives, may shed some light on the relationship between the two systems of democracy (Olsen, 2015).

Taking these research goals into account, the central research question can be developed into the following sub questions:

1. What does the phenomenon of do-ocracy entail in practice?
2. How do active citizens perceive accountability in the context of their initiative?
3. What accountability processes do citizen initiatives engage in?
4. How can these processes be reviewed from the perspectives of representative democracy and do-ocracy?

An outline of the research

Before setting out to answer these questions, first, the research design and methodology will be discussed in **chapter 2**. This includes the design and methodology of th liteterature review and the empirical analysis.

In **chapter 3** *'Do-ocracy as policy, practice and politics'*, then, by a systematic review of the literature, aims to set the context for this research by exploring the forms do-ocracy takes in practice: what issues do these active citizens aim tackle and with which strategies? How do they organize themselves? And how widespread is the phenomenon of do-ocracy? (sub question 1). Do-ocracy, here is presented as a broad range of *initiatives* of active citizens to improve their neighborhood, often in terms of social cohesion or the living conditions of the neighborhood and physical improvements.

Having explored the context of this research and the phenomenon that will be studied empirically, **chapter 4** provides an analytical framework for analyzing this empirical phenomenon, including a descriptive theory of accountability, and the specially developed normative framework.

The empirical part, presented in **chapter 5**, starts by exploring active citizens' views of accountability in sub question 2 **(section 5.1)**. To whom do they feel accountable, and about what? Here, a clear difference appears in the perceptions of accountability towards the local community as an accountability forum, and towards local government. The relationship with the local community is perceived as a form of *democratic or political* accountability, whereas accountability towards local government tends to be viewed more as a form of financial, 'return on investment' type of relationship.

After having explored the perceptions, these are compared to the accountability practices **(section 5.2.)**. In order to answer sub question 3, regarding these accountability practices, respondents were asked about their accountability activities following an interview protocol including all phases and aspects involved in accountability. Here, we see that the active citizens indeed engage in accountability relationships with their local community and local government. They engage in rather formal practices of voluntary accountability towards their target audiences, and make - mostly informal - arrangements with neighbors affected by their projects. Differences are found along the lines of who are considered the target audience of an initiative, and in how the affected neighbors are addressed. In addition, four types of accountability relationships towards local government are identified, varying from traditional to newly crafted, financially or process related, and differing in intensity.

Then, in **chapter 6,** we go on the evaluate the practices identified from a normative point of view, analyzing them from the perspectives of representative democracy and do-ocracy (sub question 4). Based on the findings mentioned above, it is unsurprising that this is a rather positive analysis. The review, however, also results in some points of criticism related to the voluntary nature of the accountability arrangements with the local community and the dilemma for local government between creating space for initiative and keeping control.

After having conducted both the descriptive and normative analysis, conclusions will be drawn in **chapter 7**, answering the main question presented above. Finally, in **chapter 8**, these conclusions will be discussed in the context of the broader theoretical and societal debate on accountability and do-ocracy. Revealing that there is actually a lot going on with accountability in the world of do-ocracy, the main contribution of this study to these debates may be that it may not be so bad after all. The risks of do-ocracy for democratic legitimacy have been specified and opportunities are identified. Suggestions for urther research into these risk and new, potentially beneficial forms of accountability in the context of do-ocracy are made.

To summarize

In short, this research will explore the democratic legitimacy of do-ocracy, by looking at the processes of public accountability that emerge in this system. The research aims to pay a constructive contribution to the debate on the democratic legitimacy of citizens' initiatives, that increasingly take on a role in the public sphere. Theoretically, the research contributes to the literature by exploring the concept of accountability in the context of non-representative democracy, and adding a complementary normative framework for evaluating accountability within this context. Empirically, the study reveals how active citizens engage in accountability relationships with their target audience, with affected neighbors and local government. Hereby, newly developing accountability arrangement that may contribute to democratic legitimacy are identified and potential risks are pinpointed.

II.   Research design

In order to develop an overview of the practices, forms and reach of do-ocracy, to study the role public accountability plays in these practices, and to evaluate how the forms of accountability identified contribute to the democratic legitimacy of do-ocracy, a three step research design was developed. These three steps include:

1. A systematic review of do-ocracy literature
2. A series of exploratory interviews with leaders of different citizens' initiatives
3. Four case studies

The literature review will be used in the first place to answer the first sub question in this research regarding the nature, practices and prevalence of do-ocracy. This review, in addition, informs the selection of respondents for the second stage of this research. By exploring the variety of do-ocracy, relevant aspects of do-ocracy are identified and a varied sample of respondents can be selected.

The purpose of the exploratory interviews also is twofold. Firstly, the interviews will be used to answer the second sub question: 'How do active citizens perceive accountability in the context of their initiative?' Secondly, these interviews will provide a first impression of accountability practices active citizens engage in. This impression informs answers to sub questions 3, 5 and 6, regarding accountability practices and tensions between different accountability perspectives. Relevant differences in accountability practices are used to select the cases elaborated on in the third stage of the research.

Finally, the case studies that are further developed in stage three will be used to generate a more in depth view of accountability practices and tensions. More importantly, they will be used to evaluate these processes from the perspectives of representative democracy and do-ocracy (sub question 4), by including the perspectives of 'accountability forums' and other evidence of accountability (e.g. through document analysis).

In the next sections of this chapter, the methods of data collection and analysis in all three stages will be elaborated on, starting with the data collection and analysis in the literature review, followed by data collection in respectively the interviews and case studies, and finally, the analysis of the empirical data gathered in interviews and cases.

A systematic literature review

In order to provide an overview of (what is known about) the world of do-ocracy in terms of issues addressed, activities, organization and prevalence and map what is known of accountability in the

context of do-ocracy, a literature review was conducted. The review process follows systematic review guidelines, to create a replicable and transparent process. Steps in this process include search strategy, selecting eligibility criteria, the selection of eligible studies, extracting data from these studies and analyzing and reporting these data (Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff & Altman, 2009). The steps in the methodology used are described below, following the PRISMA statement on Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews. Exceptions are those items specifically related to quantitative research[1], as most studies included in this review are qualitative in nature and the review focuses on individual categories and not the relations between those categories. The reporting of the review results differs, however, from the protocol as it is integrated in a larger research project.

Search strategy

The approach adopted in this research can be described as a layered search strategy, consisting of three steps. Firstly, a Google Scholar search was conducted using 'doedemocratie' as key search term. Google scholar was chosen over other international academic databases (such as Scopus), as do-ocracy seems to be a predominantly Dutch phenomenon, and this research is focused on the Netherlands. It is therefore unlikely that international journals will be the primary source of relevant information. As do-ocracy has been the topic of political debate in the Netherlands, various research reports have for example been commissioned by national government and advisory councils. To form a comprehensive view of the nature and expressions of do-ocracy, other sources than peer reviewed scientific journals need to be included in the review. The Google Scholar search was limited to research published after 2000, since the specific form of active citizenship we are interested in has emerged at the beginning of this century (Van de Wijdeven, de Graaf & Hendriks, 2014). This initial search resulted in 210 records (on may 5th 2016). From the 210 records found in the initial search, a first selection of 20 eligible studies was identified using the eligibility criteria described in the next section.

Secondly, additional studies were identified from the references in the initial 20 studies. This second stage in the search strategy is particularly important, as the term do-ocracy was first mentioned only in 2010 by Van de Wijdeven and Hendriks (2010), whereas at this point the practice of do-ocracy had already existed for a decade (Lenos, Sturm & Vis, 2006; Van de Wijdeven, de Graaf & Hendriks, 2014). This second stage of the search strategy resulted in another 25 eligible studies. Finally, this same strategy of selecting eligible studies was applied to the references of the 25 studies found in

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[1] These items include principal summary measures (e.g., risk ratio, difference in means), methods used for assessing risk of bias of individual studies,

stage 2. This resulted in another 7 studies. In total, therefore, 52 studies were included in this review. The eligibility criteria used to select these 52 studies are discussed below.

Eligibility criteria

In order to ensure the validity and reliability of this research, two main criteria were used to select studies eligible to include in the review. These criteria aim to ensure that only those studies actually focusing on the phenomenon under study (do-ocracy), and those that are of scientific in nature are adopted.

Firstly, the studies included in the literature review must focus on the practices that following Van De Wijdeven's (2012) definition qualify as do-ocracy. This means that it involves concrete projects, initiated by citizens, focused on public issues on the neighborhood level. In the initial search, this criterion was applied by only selecting those studies that include the term 'do-ocracy' in their title, introduction, abstract or summary. This measure is adopted to make sure that studies actually describe the phenomenon that is at the heart of this study. In the second and third stage of the search, including studies from before 2010, the term do-ocracy does not have to be used. These studies were scanned and checked against the definition used by Van De Wijdeven (2012). Records that were excluded using this criterion were for example studies only mentioning the term do-ocracy in notes, references and context – not claiming to write about do-ocracy itself.

Round 1	Initial search	20 papers
Round 2	From references R1	25 papers
Round 3	From references R2	7 papers
Total papers on do-ocracy		52 papers

Secondly, only scientific reports are included in the review. Literature reviews often only involve peer reviewed scientific journals to maintain the quality of the findings that are included in the review. This review, however, as described above, covers a broader range of sources. In order to maintain minimum scientific quality, only reports from scientific institutions, such as universities and independent research institutes, that are directly or indirectly based on empirical data were considered eligible. This literature research does not, however, focus on a specific type of research. Therefore the selection may include all forms of empirical research, ranging from surveys to case studies and ethnographies. The main sources include research reports and policy evaluations written for ministries and municipalities that were conducted by universities, research reports by independent advisory boards, articles in (Dutch) scientific journals and master theses. Records not

meeting this criterion include for example policy documents, opinion pieces and bachelor theses. A list of all eligible studies can be found in appendix A.

Eligible studies: type
o   25 research reports and policy evaluations by universities (written for governments)
o   9 articles in scientific journals
o   7 research reports by independent advisory boards
o   4 master theses
o   2 research reports part of a university research program
o   1 PhD thesis
o   1 conference paper
o   1 research report by a topic specific think tank

Data extraction and analysis

Data has been extracted from the identified studies to answer the following questions:

1. What types of *issues or policy domains* does do-ocracy (typically) involve?
2. What types of *activities* does do-ocracy (typically) involve?
3. What forms of *organization* does do-ocracy typically take?
4. What is known of the *prevalence* of do-ocracy initiatives?
5. What is said about *accountability* in do-ocracy studies?

In order to answer these questions, the 52 sources were coded using NVivo software.

In the case of the questions 1 – 3 and 5 that describe different characteristics of citizens' initiatives, and their accountability practices, this coding process consisted of three steps. Firstly, generic codes related to the questions above were used: 'theme', 'activity' and 'organization' as an initial form of open coding (Boeije, 2009).

Secondly, codes were further developed and specified. More specific codes were used to code the different answers given to the question by the authors, in their own words. This includes both systematic answers – typologies of for example issues and organizations - as well 'unsystematic' answers, such as themes and activities mentioned along the way. This may be considered a form of axial coding (Boeije, 2009). Finally, in the stage of selective coding, these different answers were compared and ordered into distinctive categories. These form the categories that are reported in the results section.

	Coding	Codes
1	Open	'theme'
2	Axial	Livability; multicultural; nature; personal development; sports; solidarity; green and environment; social meetings; physical projects; arts and culture; meeting; youth; care; safety; spatial planning; emancipation/ empowerment; social
3	Selective	o Social initiatives: aimed at improving social cohesion and strengthen social ties & care o Physical improvement of the neighborhood: including small and large scale projects o Education: including for example lessons in Dutch, computing and nature o Arts and culture: cultural activities such as museum excursions and the organization of exhibitions and cultural manifestations o Sports o Safety

In the case of prevalence, the coding process was less complex. The instances in which authors mentioned prevalence were coded and summarized, taking into account the types of initiatives that were counted in the studies.

The results of this literature study are reported in chapter 3.2, on the nature of do-ocracy, and in section 4.1.2 ('what do we know of public accountability in do-ocracy').

Semi-structured interviews

After the literature study, a series of 16 interviews was conducted with initiative leaders. An exploratory approach was required as the research is focused on a relatively new phenomenon – do-ocracy - in which accountability processes have not been systematically studied before. This approach, in addition, allows for both the generation of in-depth data, as well as keeping a broad perspective. Both aspects are discussed below.

Firstly, a qualitative approach is preferred as the implicit processes and experiences that constitute informal accountability relations are at the heart of this research. How the relationship with a forum is experienced from the perspective of the initiative, how the initiative leader feels about the forum

and whether he or she feels obliged to explain his or her behavior to the forum, is an integral part of the analytical framework that has been applied. This knowledge of their *experiences* of their relationship with potential accountability forums, is necessary to identify de facto and informal accountability relationships, and – of course – to answer sub question 2: 'how do active citizens perceive accountability in the context of their initiative?'

In order to ensure the in depth, qualitative nature of the research, these interviews are *semi-structured*. Questions are open ended and topics based on the analytical framework developed in the next sections are used to guide the interview. This topic list can be found in appendix B. This technique allows the interviewer to be in control of the interview, but still provides room for the respondent to explain his or her own account of the events (Silverman, 2011, p. 162). Furthermore, the topic list based on the analytical framework ensures systematic data collection to increase the reliability and validity of the study (Yin, 2011, p. 105).

Secondly, a broad perspective is required to explore the potential variety of accountability practices. The active citizens selected as respondents – for example founders and chairmen – can be considered 'elite respondents'. They are key informants about the activities, goals, policies, plans and external relationships of their initiative (Harvey, 2011). The semi-structured interviews therefore will not only focus on experience, but also on accountability practices and processes.

To explore the potential diversity of practices, a large variety of cases was selected. This variety helps explore the potential diversity of accountability practices across contexts, and to select relevant aspects for the selection of the case studies of stage 3. In addition, the cross context comparison increases the internal validity of the study (Yin, 2011). The main method to realize this diversity is in the case selection, that will be discussed below.

Selection of diverse respondents
To ensure a diverse group of respondents, the selection of respondents for the exploratory interviews was based on purposive sampling (Yin, 2011) on three levels.

Unsurprisingly, respondents must first and foremost be involved in practices that can be described as do-ocracy, according to the definition of Van de Wijdeven (2012), that will be elaborated on further in chapter 3.

In light of this study, in which it is argued that citizen initiatives need to be accountable as they, with their concrete actions, engage in *public* decision making, the notion of 'publicness' is especially relevant. This notion of 'publicness' will therefore be an initial criterion for selection. The public

character of a citizens' initiative will be operationalized in three ways. It must fit at least one of the following three notions of publicness:

- o The initiative provides a (formerly) public service
  Definition of public service
- o The initiative operates in a public place
- o The initiative is supported with resources from local government (subsidies and/ or the use of municipal property)

Secondly, as mentioned above, the selection of respondents is based on diversity. Accountability processes can be expected across various contexts, and this research aims to explore the phenomenon of accountability in do-ocracy in general. From the literature review, three contextual characteristics were obtained for the selection of respondents, two of which can be expected to make a difference with regard to accountability.

1. Firstly, the main distinction in the types of citizens' initiatives found in the literature review is the distinction between social – focused on promoting social cohesion, health and well being as well as cultural activities - and physical projects, focused on cleaning, refurbishing or even restructuring public places in the neighborhood.
2. Secondly, there may be a difference in accountability between small towns and cities. Van de Wijdeven & de Graaf (2014) suggest that informal accountability to the local community may be more relevant in villages with a strong sense of community, than in cities. These authors argue that informal communication may be the most important source of accountability for citizens' initiatives.
3. Thirdly, a difference in accountability practices can be expected between 'top down' initiatives that receive funding from local government, and 'bottom up' initiatives that do not. A study of 'neighborhood budgets' in Amsterdam, for example, shows that such a budget comes with accountability demands regarding how the money was spent (Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2012; Verhoeven, Van de Wijdeven and Metze, 2014).

These characteristics formed the criteria for a diverse selection of respondents. The amount of respondents to be interviewed was determined by the point of data saturation, in which no new information is generated (Boeije, 2009). Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006) found that data saturation for perceptions of a phenomenon across a broad context is likely to appear after 12 interviews. Kuzel (1992), in addition, suggests twelve to twenty data sources in heterogeneous contexts, when trying to achieve maximum variation. Combined with the selection criteria for respondents presented below, the starting point of this research therefore are 16 interviews, across the following categories:

Social project			
small community		large city	
mostly public funding	mostly private funding	mostly public funding	mostly private funding
1. care cooperative 1 2. care cooperative 2	3. community center 1 4. community center 2	5. community center 3 6. Homeless shelter	7. community center 4 8. refugee project
Physical project			
small community		large city	
mostly public funding	mostly private funding	mostly public funding	mostly private funding
9. community garden 10. redevelopment town center	11. traffic safety 12. cleaning initiative	13. city park 14. planting project 1	15. community building project 16. planting project 2

These social initiatives under study include four community centers located in Vreeswijk, Hoogland, Amsterdam and Utrecht (cases 3, 4, 5, 7), two 'care cooperations' (cases 1, 2), an Amsterdam based refugee project (8) and a homeless shelter in Utrecht (6). The physical projects, related to spatial planning and refurbishment, include the development of two community gardens in De Meern (9) and Utrecht (13), two projects in which active citizens organize the maintenance and development of the public green in Almere and Amersfoort (14, 16), a traffic safety project located in a village in the municipality of Hengelo (11) and a community cleaning project (12). In addition, two larger scale projects are included in the form of the redevelopment of a village center, lead by the local care cooperation (10) and the development of a housing project in Amersfoort (15).

Zooming in and evaluating: illustrative case studies

In addition to the elite interviews, four of the initiatives were studied more in depth. In addition to the semi-structured interviews with initiative leaders, additional data is gathered through document analysis for all cases, and in two of the cases a semi-structured interview with a public servant involved in the initiative in the role of 'accountability forum'. In addition, in one of the cases, observations were added. This was not possible for all four though.

A case study approach is pre-eminently appropriate for the exploratory nature of this study, as it allows a phenomenon to be explored in its natural context, in detail, and from different perspectives (Yin, 2009; Swanborn, 1996, p. 46). As this research is exploratory in nature, and focuses on identifying the different accountability practices and relationships that may occur in the context of

do-ocracy, - and the case selection is the result of the central analysis, the purpose of the four cases is mainly *illustrative* in nature. Taking a closer look at some of the cases, has two additional, important benefits, though.

Firstly, the case studies allow for a closer look at the *practices* of accountability, enabling a more extensive, precise and critical perspective on the research topic. The cases, through triangulation of data sources, can be used to get an impression of whether the experiences of the initiative leaders reflect the actual accountability practices and evaluate these practices in terms of democratic quality, for example by looking at the actual accountability information. In addition, adding different data sources increases the internal validity of the study (Yin, 2011). Secondly, including other data sources and speaking to some of the 'accountability forums' involved, may lead to a better *understanding* of the accountability relationships an practices that are identified.

By developing such an understanding of accountability processes within their specific context , this research aims for *analytical generalization*. The case studies may lead to an impression of public accountability in the context of a particular citizens' initiative. By showing these findings 'bear upon a particular theory, theoretical construct, or theoretical (not just actual) sequence of events', a theory is created that may be used to understand similar situations where analogous events also might occur (Yin, 2009, p. 43). It should lead to an understanding of how public accountability is organized in do-ocracy and how this might contribute to democratic legitimacy.

Case Selection

Based on an analysis of the initial interviews, four cases were selected for further exploration: a health care initiative (care cooperative 2), an initiative for traffic safety and the redevelopment of the entrée of a village (case 11), a community center in the city Utrecht (case 7), that is run by citizens and a community run housing project for refugees in Amsterdam (case 8).

The selection was based on the main differences in accountability relationships with the local community and local government that were identified in the interviews. The cases reflect the different models of relationships. As this typology is part of the analysis, it will be further discussed in chapter 5. The selection includes different types of citizens' initiatives, both social and physical projects, cities and small communities, and reflects different perspectives on accountability. The connection between these aspects and the different types of accountability will be explained in chapter 5, that describes the empirical results.

Analysis of the empirical data

To analyze the data an *abductive* approach will be adopted, in which the empirical data will systematically be compared to the analytical framework (Peirce, 1934). Abductive analysis aims at 'generating novel theoretical insights that reframe empirical findings in contrast to existing theories' (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012, p. 8). This research aims to understand accountability practices in do-ocracy in light of existing theories and knowledge of public accountability, and understand how it may differ. This abductive process was structured through three stages of *open, axial* and *selective* coding, using NVivo software (Boeije, 2010, based on Straus & Corbin, 2007).

In the first stage of the coding process, *open coding*, the interviews were broken down into different, relevant segments. These segments are labeled with a code describing the content of the segment, as concise as possible, including both descriptive and interpretive phrases, as both are relevant to the research. At this stage, codes are informed by the data and are derived 'in vivo' from the respondents' terminology instead of the literature (Straus & Corbin, 2007). The selection of which fragments are relevant to include, however, is informed by the analytical frame. These segments were then compared and segments addressing the same topic were grouped together, resulting in a first categorization of data into general themes and their content (Boeije, 2010, p. 96). This initial categorization was finished at the point of saturation, when the information from new interviews could be grouped into fragments that can be covered with existing codes (Boeije, 2010, p. 107).

In the second stage of *axial coding*, the categories are further developed, fine tuned and ordered. First, topics were compared, similar topics were renamed into the codes best representing the content and differences were coded into sub-codes. Next, codes and sub-codes were ordered across over arching categories. These categories and subcategories were then described based on the data segments connected to them and related to one another (inspired by Boeije, 2010, p. 111). This stage of coding was also informed by the analytical framework and sensitizing concepts that will be described in the next chapter, such as the different phases of the accountability process, different types of accountability. This resulted in a code tree that is presented in appendix C (Boeije, 2010, p. 103). Finally, in the stage of *selective coding* (Boeije, 2010, p. 114), a final model was developed structuring the findings presented in chapter five.

III.   Do-ocracy as policy, practice and politics

This chapter, that is based on the literature review, explores the nature of do-ocracy. The chapter is connected to the first sub question of this research and provides a context for the empirical analysis. It presents do-ocracy as a trend in citizen participation and participation policy (3.1), it describes the practice of do-ocracy in terms of organization and activities (3.2) and views do-ocracy as a political phenomenon (3.3), highlighting the relevance of accountability.

3.1.   Do-ocracy as a trend in participation and policy

Do-ocracy ('doedemocratie') refers to a specific type of participatory democracy, or active citizenship, that is characterized not by deliberation, but rather by 'doing'. The term was first mentioned in the context of public policy (in Dutch) in 2010 by Van De Wijdeven and Hendriks to describe the modus operandi of active citizens who contribute to the public cause by taking on everyday neighborhood problems by themselves. Local government may stimulate or participate in these initiatives, the initiative, however, in do-ocracy lies with the active citizens.

The phenomenon of do-ocracy can be connected to the concept of third generation citizen participation, after advisory style participation ('inspraak') and interactive policy making and co-production (Van de Wijdeven, de Graaf & Hendriks, 2014). As such, do-ocracy can be distinguished from other forms and generations of citizen participation in three important respects.

Firstly, as mentioned above, the initiative for 'participation' in do-ocracy lies with the citizens, instead of with government. Civil society initiates, and government may participate in these initiatives (Van de Wijdeven, de Graaf & Hendriks, 2013). Local government, can however, stimulate people to become active citizens, for example by creating a fund for local initiatives. In this respect, Verhoeven, van de Wijdeven & Metze speak of bottom *up and top down do-ocracy* (2014). The responsibility for the initiative itself lies, however, in both forms still mainly with the citizens.

Secondly, following the distinctive character of do-ocracy, citizens are involved in all phases of the policy process. In do-ocracy, citizens are not only responsible for the agenda setting and content of a project, but also for the process and implementation. By 'doing' they both put an issue on the agenda, find a solution and implement it by themselves (Van de Wijdeven, de Graaf & Hendriks, 2013).

Finally, it follows that do-ocracy is action oriented. Do-ocracy typically involves citizens who are interested in concrete actions instead of deliberation and (formal) politics. They are 'everyday fixers' and 'project conductors'. '*If you want a clean street, just pick up a broom and do it; if you want more*

social cohesion, organize a social event; if the playground needs some painting, paint it together with your neighbors' (Verhoeven, Van de Wijdeven & Metze, 2014).

This distinction between do-ocracy and other forms of citizen participation is clarified in Van de Wijdevens typology of active citizens (2012). Van de Wijdeven contrasts the 'everyday fixers' and 'project conductors' of do-ocracy, with two other types of active citizens: the 'neighborhood expert' and the 'case expert'. The everyday fixers and project conductors take on local projects by themselves (in respectively ad hoc and more structural ways). The neighborhood expert and the case expert on the other hand focus on official institutions, decision making processes and routines in planning processes, formal politics and local bureaucracy. They for example lobby at local government for specific a neighborhood issue, or the interests of neighborhood in general. All four types are active citizen participatory democracy, the everyday fixer and project conductor reflect *do-ocracy,* whereas the neighborhood and case expert participate in *co-decision making*.
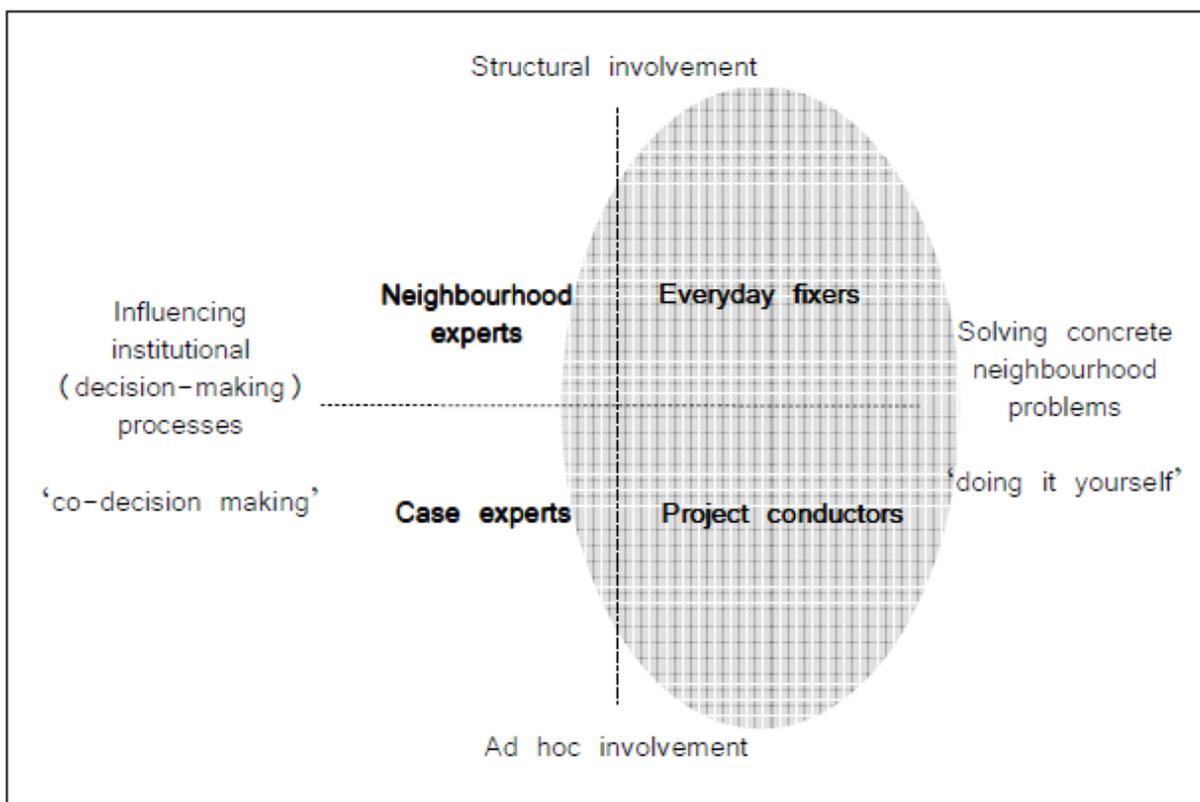
Van de Wijdeven, 2012, p. 362

This type of active citizenship can be considered an accelerating trend. A 2013 literature review by Van de Wijdeven, de Graaf and Hendriks shows that there is a wide agreement among researchers that citizens are increasingly becoming active in informal do-it-yourself ways consistent with the idea of do-ocracy.

Citizen initiatives are not a new phenomenon. Private initiatives have been emerging for over 300 years. New are, however, the 'modern-day forms and contexts of active citizenship concentrated around the neighborhood and interaction with government and other public actors located in the neighborhood' (Van de Wijdeven, 2012, p. 12). Although there are no exact numbers to describe the amount of citizen initiatives in the Netherlands (let alone worldwide), Dutch researchers agree that it must be 'a lot': thousands, possibly even more (e.g. Hurenkamp et al., 2006; Van de Wijdeven, 2012; Verhoeven, Van de Wijdeven & Metze, 2014).

This trend in active citizenship is also reflected in a policy discourse that has become increasingly popular in the Netherlands, that embraced the term 'do-ocracy' in 2013 (Oude Vrielink, Verhoeven & van de Wijdeven, 2013)**.** In 2013, Dutch government introduced a policy centered entirely around the concept of do-ocracy ('doe-democratie'). It aims to '*provide room and trust for citizen initiative and actively contribute to the transition towards participatory democracy: a form of co-decision making by citizens, by taking on societal issues by themselves*' (Ministerie van BZK, 2013). The do-ocracy policy is placed in a broader trend of policy efforts to revitalize (local) democracy, and includes tools for empowering citizens (including community rights and a list of for organizational forms for citizen collectives) and for local governments to better connect with what is going on in local communities (such as courses for public servants and a network for knowledge development organized by the ministry).

This adoption of the term do-ocracy in Dutch formal policy, is part of a pre-existing trend. Various researchers have noticed that attention for active citizenship in politics and policy, has increased during the past ten years - building on a previous trend towards increased citizen participation, that was initiated in the 1970s and 1980s. Citizens are increasingly invited to play a role in public policy and service delivery (Tonkens, 2008; Van de Wijdeven et al., 2013). In the Netherlands this perspective originated from the idea of participating ('meedoen') as citizens constructively contributing to society through civil self-organization , a central concept in the 2002 government policies. The policy perspective, after losing some prominence in the policy discourse, was revived ten years later, also inspired by austerities. The 2012 coalition agreement (cabinet Rutte II) and reports from several important advisory boards (WRR, 2012; ROB, 2012) emphasized the importance of creating space for citizen initiative and entrepreneurship (Oude Vrielink, Verhoeven en Van de Wijdeven, 2013).

The Dutch policy perspective on do-ocracy, in addition, according to Oude Vrielink et al. (2011) can be placed in a broader thinking and debate on the relationship between government and citizens, including for example the Big Society movement in the UK.

3.2. Do-ocracy as a practice

Theoretically, do-ocracy seems to be a distinctive, demarcated concept. In practice, its forms vary greatly. Citizen initiatives cover all sorts of themes and issues, ranging from safety to healthcare, urban planning to cultural activities and integration, and take all kinds of organizational forms, both formal and informal, ad hoc and structural (Van de Wijdeven, de Graaf & Hendriks, 2013). In order to get a grip on what do-ocracy entails in practice, on what we are really talking about when we talk about do-ocracy, a literature review was conducted. The literature review traces the cases and practices that the concept of do-ocracy is based on in 52 studies, and describes these practices in terms of content (policy domains and activities) and organizational form, as was discussed in the methodology section.

Content: what is do-ocracy about?

When it comes to the contents, 11 studies have systematically ordered the themes of policy domains citizens' initiatives engage in. Four of these studies are quantitative in nature and have ordered the initiatives included in their study across these themes. This results in a picture of the 'content' of do-ocracy in percentages in the municipalities of Amsterdam (Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2006, N = 289; Van Ankeren, Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2010, N = 635), the province of Overijssel (Bakker, Denters, Oude Vrielink & Boogers, 2013, N = 134) and throughout the Netherlands (Hurenkamp, Tonkens & Duivendak, 2006, N = 386). The studies in Amsterdam focus on top down do-ocracy, identifying initiatives from their participation in a municipal subsidy program, whereas in the other studies, bottom-up and top down initiatives were identified, for example, through surveys . Another ten studies focus on initiatives in the area of a specific domain: sports, livability, eldercare, combinations of eldercare, housing and retirement and finally 'green' initiatives focusing on landscape and sustainability.

The studies use different, but often similar categories describing the contents of the initiatives. Only two categorizations have been used in more than one study:

o physical projects – safety – education - care - social infrastructure
   (Van de Wijdeven & Hendriks, 2010; Boogers & van de Wijdeven, 2012, based on Winsemius et al.)
o solidarity - livability - personal development – sports - multicultural – nature
   (Hurenkamp, Tonkens & Duivendak, 2006; Van de Wijdeven, de Graaf & Hendriks, 2013).

Although most reports use different terms for their categories, they do show similarities. Studies use related categories and related categories seem to occur across initiatives in similar proportions

across the quantitative studies. This pattern also seems to be reflected in the themes that are mentioned along the way across the other studies.

Firstly, do-ocracy seems to have a strong social focus. 'Social' initiatives are included in all 11 categorizations and make up a large part of the initiatives in the quantitative studies. The themes 'social', 'social cohesion', 'social meetings' and 'solidarity', for example, make up approximately 35, 38, 19 and 32 percent of initiatives in the quantitative studies (Hurenkamp, Tonkens & Duivendak, 2006; Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2006; Van Ankeren, Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2010; Bakker, Denters, Oude Vrielink & Boogers, 2013 respectively)[2]. In addition, 'social cohesion' is mentioned as a motivation in another 11 studies that do not use systematic categories.

The main goal of these social initiatives seems to be to improve social cohesion and strengthen social ties in the neighborhood. With regard to concrete activities, social meetings such as neighborhood barbeques, parties and meetings are most often mentioned, but also managing meeting places such as community centers. In some of the categorizations initiatives focused on social and health care are included, for example under the concept of 'solidarity' (Hurenkamp, Tonkens & Duivendak, 2006; Van de Wijdeven, de Graaf & Hendriks, 2013). In other studies this is a separate category, making up for example 2 % of Amsterdam's initiatives according to Van Ankeren and colleagues (2010) and 13 percent of the initiatives in Overijssel, as shown by Bakker et al. (2013).

Secondly, many initiatives seem to focus on what is called 'livability' and the physical improvement of their neighborhood. Such a category is part of all categorizations and 'livability' is mentioned in another 17 studies. In some cases 'green' livability initiatives are mentioned as a separate category (Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2006; Hurenkamp, Tonkens & Duivendak, 2006; Bakker et al., 2013). In Amsterdam, for example, 9 percent of initiatives was focused on 'physical improvement' and another 6 on 'nature' (Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2006), in Overijssel, this was respectively 11 and 15 percent. Across the Netherland, similarly, over 20 percent of initiatives seems to be focused on 'livability' (Hurenkamp, Tonkens & Duivendak, 2006).

Social and livability projects seem to occur the most within and across the studies. Van de Wijdeven and de Graaf (2008) even distinguish solely between social and physical projects, a distinction made by municipal subsidy program in which they conduct their study. There are however, some other themes that often occurred in the categorizations, that seem to make up a smaller percentage of initiatives. These themes include:

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[2] The 'divergent' 19 percent found in Amsterdam by Van Ankeren and colleagues may be explained by the fact that their division includes more categories than those used in the other studies.

- o **Education**, including for example lessons in Dutch, computing and nature. This category makes up respectively 13 and 21 percent of the Amsterdam initiatives in according to Tonkens and Verhoeven (2006) and Van Ankeren et al (2010). 'Personal development' ('ontplooiing'), in addition, is the focus of approximately 15 percent of Dutch citizens' initiatives following Hurenkamp, Tonkens & Duivendak (2006) (Education was also used as a category in Boskamp, 2015; Boogers & van de Wijdeven, 2012; Van de Wijdeven & Hendriks; 2010; Tonkens & Kroese, 2009, and mentioned in another 6 studies).

- o **Arts and culture** account for about ten percent of initiatives studied in Overijssel (10 %), Amsterdam (9 % and 13 %) (Bakker et al., 2013; Van Ankeren et al., 2010; Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2006). Cultural activities such as museum excursions and the organization of exhibitions and cultural manifestations, in addition, occur in another 10 studies.

- o **Sports** is another returning category (Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2006; Hurenkamp, Tonkens & Duivendak, 2006; Van Ankeren, Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2010; Van de Wijdeven, de Graaf & Hendriks, 2013). Projects related to sports seem to make up little under 10 percent of initiatives across Amsterdam (Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2006) and the rest of the country (Hurenkamp, Tonkens & Duivendak, 2006).

- o **Safety**, for example voluntary surveillance teams, is mentioned in several categorization, but has not been included separately in the quantitative studies (Van Ankeren, Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2010; Bakker et al., 2013; Van de Wijdeven & Hendriks, 2010; Boogers & van de Wijdeven, 2012; Boskamp, 2015 and mentioned in another 5 studies)

In order to generate insights into the concrete activities do-ocracy involves within the different policy domains, activities were coded separately from the themes. Some activities can be - and have been - connected to the themes mentioned above. Looking at the activities separately, does however, lead to some additional insights into the nature of do-ocracy. Two observations can be made.

Firstly, when looking at activities separately, it shows that running a community service, such as a community center, library or health care cooperation, is also part of do-oracy (e.g. Denters et al., 2013; Van de Wijdeven, 2013; Van De Wijdeven & De Graaf, 2014; Hendriks & van de Wijdeven, 2014). These activities can be summarized under various themes, as an activity, however, they are distinctive in their more structural nature than most other do-ocracy initiatives.

Secondly, there seems to be a similar difference within the category of livability projects. This category often seems to involve small scale activities such as placing or refurbishing playgrounds, cleaning activities, placing benches, planting flowers and the maintenance of public places (e.g. Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2006; Uitermark & Duyvendak, 2006;Tonkens & Kroese, 2009; Verheijde &

Bosman, 2013; Bakker et al., 2013; Oude Vrielink & Van de Wijdeven, 2008; Hazeu et al., 2005; Van De Wijdeven, 2012; Boogers & Van de Wijdeven, 2012; Timmerman, 2014; Boskamp, 2015; Van Breugel, 2015). It may also involve, however, larger scale projects such as developing and maintaining playing fields, gardens and parks (e.g. Van de Wijdeven, 2012; Boogers & Van de Wijdeven, 2012; Denters et al. 2013; Timmerman, 2014; Brounen, 2014; Verhoeven, Van de Wijdeven & Metze, 2014; Tonkens, Trappenburg, Hurenkamp & Schmidt, 2015; Van Breugel, 2015), redeveloping a specific area (Van de Wijdeven & de Gaaf, 2008), recreating historical buildings (Van de Wijdeven & De Graaf, 2014) or developing social housing projects (Verhoeven, 2006; Montfort, Griffioen, Bokhorst, Asbeek Brusse, Visser, 2014). The former 'light' type of projects seem to occur more often than the latter, 'heavier' form. They were mentioned in respectively 26 and 14 studies. This pattern is reflected in one of the categorizations made, namely in the distinction between 'livability' initiatives (12 percent) and 'spatial planning' initiatives (4 percent) in Amsterdam identified by Van Ankeren and colleagues (2010). These types of differences, between structural and less structural activities and 'heavy' and 'light' initiatives are also reflected when discussing the organization of initiatives in the next section.

The organization of 'initiative'

Now we have formed an image of what active citizens in do-ocracy *do*, we will focus on how they *organize* themselves around these activities. Several organizational aspects will be discussed in the next section. What they have in common, however, is that they are nearly all referred to as 'initiative'. The 'citizens' initiative' ('burgerinitiatief' in Dutch) – here not referring to the formal instrument - seems to be the most common manifestation of do-ocracy. This term is adopted in 19 out of 52 studies, followed by simply 'initiative' (8), 'residents' initiative' ('bewonersinitiatief', 7) and 'social initiative' ('maatschappelijk initiatief', 7). Some studies, in addition speak of 'neighborhood initiatives' (1), neighborhood projects (2) or community groups (1).

In general, it is said that the organization of these initiatives, compared to more traditional forms of active citizenship, can be characterized as informal, ad hoc and loose (Van de Wijdeven & Hendriks, 2010; Van de Wijdeven, de Graaf & Hendriks; Oude Vrielink, Verhoeven & Van de Wijdeven, 2013).

Several authors have described the initiatives in terms of their level of organization, and their internal and external 'connectedness'. Authors distinguish between initiatives by *'unorganized' groups* or *'project team's* in which only one or a few citizens are involved, and *'organized initiatives'* or *'network organizations'* such as volunteer organizations, official citizen collectives or foundations in which members are more strongly connected to each other and to their environment (Van Ankeren, Tonkens & Verhoeven , 2010; Van de Wijdeven and Boogers, 2012, respectively).

Other authors have further developed the issue of connectedness and distinguish between internal and external connectedness. Hurenkamp, Tonkens, Duivendak (2006), based on their analysis of 386 community groups in the Netherlands, have introduced four types of organizations related to the intensity of contacts with their internal and the outside worlds: feather light, cooperative, networked and nested groups. *Feather light* groups have little contact among their volunteers and little contact with the outside world and are generally most recently formed. A community website run by one or two volunteers would be a good example. *Cooperative groups* have a great deal of contact among themselves – they often revolve around a specific place, community or event – focus on socializing, but relate relatively little to the outside world. *Networked volunteers* on the other hand, are well connected to the outside worlds but less to one another, as they are oriented towards results instead of their group. They often focus on 'livability issues and policy strategic topics, such as safety arrangements or local youth at risk' (De Wilde, Hurenkamp &Tonkens, 2014). Finally, *nested groups,* or *'fully connected networks'*(Igalla & Van Meerkerk, 2015) engage both in substantial contacts among themselves and the outside world.

Often, an initiative evolves from an unorganized group or project team into a more formal organization (Mujde & Daru, 2005; Boogers & Van de Wijdeven, 2012). They usually start as an informal organization, but *'because of the long term engagement of everyday fixers and the unavoidable subsidies, for organizational and administrative reasons, a formal organization is created in the form of a foundation of association* (translated from Boogers & Van de Wijdeven, 2012, p. 6). In at least 10 of the studies included in the literature review, citizen initiatives have indeed adopted the form of a formal foundation, and several formal cooperations and associations occur. Remarkably, some of the studies show that a development in the opposite direction also occurs. Some of the more informal, action oriented initiatives originate from traditional associations such as neighborhood platforms and village associations (e.g. Brounen, 2014; Verhoeven, 2006; Hazeu et al, 2005).

When it comes to statistics, it seems that although do-ocracy in general is characterized as more ad hoc than other forms of citizen participation, the activities of active citizens may be more structural in nature than expected. Most Amsterdam initiatives investigated by Van Ankeren, Tonkens & Verhoeven (2010) are lasting rather than one off activities, and nearly half of the initiatives studied by De Wilde, Hurenkamp and Tonkens (2014) qualifies as a 'nested group', reflecting the highest organizational level.

Conclusion

In the sections above, do-ocracy was defined as '*the modus operandi of active citizens who contribute to the public cause by taking on everyday neighborhood problems by themselves'*, and the related policy perspective. It is a form of active citizenship or participation, in which the initiative to take concrete projects lies with the citizens. In section 3.3., empirical studies of this phenomenon were analyzed systematically, in order to answer the first sub question posed in this research: *what does the phenomenon of do-ocracy entail in practice?*

Based on the review of the available literature, this question can be answered as follows. Do-ocracy involves a broad range of *initiatives* of active citizens to improve their neighborhood, often in terms of social cohesion or the living conditions of the neighborhood and physical improvements. Therefore, it often involves activities aimed directly at these goals, such as the organization of social events – the neighborhood barbeque – and refurbishment projects, but there are also initiatives that provide education, organize cultural and arts related activities, sports activities, safety and health care initiatives. These initiatives may be ad hoc, such as the organizations of one off activities and events, but may also take a durable, more structural character. These include larger planning projects and initiatives developing community services like community centers, that may facilitate other active citizens in organizing their events and activities. Although do-ocracy is generally characterized as more ad hoc than other forms of participation, the studies included in the review suggest that most often take a more structural character. These long term initiatives seem to emerge from the informal ad hoc initiatives, that have evolved over time and in the process adopt a more formal, institutional character for example by forming a formal foundation or association.

Based on these findings, a small critical remark can be made regarding the definition of do-ocracy by Van de Wijdeven (2012). In practice, even though they involve concrete actions, do-ocracy activities may not be as strongly focused on concrete, direct *problem-solving*. It seems that the majority of initiatives has a strong social character and focuses on 'improvements', rather than on concrete problems. There may however, be underlying social problems, but this cannot be determined based on this review.

3.3.   Do-ocracy as politics

Do-ocracy can be characterized as a trend in active citizenship and policy and as the practices of active citizens who are more interested in concrete actions, in doing things, than in politics. This does not mean, however, that do-ocracy is apolitical. The activities individuals and groups launch under a do-ocracy reflect what, from their perspective, is a civic need. The do-ocrats may not primarily (or at all) be interested in politics, they are, however, oriented towards public good and civic ends and needs (Chen, 2009, p. 55). And 'political action such as reflecting on practices or discussing what to do next is highly informal and functional to 'doing'. By restructuring parks, squares and playgrounds, providing education, organizing health care and developing arts projects in their neighborhoods, they influence the public domain (Verhoeven, Van De Wijdeven & Metze, 2014).

In do-ocracy, the public sphere is thus (co-) created by concrete actions that reflect local citizens perspectives on what needs to be done, instead of through public planning, based on voting and deliberation. The concept of do-ocracy, hereby adds a new mode of decision making to the three dominant modes described by Elster (1998) - voting, deliberating and negotiating. In this respect, do-ocracy not only is a form of participation or an a-political activity, it represent a specific model of public decision making and democracy. It follows, that as do-ocracy represents a new model of political decision making, substantial questions about democratic anchorage and legitimacy are raised (Van de Wijdeven, 2012; Verhoeven, Van de Wijdeven & Metze,2014).

The term do-ocracy (doe-democratie) suggests that there is indeed something democratic about citizens' initiatives. Roorda et al (2015) here look at the concept of 'multiple democracy'. Multiple democracy refers to the democratization of civic and administrative practices in which citizens and organizations work on problems. By involving citizens in the discussion and decision making, this should lead to innovations in a more democratic society and use of local knowledge and creativity (Roorda et al., 2015, based on Grin, Hajer en Versteeg, 2006). The authors, however, add that 'it matters who is involved, how and with what responsibilities' (p. 12). Aspects such as checks and balances, inclusion of stakeholders and accountability, therefore also matter in the context of do-ocracy: 'Who do these doers represent? What interests do they serve? Who holds them accountable?' (Verhoeven, Van de Wijdeven & Metze, 2014, p. 2).

As put in the introduction: if politics are relocated, from formal politics in city councils to the 'sub politics' of active citizens at the neighborhood level, accountability should follow. The next chapter focuses on public accountability, what we know of accountability in do-ocracy, and how it can be studied more systematically .

IV. Analytical framework: on public accountability

4.1. A descriptive framework

Do-ocracy through the lens of public accountability

4.1.1. What is public accountability?

An analytical framework focused on accountability, of course, should start with as definition of the concept. As is the case with many scholarly concepts, there are many different definitions around, and the concept, in broad sense is contested and contestable. In contemporary political and scholarly discourse the term often serves as '*a conceptual umbrella that covers various other distinct concepts.*' (Bovens, 2007, p. 449). Often, accountability is considered a virtue, connected to qualities such as 'responsiveness' and having a 'sense of responsibility', but it may also viewed as the process that should advance such virtuous behavior (Bovens, 2010).

As this research primarily focuses on the *practice* of accountability, the emphasis in this study will be on the perspective of accountability as a *process.* From this perspective, there is some general consensus over what accountability entails (Schillemans, 2011). Bovens (2007) provides us with a useful, more demarcated, analytical definition of accountability, that covers these aspects of consensus. In this definition, that will be the starting point for the analytical framework, accountability refers to:

'a relationship between an actor and a forum, in which the actor has an obligation to explain and to justify his or her conduct, the forum can pose questions and pass judgment, and the actor may face consequences' (2007, p. 450).

Bovens' definition focuses on accountability as a process, that consists of three (analytically) distinct phases: the information phase, the debating phase and the sanctions or judgment phase. In the information phase, the actor explains his conduct to the forum. In the debating phase, the forum can ask for additional information and question the conduct of the actor. To these questions the actor must answer. Finally, in the sanctions or judgment phase, a concluding judgment is formed about the conduct of the actor and possible sanctions (or rewards) may be passed on to the actor. It should be noted, that this process can be organized formally, but it may also involve an informal, social relationship (Schillemans, 2013).

One of the primary functions of public accountability is to ensure democratic control. In modern representative democracies this typically happens directly trough voting, and indirectly through formal accountability demands and hierarchical control in public organizations. Citizens, through

voting, transfer their sovereignty to political representatives who, in turn confide their trust in a cabinet. They delegate their mandate to public servants and executive agencies, and so on. All these principals in the chain of delegation want to control the exercise of the transferred powers by holding the agents to account. '*At the end of the line of accountability relations stand the citizens who judge the performance of the government and can sanction their political representatives by 'voting the rascals out.'* (Bovens, 2005, p. 192).

4.1.2. What do we know of public accountability in do-ocracy?

Although accountability is not a primary focus (except for the article by Verhoeven, Van De Wijdeven and Metze, 2014), 26 out of the 52 articles in the literature review mention the concept of accountability ('verantwoording'). The focus in most of these studies seem to be on the role accountability plays in the encounters between citizens' initiatives and local government. In only 15 of these studies, it is the initiatives or active citizens being held accountable. In the 16 other instances, the accountability of local government and civil servants is discussed in the context of do-ocracy, and some articles address both.

The accountability issues with/ in local government

With regard to the role of accountability in local government, various authors state that the way accountability is currently organized is getting in the way of public servants' new role as facilitator of citizens' initiatives, in which they no longer implement policies, but support active citizens contributing to policy goals (Timmerman, 2014; Basten et al, 2015; Brounen, 2014; De Wilde, Tonkens & Hurenkamp 2014; Kleistra & Walraven, 2014; Tonkens & Kroese 2009; Van Dam, Salverda & During, 2011; Verheijde & Bosman 2013). The accountability referred to here, is the *internal,* hierarchical accountability in the municipality. The problem with this form of accountability, with regard to government's 'new role' seems to be related to the relatively unpredictable nature and unclear outcomes of citizens' initiatives. These may demand more loose forms of accountability than the strict accountability rules around public money and public servants' working hours (Tonkens & Kroese 2009; Timmerman, 2014). Van Dam, Salverda & During (2015) speak of the 'classical dilemma' of enthusiastic citizens running into a government that is obliged to be careful and accountable. Interviews with people involved in citizens' initiatives indicate that this is also experienced as such by active citizens (Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2011 Denters, Tonkens, Verhoeven & Bakker, 2013; Hazeu et al, 2005; Hendriks & Van de Wijdeven, 2014; Tonkens et al., 2015).

When it comes to the accountability of citizens' initiatives, local government also plays a role. In several reports, citizens' initiatives are confronted with accountability demands from local government because they make use of public money (Tonkens & Kroese, 2009; Tonkens &

Verhoeven, 2011; Denters, Tonkens, Verhoeven & Bakker, 2013; Hendriks & Van De Wijdeven, 2014). This seems to involve a process of administrative accountability, though, the details of these accountability demands and processes have not been reported systematically. The few examples that are mentioned throughout the various researches suggest that there is some diversity in form and intensity. Hendriks and Van de Wijdeven (2014) report six-weekly meetings with public servants to discuss progress, written reports and accountability over the conditions of a subsidy without a fixed form, in different cases of bottom up do-ocracy. Tonkens and Kroese (2009), who studied examples of top down do-ocracy, show that in small scale initiatives accountability demanded may be minimal. They quote a public servant: *'You ask for some accountability… that could be a couple of photographs or a story in the neighborhood newspaper. It is not an operating subsidy, it is a performance subsidy. Receipts, therefore are uninteresting*' (p. 24). Accountability demands are heavier, however, if the initiative receives more public money, then receipts do become relevant.

When being held accountable, it seems that the active citizens share a similar experience of accountability procedure that are not well attuned to the practice of do-ocracy (Hazeu et al, 2005; Hurenkamp, Tonkens & Duivendak, 2006; Hendriks & van de Wijdeven, 2014). In some studies, accountability is even considered to be a barrier to the initiatives of active citizens (Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2011 Denters, Tonkens, Verhoeven & Bakker, 2013; Hazeu et al, 2005; Hendriks & Van de Wijdeven, 2014; Tonkens et al., 2015). The demands are experienced as too much and too complicated: '*time spent on these issue could not be spent on the 'real thing' – meetings and exhibitions - some people experienced, which was frustrating'* (Denters, Tonkens, Verhoeven & Bakker, 2013, p. 35). It is remarkable, that even though many papers warn for an accountability deficit, there studies point towards an (experienced) accountability overload.

Appreciation and development

On the other hand, active citizens also appreciate accountability relations with local government (Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2011; Denters et al., 2013; Hendriks & van de Wijdeven, 2014; Van de Wijdeven & de Graaf, 2014). *'Citizens want a system that guarantees fair use of public funds. That system should not be exaggerated (the receipts), but it should exist'* (Denters et al., 2013, p. 32). In addition, some authors report that accountability processes offer active citizens a way to receive attention and appreciation (Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2011). The researchers also point out that the accountability burden can be lightened, when public servants assist active citizens in dealing with complex (financial) accountability processes (Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2011; Roorda et al, 2015; Denters et al, 2013; Oude Vrielink, Verhoeven & Van de Wijdeven, 2013

Some studies, in addition, show that local governments are searching for new ways to adapt their

internal accountability processes to their new role (Van Caem, 2008; Hazeu et al, 2005; Hendriks & Van de Wijdeven, 2014). In a study by Hendriks & Van de Wijdeven (2014), the municipality of Amsterdam, for example, installed a team to identify possible changes in 'quality assurance, management of professionals and financial accountability', to 'be accountable in a meaningful way' (p. 123).

External accountability to the community

In addition to the accountability relationship with local government in the context of public funding, Van De Wijdeven and De Graaf (2014) also speak of accountability towards 'the community'. They have seen this type of informal, continuous form of accountability in their four case studies, mostly in small villages. The initiators are part of the community and have everyday conversations with other community members about the initiative, '*besides speaking about the initiative, they may also be held accountable for it.* The initiators realize this, and therefore they check projects (formally and informally) with the community, beforehand and during the implementation (p. 74). In addition, these authors mentions 'accountability pamphlets', websites, social media and annual public meetings as ways for initiatives to be accountable to their community. Hazeu et al. (2005), in addition, mention an initiative that keeps a logbook for accountability towards partners and financiers. These informal processes of accountability towards the community are important, as '*the enthusiastic reaction, the applause (they hope to get), from the local community is an important energizer for these doers: that is the fuel that keeps their motor running … . If what they are doing is not appreciated, they directly get such feedback from their community.'* (Verhoeven, Van De Wijdeven & Metze, 2014). In sum, these studies indicate that citizens' initiatives may be involved in highly informal external accountability processes with the local community.

Conclusion

To conclude, citizens' initiatives seem to engage in formal accountability relationships with local government and informal accountability relationships with their 'community'. To quote Verhoeven and colleagues: *'in a do-ocracy in which self-organizing citizens provide public services this [accountability] is a hybrid form that combines elements of private and social accountability with those of political accountability* (2014, p. 14). These forms of accountability are relevant to the active citizens as they feel responsible for fair use of public funds and generates feedback from their primary target audience, but when experience as too much or too complex, become a barrier. The studies in the literature review, with a few exceptions[3], however, do not discuss accountability structurally. This is review, therefore reflects what is known and written about public accountability

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[3] Van de Wijdeven & de Graaf (2014) in four case studies of do-ocracy in the country side and Tonkens & Verhoeven's (2011) study of top down do-ocracy in Amsterdam

in do-ocracy, it does not provide a systematic overview of accountability practices themselves. In order to close this gap in the literature and develop such a systematic study of accountability in do-ocracy, an analytical framework is needed. This framework for systematically describing accountability is presented in the next section.

4.1.3.   A descriptive analytical framework

Having discussed what we now of public accountability in do-ocracy, it can be concluded that there is a lack of *systematic* knowledge of the topic. To order to generate such knowledge, an analytical framework is needed. Fortunately, such a framework, based on Bovens' definition of accountability , exists. This descriptive analytical framework will be discussed briefly in the sections below.

The actor and the forum

The starting point for this framework is Bovens' definition of accountability as a relationship between an 'actor' and a 'forum'. As the focus of this study is the accountability processes in do-ocracy, the relevant actor under study will be the 'doer' of do-ocracy, citizens engaging in 'initiatives' (van de Wijdeven, 2012). Based on the available literature, some expectations have been formed as to what parties may form a relevant forum: the municipality, more specifically the city council, and the neighborhood community as the users and the people affected by the activities of the initiative. The normative relevance of these parties will be elaborated later.

De facto accountability processes

The first sub question of this research focuses on describing the accountability processes that take place in do-ocracy. Such a description may start with the content of the communication between the citizen initiative and their (potential) forums. Is there communication in the first place? What behaviors are the initiatives being held accountable for? And what are the standards used to judge them? How are they judged? These questions need to be answered not only to better understand accountability in do-ocracy, but also in order to do the normative analysis of sub question 2.

Secondly, in order to judge the democratic accountability of do-ocracy, we need to establish which accountability processes actually take place. This requires a distinct analytical framework, as not all explanations and justifications of behavior qualify as accountability processes, and not all formal accountability arrangements lead to real accountability processes.

In order to identify and describe the accountability processes in do-ocracy, the descriptive analytical framework developed by Schillemans (2007) will be adopted. This framework follows Bovens' definition of an accountability process as a specific form of interaction that consists of eight elements across three analytically distinct phases. In order to qualify as a de facto accountability relationship

all 8 steps need to be included in the communication between actor and forum (Schillemans, 2007, based on Bovens, 2006, p. 12):

Information phase

1. There is a relationship between an actor and a forum
2. In which the actor is or feels obliged
3. To explain his or her behavior

Debating phase

4. and justify it if necessary
5. while the forum may pose additional questions

Judgment phase

6. and the forum judges the conduct of the actor
7. in the light of certain expectations
8. *which may result in consequences for the actor*

In addition, the interaction between actor and forum may lead to some form of behavioral change in the actor - in the direction desired by the forum . The influence of the communication on the actor can either be ex post or ex ante. Ex post, the actor changes its behavior after the debating with the forum, and adapts it in line with the judgment of the forum (Schillemans, 2007, 104). Ex ante, there may be anticipated reactions to the forum if a.) the actor knows the preferences of the forum and b.) the actor thinks highly of the forum. The actor in this case may anticipate the reactions of the forum and engage in 'pre emptive self criticism '.

These elements lead to the following **descriptive framework**:

➢ What is the content of the communication between the actor and forum in the three phases of the accountability process?
➢ What is the influence of the communication on the behavior of the actor?
➢ Does the communication between actor and forum qualify as an accountability process?

From Schillemans, 2007

4.2.   A Normative Framework

Competing conceptions of democratic accountability

The aim of this research is not only to describe and understand the practices of public accountability taking place in do-ocracy, it also aims to evaluate these practices in terms of (their contribution to) democratic legitimacy. This requires for a normative analytical framework for democratic accountability. This research, however, views do-ocracy as a different model of democracy than the representative model it is embedded in, and that forms the basis of the models of democratic accountability we commonly use. This requires for the use of two normative models of democratic accountability. These will be developed and elaborated in the coming section. Firstly, however, the two competing models of democracy will be compared to develop a basis for the different models of democratic accountability

4.2.1.   Two competing models of democracy

A normative framework to evaluate the democratic quality of an accountability arrangement was developed by Bovens & 't Hart (2005). In this framework, citizens, as the primary principals in a democracy, transfer their sovereignty to political representatives, who transfer implementation of their plans to executive agents. '*Each of these principals in the chain of delegation, wants to control the exercise of the transferred powers by holding the agents to account. At the end of the line of accountability relations stand the citizens who judge the performance of the government and can sanction their political representatives by ''voting the rascals out''.'* (Bovens, 2005, p. 192). As such, accountability is an essential part of democracy, and democratic control is considered one of the primary functions of public accountability.

This framework, however, is based on the notion of democracy as *representative* democracy. Although alternative models of democracy, such as direct and participatory democracy, are increasingly taking on a role in society and politics 'the concept of democratic accountability is almost exclusively discussed in the context of representative forms of democracy' (Trechsel, 2010, p. 1050).

Verhoeven, Van de Wijdeven and Metze argue that do-ocracy not only requires democratic anchorage in the aggregative representative democracy in which it is nested, it also needs to be democratically legitimated *in its own terms* (2014). Do-ocracy is a different model of democracy and departs from a different conception of what democracy is. This has implications for the organization and role of accountability, as competing democratic visions suggest different accountability relationships and accountability claims (Olsen, 2015).

In the next section the two models of democracy, representative democracy and do-ocracy, are compared, resulting in several differences that are relevant for the organization and role of accountability. These differences will form the point of departure for the alternative model of accountability for do-ocracy, that will be developed in section 4.2.3.

Two competing models of democracy

In the ideal type of do-ocracy, the public sphere is (co-) created by (groups) of active citizens that address and deal with what they view as local problems reflecting a public cause, by taking concrete action to take on these problems by themselves (Van de Wijdeven, 2012). The ideal type reflects elements of models of direct democracy, in which public decisions are made directly by the people, and associative democracy, in which voluntary, self governing associations form the primary form of democratic governance of social and economic issues (respectively Trechsel, 2010; Hirst, 1994).

In the ideal type of representative democracy, citizens transfer their sovereignty to political representatives, who represent their ideals and interests. These political representatives in turn transfer implementation of their plans to executive agents, the bureaucrats and professionals developing and conducting the policy in practice (Bovens, 2005).

These two ideal types of democracy show some obvious differences, some of which are particularly interesting in the light of democratic accountability.

Firstly, do-ocracy can be considered a form of ***direct, rather than representative democracy***. In do-ocracy, decisions to take a certain action are made by citizens directly. Sovereignty, or the ability to decide is, unlike in the representative model, not transferred to political representatives.

Secondly, in do-ocracy, following it associative nature, ***there is no distinction between those making the decisions, and those implementing them***. Decisions actually take the form of concrete actions by voluntary groups. This is a significant difference with representative democracy, in which decisions made by political representatives are implemented by executive agents.

These two differences imply that in do-ocracy, there is no 'hierarchical chain of delegation', which happens to be at the core of the traditional model of democratic accountability. In this traditional model, an accountability arrangement enables 'democratically legitimized bodies to monitor and evaluate executive behavior and to induce executive agents to modify that behavior in accordance with their preferences' (Bovens, Schillemans & 't Hart, 2008). In do-ocracy, however, there are no executive agents to be monitored by decision makers and there are no political representatives to be voted out by the people as these roles are concentrated in the same group of people.

Thirdly, in do-ocracy, there is, however, *a difference between those who make the decisions, and those who are affected by the decisions*. In representative democracy, 'the people', represented by elected politicians, make the decisions, and are affected by these decisions. In do-ocracy, decisions regarding the public sphere are made by active citizens and voluntary associations. These decisions, however, may affect the lives of other than those represented in the association and using their services. This difference is relevant for the organization of accountability, according to Mulgan (2003), as accountability relations can be legitimized either from the perspective of ownership – from those on whose behalf the decision is made - or from the perspective of affected interests. In representative democracy, the ownership of a decision or action and the interests affected by these actions are concentrated with the people (Mulgan, 2003, p. 12 - 13). Therefore, accountability from executive agents to the people through a chain of democratic delegation is (theoretically) sufficient, from both the perspective of ownership and affected interests. In do-ocracy, however, ownership and effects may not be concentrated in the same group of people, again demanding other forms of accountability than through democratic delegation.

On the other hand, the lack of hierarchical delegation, implies, fourthly, that in do-ocracy, *decision making is decentralized* to the level of individual, local problems. Hirst (1994), in his theory of associative democracy, argues that if decisions are reduced in both scale and scope, decisions can be made in constant consultation with those who are affected by them and accountability to the people can be strengthened (p. 21-22, 35). According to Hirst, a lack of accountability to locally affected citizens, is actually the main problem of representative democracy that is '*hopelessly overburdened by the sheer size of modern big government and the multiplicity of the functions of social provision and regulation undertaken by modern states*' (1994, p. 21). Following Hirst, do-ocracy, with its focus on local problems, actually allows for more direct accountability to 'the affected'.

Finally, the overall ideal typical system of do-ocracy can be characterized as a *system of voluntary self-organization, rather than formal collective decision making and hierarchical control*. To quote Verhoeven et al (2014): *'From this perspective democracy, can be seen as an arrangement that realizes the ideal of self-government and that de-emphasizes the idea that democracy applies to reaching collective binding decisions.'* (p. 7). This ideal is also reflected in Hirst's idea of associative democracy (1994).

To summarize, these differences between representative democracy and do-ocracy complicate the application of democratic accountability as described by Bovens and 't Hart, that is based on the idea that 'accountability legitimizes government actions by linking them effectively to the 'democratic

chain of delegation', to the context of do-ocracy. The differences, however, also add new possibilities for more direct accountability.

In addition, the models may be different, but they are not mutually exclusive and exist alongside each other in practice. Do-ocracy is embedded in the system of representative democracy, and citizens initiatives are often granted public resources through this system. Hirst, too, views his ideal of associative democracy as an addition to the system of representative democracy (1994).

The authors therefore argue that citizens' initiatives, as the decision makers and executive agents of do-ocracy, should be democratically legitimized from both perspectives of democracy (Verhoeven et al., 2014; Hirst, 1994).

This research will therefore apply Bovens and 't Hart's perspective of democratic accountability, that will be elaborated in section 4.2.2. In addition, however, a second normative framework will be developed for evaluating accountability processes from the point of view of do-ocracy – as a different model of democracy. This framework will not be limited to reviewing appropriateness of the *form* of accountability (horizontal, informal, etc.). Its purpose is to evaluate accountability processes from the perspective of the democratic *function* they may serve in do-ocracy. How does accountability contribute to democracy, if democracy is conceptualized as do-ocracy?

This framework, that will be developed in section 4.2.3. departs from the differences between the two models described above. It builds on Trechel's (2010) notion of reflexive accountability in direct democracy, Verhoeven et al.'s (2014) proposition of pragmatic accountability for do-ocracy and Hirst's idea of associative democracy (1994), combined with Koppell's (2005) notion of responsiveness.

4.2.2. A normative framework for representative democracy

To judge whether accountability processes contributes to democratic legitimacy, Bovens & 't Hart (2005) have developed a normative analytical framework. Starting point for this framework is accountability's democratic control function, in which 'accountability controls and legitimizes government actions by linking them effectively to the 'democratic chain of delegation' ' (Bovens, Schillemans & 't Hart, 2008).

The central evaluation criterion for the democratic control function of accountability therefore is the degree to which an accountability arrangement contributes to this process of monitoring and evaluating by democratically legitimized principals. Bovens et al (2008) have developed this central criterion into the following set of concrete evaluation criteria:

> *Representative democratic perspective*
>
> ***Central idea:*** accountability legitimizes government actions by linking them effectively to the 'democratic chain of delegation'
>
> ***Central evaluation criterion:*** the degree to which an accountability arrangement or regime enables democratically legitimized bodies to monitor and evaluate executive behavior and to induce executive agents to modify that behavior in accordance with their preferences
>
> ***The forum*** represents a democratically legitimized body
>
> ***The content*** of the accountability communication: must include the standards and preferences of the democratically legitimized principal
>
> ***Concrete evaluation questions:***
>
> o   Are democratically legitimized principles informed about the conduct of executive actors, and the social consequences of that conduct?
> o   Do the debates between accountability forum and actor focus on whether the behavior of the latter accords with the democratically legitimized principal's standards and preferences?
> o   Does the accountability arrangement provide sufficiently significant incentives for executive actors to commit themselves to the agenda of their democratically legitimized principals?

From Bovens, Schillemans & 't Hart (2008)

As this normative framework is based on the model of representative democracy, the model may be used to judge do-ocracy from the 'aggregate representative' democracy perspective mentioned by Verhoeven et al (2014). As such, it can be applied directly to evaluate the relationship between initiative and the municipality.

The frame is less suitable, though, for judging the other non-vertical forms of accountability citizen initiatives may engage in. Schillemans (2007), however, developed an additional framework that can be used to assess the democratic quality of *horizontal* accountability processes. This frame may be used to judge the contributions of possible horizontal accountability processes between the initiative and local community. Following Schillemans' reasoning it is possible that these horizontal accountability processes contribute to this type of democratic control, as a 'fire alarm control' mechanism for the principal for example by providing democratic representatives with additional information (p. 341).

4.2.3.   A normative framework for do-ocracy

Accountability for direct democracy

We have established that do-ocracy, due to its direct nature, does not distinguish between the people, decision makers and executive agents. What goes on in the public sphere is not controlled through a hierarchical chain of delegation. Therefore, direct democracy is has some interesting implications for accountability. As Trechsel (2010), who theorized accountability in referenda and

popular votes, puts it: *'When the people have the last word, are the people responsible for the decision taken? And if so, to whom?'* According to Trechsel, both questions need to be answered in the affirmative: *'when the people decide, the people are responsible for the decision. And they are responsible, as the highest organ of the state, to themselves'* (p. 1050). From this perspective the people are both the actor and ultimate forum. This means, according to Trechsel (2010), that the citizens who make the decision – the majority of voters – need to be held accountable by the people as a whole. In the context of do-ocracy, in which an initiative makes a 'public decision' for their neighborhood, the initiative needs to be accountable to the neighborhood community.

(1a) The actor – the initiative – needs to be accountable to the neighborhood as a whole

It is important to notice that in Trechsel's model the citizens as a whole include both the majority in favor of the decision, and the minority that was not. In the context of do-ocracy, in which there are no voters, this concerns both the initiative and the users of their services but also the rest of the neighborhood, for whom the 'public decision' is made. This argument is focused on the aggregate level the democratic system, viewed as a system in which all people can vote, or in the case of do-ocracy, take initiative.

Accountability for the users and the affected

From the level of individual initiative a similar argument can be made derived from Mulgan's (2003) distinction between the 'owner' of a decision and those who are affected by it. As mentioned above, Mulgan argues that accountability relations can be legitimized either from the perspective of ownership – from those on whose behalf the decision is made - or from the perspective of affected interests. In representative democracy, the ownership of a decision or action and the interests affected by these actions are concentrated with the people (Mulgan, 2003, p. 12 - 13).

In do-ocracy, however, ownership and effects may not be concentrated in the same group of people. The effects of citizen initiatives in the public sphere may transgress the boundaries of the group of active citizens taking the initiative and those using their services. Not all neighbors affected by the initiative, are considered the owner, or target audience of the initiative. A youth center, for example, may affect more than only the youths participating in the center's activities, and not all neighbors will visit a community managed swimming pool. Although this perspective approached do-ocracy at a different scale, the implications for accountability are similar to the conclusion derived from Trechsels model. The citizen initiative should be accountable to both the owners of the initiative – the initiative and its users - and the people affected by their actions, which in practice will be the local community.

(1b) This includes the initiative and its users itself, and the neighbors they affect

Following Mulgan's argument, citizen initiatives should be accountable to their neighbors for the effects their activities have on their lives. When being accountable to 'themselves' and the users of their service, they need to be accountable for their decisions, or *concrete actions* in the context of do-ocracy. This matches the pragmatic, action oriented nature of do-ocracy. As Van de Wijdeven (2012) and Verhoeven et al (2014), initiatives are focused on results, rather than the process.

The idea of accountability for results can be connected to Koppell's notion of *responsiveness*, a form of accountability that is focused on *whether the organization has fulfilled the substantive expectation (demand/ need)* (Koppell, 2005, p. 96).

In some cases, the affected community members will be the same group as those who are the users of the services the initiative provides. This applies to for example activities restructuring or renovating public places, in which the target audience is the neighborhood as a whole.

> ***(1c) The actor (the citizen initiative) needs to accountable to the neighborhood for the effects their activities have on the neighborhood.***

> ***(1d) The actor (the citizen initiative) needs to be accountable to themselves and their users for the results they produce.***

Reflexive accountability

Now how can one part of the people be accountable to the people as a whole – including themselves? As one group of citizens is not placed above the other, formal sanctioning instruments are virtually impossible. Trechsel's solution to this dilemma is a model of 'reflexive accountability'. Reflexive accountability offers a way in which the people can sanction themselves – or the people can sanction the majority of voters - by building in the possibility to revise a decision made earlier. '*If a fraction of the electorate can ask for a new vote on the same issue, or in other words if this fraction of the electorate can question the previous majority and try to gain a new, dissenting majority, then a soft sanctioning mechanism is built into the system'* (Trechsel, 2010, p. 1059).

Such an idea of repetitive decision making is not new. It is built into the system of representative democracy in the form of a fixed periodicity of the elected representatives. Such periodicity is however not inherent to a system of direct democracy, especially not to do-ocracy. Trechsel argues therefore that the opportunity for revision should be built in direct democracy, for example by provision of (formal) popular initiative. '*By allowing the people to ask for referendums to be held, by giving the people the right to launch initiatives that (ultimately) can result in a binding popular vote,*

the accountee can sanction – in t1 – the accountor for a decision taken in t0.' (Trechsel, 2010, p. 1060).

Trechsel's notion of reflexive accountability was developed in the specific context of referendums and popular votes. In a more abstract sense, however, reflexive accountability implies that the people should always be in power to reconsider a decision (after some time) to find out if it still holds, and alter the decision if it does not. The second implication direct democracy places on accountability arrangements, therefore, is that the people need to be in the position to reconsider decisions and make an alternative decision.

(2) The principal (the neighborhood community) needs to be able to sanction the actor (the initiative) by reconsidering decisions made by the actor

The idea of popular initiative as a sanctioning mechanism follows the rationale of direct democracy. The initiative for challenging the decisions of the (majority of the) people stays directly with the people. In the case of do-ocracy, it should stay with the local community. According to Olsen (2015), direct and participatory democracy allow all citizens and issues access to all decision opportunities. *'Citizens have the right to call rulers and each other to account in terms of democratic standards. They have influence through referenda, direct administrative contact, taking issues to court, opinion polls, citizens' juries and rights of inquiry, protest demonstrations, civil disobedience and media activity'* (Olsen, 2015, p. 10).

In the context of do-ocracy, in which decisions are not made by a formal vote but rather by actions, Verhoeven et al. suggest that accountability mainly will be an informal process directly between citizens. Their biggest criticism of using only the classic perspective to evaluate the democratic legitimacy of do-ocracy, is that these informal interactions are not taken into account. '*When put into practice the classic normative criteria for democratic anchorage are already to some extent problematic by not taking into account the possibility of citizen's interactions and its inherent (political) cooperation'* (Verhoeven et al., 2014, p. 8). This is also reflected in Hirst's idea of associative democracy, as an alternative for, or necessary supplement to representative democracy. The associations are not permanent interest groups, they can be joined or abandoned by their members at any moment. Participation itself, therefore is not of crucial importance, 'important, however, is the introduction of opportunity for influence' (Engelen, 1997, p. 6). For an effective accountability process in do-ocracy, therefore:

(3) The principal (the neighborhood community) has the opportunity to take initiative for these sanctions

As follows from the above, these sanctions for 'an alternative' are likely to be horizontal, soft and informal in nature. As one group of citizens is not placed above the other, formal sanctioning instruments are virtually impossible. As Trechsel puts it: you simply cannot dissolve the people and elect another (Trechsel, 2010, p. 1058). This implication of soft, horizontal accountability is in line with the pragmatic approach of Verhoeven et al. (2014) and their argument of informal accountability mentioned above. What these informal sanctions to alter decisions might be, however, cannot be specified from the theory of accountability. One can imagine, for example, an alternative, competing citizen initiative, or a protest against the initiative. The idea of horizontal accountability is, however, a practical implication for accountability, rather than a normative demand.

(4) Accountability in do-ocracy may be horizontal and informal

To know whether to use such sanctions or not, the forum – the local community – needs to be informed about the conduct of the actor – the initiative – and judge this behavior. Hirst, in his model of associative democracy even speaks of 'democracy as communication' (1994, p. 35). According to Hirst, constant consultation is needed between those organizing public services and those who are affected by them. The decentralized decision making that characterizes associative democracy and do-ocracy, unlike representative democracy, allows for such consultation. The final implication of do-ocracy for the organization therefore involves the first two phases of the accountability process.

(5) In do-ocracy, the information and debate about the conduct of the actor – the initiative - must enable the forum to judge whether it needs to organize an 'alternative' or not

Accountability for self-organization
At the aggregate or systems level, do-ocracy is set apart from representative democracy and many forms of direct democracy is it is focused on self-governance, rather than majority decision making. This suggests that not only the *form* of accountability in do-ocracy relies on self-organization - namely active citizens demanding an account - following the essence of do-ocracy the mere *purpose* of accountability in do-ocracy should be self-organization. The evaluative question 'does accountability contribute to democracy?' in the context of do-ocracy means: does accountability contribute to self-organization?

At this point the notion of do-ocracy differs significantly from the forms of direct democracy upon which Trechsel builds his model of reflexive accountability. In the context of do-ocracy, an 'alternative decision' is not made by majority votes. Rather, any public decision in do-ocracy is the result of the concrete actions of (a collective of) active citizens (Van de Wijdeven, 2012). The

'alternative decision' in do-ocracy therefore must take the form of alternative actions, organized by members of the local community. As mentioned above, this could be a protest or alternative plan by affected citizens, or the changes required by service users.

If it satisfies the 5 demands mentioned in the previous sections, an accountability process should contribute to self-organization in two ways. Firstly, accountability itself is a process of informal self-organization. Ideally, service users and affected neighbors demand an account. Secondly, these accountability activities affect the system of self organization of do-ocracy - the total of activities that shape the public sphere – by altering and improving or protesting initiatives.

Do-ocracy as an evaluative framework for accountability

From the view of do-ocracy as self-organization, combined with the notion of reflexive accountability in direct democracy, a normative framework for evaluating accountability processes can be derived. From this perspective accountability needs to contribute to self-organization through reflexive accountability.

Do-ocracy perspective

Central idea: self-organization through reflexive accountability

Central evaluation criterion: are the local community affected by an initiative, and are the users of the service able to judge whether they would want an alternative decision, and is an alternative possible?

The forum: consists of affected neighbors and the users of the initiative's services, and has the power to organize itself

Content of information and debate: needs to be sufficient for the community and users to judge whether they want to take action to organize themselves for an alternative

Concrete evaluation questions (linked to the three phases of accountability)

o   Is the information provided by the actor (citizen initiative) sufficient for the forum (affected community and service users) to judge the effects and performance of the initiative?
o   Is there a debate between the actor (citizen initiative) and the community about the initiative's effects?
o   Is there a debate between the actor (citizen initiative) and its users about effectiveness?
o   Are affected local community members able to organize an 'alternative'?
o   Are service users able to demand change if they find activities are ineffective?

V.   Accountability in practice and perception

A descriptive analysis of the data

After having discussed the 'world of do-ocracy' as it appears from the literature in section 4.1.2, and having developed the analytical framework in chapters 3 and 4, chapter 5 moves on to apply the theoretical knowledge to answer the empirical questions guiding the research. We start with the perceptions of active citizens on accountability (sub question 2) in section 5.1. Next, in section 5.2, we explore how the these perceptions translate into accountability practices (sub question 3). Sub question 4, regarding the normative analysis will be answered in a separate chapter (chapter 6).

5.1.   Active citizens' perspectives on accountability

This first section of the empirical results focuses on the active citizens' views of accountability and aims to answer sub question 2: '*how do active citizens perceive accountability in the context of their initiative?*' When conducting the analysis, a clear difference appeared in the perceptions of accountability towards the local community as an accountability forum, and towards local government as forum. The former, discussed in section 5.1.1, focuses on the relationship with the target audience of the initiative as a form of *democratic or political* accountability, in which accountability to the local community – in all its different forms – is legitimized from the perspective of 'ownership', and to a lesser degree, 'affectedness'. Section 5.1.2, then, explores the perceptions of accountability towards local government, that is viewed more as a form of financial, 'return on investment' kind of accountability relationship.

5.1.1.   The 'local community': a matter of ownership

With regard to perceptions of accountability, the first thing that came up in the interviews was the relationship with the local community as the target audience of the initiative. When asked about accountability, nine of the sixteen respondents told me that they felt they were, or should be accountable to their local community. Three respondents mentioned this even before being asked about accountability explicitly. The main reason for these respondents to feel accountable towards their community, is that what they do, they do for, or in the interest of, the community:

'*Je doet het voor het dorp zelf. Je doet het uit een soort maatschappelijke betrokkenheid van 'iemand moet het doen', en we hebben er als dorp allemaal baat bij*' (respondent 11)[4]

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[4] In this report, short quotes paraphrased in the text are translated to English, whereas longer, illustrative quotes will be presented in Dutch, to retain the original phrasing.

There are however, two main differences in what the respondents mean by 'being accountable to their community'. Firstly, they differ with regard to who they consider the local community they are accountable to. In some cases the local community referred to is the entire population of the village or neighborhood. These were initiatives with no specific target audience, most of which taking place in or reshaping public places. Examples include the redesign of village entry and the development of a community park. In the other cases, the community referred to when speaking of accountability is a more specific target group, that covers only part of the neighborhood or village population. In these cases, respondents feel they are accountable to their service users or members, on behalf of whom they act. Examples include a project developing a new neighborhood of forty homes built by its future residents, a health care initiative focused on vulnerable elderly residents and a community center that 'provides community organizations with facilities they need.' The latter illustrates what being there for the neighborhood means from this perspective. The manager of the community center feels states that they *do not aim to be accountable to government, but to the neighborhood'*. He explains, however, that:

'De buurt bestaat niet. Dus dat is een beleidsmatig eufemisme, van: wat is jullie relatie met de buurt? Geen idee, wat is de buurt? De buurt bestaat niet. 20, 25 duizend mensen waarvan een belangrijk deel alleen hier slaapt, werkt buiten de buurt, vrije tijd buiten de buurt. Daar heb je niks mee en dat is ook niet erg'.

The 'community' that he does feel accountable to is the part of the community using, or wanting to use, the center. This is a group of community organizations, that dangle between public and private sphere or market.

These respondents have in common that to them, accountability is about being responsive to the community for whom they organize their services – either the entire neighborhood or a specific group. This perspective on accountability can be connected to Mulgans (2003) concept of 'ownership' and Koppel's (2005) 'responsiveness'. According to Mulgan (2003), accountability can be legitimized either from the perspective of ownership or from the perspective of affected interests. To these respondents the community members are the 'owners' of their initiative, in the sense that the initiative serves their interests and is developed on their behalf. Koppell's notion of responsiveness, that can be connected to ownership as well, refers to a form of accountability that is focused on whether an organization fulfills the substantive expectation of their target audience (Koppell, 2005, p. 96).

Being accountable for responsiveness: process or virtue?

The second main difference in the respondents perspectives' is the difference in whether they refer to accountability as a 'process' or a 'virtue' (Bovens, 2010). For five of the respondents, being accountable involves engaging in an accountability *process,* that serves to either test or reinforce the support of their community. These respondents believe they act *on behalf* of their community, and therefore accountability to them plays a similar role as in representative democracy. This is mostly experienced by the respondents that have organized their initiative in the form of a cooperation, in which the members formally make decisions together. Accountability here is crucial, as '*you cannot make all decisions together with the entire group'* (respondent 15). It is also experienced as such by some of the initiatives that feel they operate on behalf of the entire village or neighborhood, as is the case with a project in the village of Beckum: *'we should all benefit from this as a village, but that should be put to the test. We may think we have built a nice tower, but if nobody else cares...'* (respondent 11). In addition, two of these respondents view accountability as a means of gaining appreciation and reinforcing support from the community and emphasizing the shared interest. It is *'a way of showing what you have achieved'* and '*to get some appreciation for contributing to solidarity'* (respondent 9).

For other respondents that say they feel accountable to their community, accountability means *being responsive itself*. For them, accountability towards their community is perceived as a *virtue*, rather than a process. Acting on behalf of the community is viewed as inherent to their initiative, for example in the case of an Amsterdam community center that was taken over by active citizens preventing them from being closed down. They are accountable to the community by *'on the one hand making sure the building is well used and on the other hand by showing we can accommodate a lot of requests from the neighborhood' (*respondent 5). This accountability virtue, though, comes with the practice of having to explain how the decisions made the interest of the community. You should, as the manager of the Amsterdam community center puts it *'be able to explain it if you cannot accommodate a certain request from the community.'*

This virtue of doing what is in the interest of the community seems to be even more widespread, as it also came up in most of the other interviews, including those with respondents who do not feel accountable to their community. These respondents have similar a feeling about their relationship to their community, but do not experience this as an accountability relationship. To these active citizens, it comes naturally to act in the interest of their community and this is not experienced as accountability. Only when you depart from this course of action, an accountability *process* may come in play. This perspective is illustrated perfectly by one of the board members of one of the health care initiatives:

'Het is meer laten zien waar we staan, ik zie dat helemaal niet als verantwoording. Maar ik denk dat we allemaal wel voelen dat de verantwoording voor een deel zit in hoe je vindt dat je handelt. Niet achteraf, maar vooraf al. Ja, met de beste bedoelingen. ... En alles voor het dorp, voor de mensen. En verder verantwoording... ja, als we een keer flink het schip in gaan, dan zullen we ons moeten verantwoorden. ... Je wordt er natuurlijk wel genadeloos op afgerekend als het een keer mis gaat of verkeerde beslissingen maakt. Als je moeilijke beslissingen maakt moet je die natuurlijk wel kunnen beargumenteren, maar dat is overal zo. Als je echt afwijkt van het pad, zeg maar.' (respondent 1)

Finally, it should be noted that in most of these cases in which responsiveness is viewed as an important (accountability) virtue, as in the quote above, the focus is on the *intentions* of the active citizens involved in the initiatives. In some of the initiatives this is particularly important, as their role is to enable or facilitate other active citizens. These are the respondents running community centers in which other community organizations reside. To them this has some important consequences for the way they view their accountability towards the neighborhood. On the one hand, the respondents state that their success largely depends on how much their center is being used: *'you can measure success to the degree the building is being used'* (respondent 5). This, however, is not in their hands and therefore they cannot (entirely) be held accountable for the results they produce:

'Wij maken geen beleid. Dus we hoeven ook niet te verantwoorden. Dat is een uitermate geruststellend idee. Als iemand zegt: het gebouw wordt weinig gebruikt, dan zeggen we: dat klopt. Maar wij gaan geen activiteiten doen want daar zijn we niet voor. Als het echt te weinig gebruikt wordt, dan geven we het gebouw terug aan de gemeente, dan hoeven we het niet te hebben want we willen het alleen als het goed gebruikt wordt.' (respondent 5)

Rather, it is the community itself they feel is responsible for the success of the initiative. If the community wants it to stay open, *'they should come here and not go to the competition'* (respondent 4).

Taking the affected into account

When speaking of feeling accountable towards the community or neighborhood, the respondents mostly spoke of their neighbors from the perspective of ownership. The perspective of the 'affected' also came up during the interviews, although the respondents did not connect this as much to their sense of accountability. Most of them feel they have every right to do what they do. This does not mean, however, that they do not take into account the consequences of their projects for the neighborhood. Even though they do not connect this to accountability, most of these respondents feel that – being part of a society or context – their relationship with their neighbors matters, as is illustrated below:

*'Dat soort processen voel ik in ieder geval niet zozeer als verantwoording, maar meer… we hebben het volste recht om dat te doen bij wijze van spreken. Het is meer dat we dat in een context willen doen, we zijn niet bij wijze van spreken een losstaand eliteclubje binnen zo'n wijk. We willen iets doen dat daar past, dus ook in samenhang, esthetisch, met de omgeving (*Respondent 15)

Two respondents, who are involved in cleaning and refurbishment projects, state, on the other hand, that they do not feel accountable to the neighborhood as they have little negative effects on their neighborhood, or the neighborhood is simply happy with what they do. *'The neighborhood? No, they are very pleased with what we do, they do not ask for accountability'* (respondent 12). This suggests however, that they may find accountability relevant if their activities did have negative consequences for their surroundings: *'if we started doing something dangerous… but that just never happens with these sorts of project'* (respondent 16).

5.1.2. Accountability towards government: give a little, take a little

With regard to accountability towards local government, the main sentiment throughout the interviews can be described as 'give a little, take a little'. Consistent with the findings of Tonkens and Verhoeven (2011), most respondents find it only natural that government makes some demands regarding accountability if they invest in an initiative. *'You ask for money, you get the money, you make some agreement … the regular stuff when you get a subsidy'* (respondent 6). Often this fits with the normal financial administration of the initiative:

'De verantwoording naar de gemeente is de formele verantwoording. Daar hebben we een jaarverslag en een jaarrekening voor. Daar ontkom je niet aan en daar is ook niets mis mee. We hebben een toko met een omzet van driekwart miljoen, dus we hebben een jaarrekening, anders snap je gewoon niet hoe het erbij staat.' (respondent 5)

In most cases the investment made by local government takes the form of a subsidy. It may, however be another form of commitment such as public servants investing their time in assisting the initiative or working on shared goals. If government is not subsidizing or supporting the initiative otherwise, however, the respondents feel that there is no need for government involvement, as long as they operate within the boundaries of the law. If government is to make demands, however, there should be something in return: *'the municipality expects us to do welfare related activities, but they do not expect much, as they do not give any money. If they start expecting things from us we go and … [holds up her hand]. Bring it on!'* (respondent 3). If an imbalance exists between accountability demands and what the initiative gets in return, though, this is a major cause for frustration for those respondents experiencing it.

Conclusion

To conclude, with regard to the question of *how active citizens perceive accountability in the context of their initiative*, it seems that they primarily share a sense of democratic accountability for their responsiveness towards the community, either in the form of a virtue or an actual process. They may also feel accountable to local government, if government contributes to their initiative.

Most respondents share a sense of accountability towards their community from the perspective of *ownership*. They feel accountable to those for whom or even on whose behalf they organize their services. This may be the entire neighborhood or village, or a smaller target audience, depending on the goal and nature of the initiative. For some initiatives this sense of accountability means having the right intentions, a 'virtue', shared more widely across respondents - including those who would not define it as accountability. For a smaller group it involves a *process* to test or reinforce community support. For most respondents the community functions as a democratic principal.

With regard to the community as 'affected' by their services, most respondents do not feel accountable. They feel they have the right to do what they do. Almost all respondents do speak, however, if taking their neighbors 'into account'.

Local government, in the perceptions of the active citizens, is not involved in the role of democratic principle. Rather, they are considered a relevant accountability forum with regard to the (financial) investments they have made in the initiative, as long as the demands are proportionate to what the initiative gets in return.

5.2. Accountability in practice

Having explored the active citizens' perceptions of accountability in the context of their project, in this section we move on to the practices of accountability they engage in. As with the perceptions, the starting point is the accountability relationship with the local community on the one hand and, respectively, the accountability relationship to local government on the other – as these were the accountability 'forums' that were most dominant across all cases. For each relationship the general trends for each phase of accountability will be discussed briefly. Next, the differences will be discussed, followed by the types of accountability relationships resulting from these differences.

With the local community, it appears here that accountability practices are indeed strongly connected to the active citizens' perceptions. We see voluntary accountability relationships emerge that differ along the lines of whom they consider their target audience – the entire community, a specific group inside the community, or a group located outside the community – and how they approach affected neighbors.

Regarding local government, a typology of four different accountability arrangements is presented. This typology differs between traditional accountability arrangements and newly emerging ones, and between process oriented and financially focused arrangements. Although most of the initiatives engage in an accountability arrangement with local government, there is also a substantial number that does not seem to subject to accountability demands.

To illustrate the various accountability practices, examples from four cases will be discussed in more detail. The projects of the Utrecht community center, care cooperative 2, the refugee housing project and the redevelopment of the village entry and their activities will be elaborated along the way. Even though the two typologies are not related, case selection could be organized as to select four cases that represent all the types in the typologies. The general trends and the typologies, further developed by looking at the four cases will provide an answer to sub question 3: *'What accountability processes do citizen initiatives engage in?'*

5.2.1. Accountability to the local community

When looking at perceptions of accountability, we have seen that the majority of the active citizens interviewed in this research shares a sense of accountability towards their community as a target audience of their project.

When looking at accountability practices, this is reflected most strongly in the *information phase* of the accountability process. Nearly all initiatives inform the neighborhood in the broad sense about

their plans, either to simply inform people about what will be going on, or to generate publicity among (potential) members and service users. Two third of these initiatives uses a door to door approach, distributing leaflets, newsletters and neighborhood or village news papers, or even stopping by personally. Other initiatives post this information on their website. The information, however, is mainly focused on announcements of what will happen and is provided beforehand. Some initiatives, in addition, report about their achievements, only a few also report about their process and progress in the mean time.

In addition, over half of the initiatives in this study organizes information meetings to discuss their plans with the neighborhood – that are often also used as an opportunity to recruit new members and volunteers. This brings us to the general observations about the *debating phase* of the accountability process, in which the accountability forum can ask questions, and the 'actor' is in the position to answer or defend their actions. With regard to this phase, it can be remarked first, that it seems difficult for the initiatives to engage the community in a general debate during the course of the project. This seems to work, primarily in those initiatives that have organized their target group in a formal association and general assembly.

Secondly, even though most respondents do not feel they need to be accountable towards the surrounding neighbors, a discussion or dialogue grows about the - potentially negative - consequences of the project. Whereas some initiatives have made specific arrangements to deal with complaints, this discussion, in most cases, is initiated by the affected neighbors, informally and individually. This discussion is generally focused on finding a practical solution for the issue at heart. This may explain why in section 5.1, we found that this relationship with the affected neighbors is not experienced as matter of accountability by the respondents.

With regard to the debating phase in practice, it also appears that in at least half of the cases, being able to explain why you do something indeed was important to maintain a positive relationship with the neighbors. It seem to be especially those initiatives with a specific target group that the 'affected neighbors' are not necessarily also considered part of, and therefore have not been involved in the plan making or share the underlying interests, that have some explaining to do. Listening to, and showing you understand this group, in addition, is an important aspect of the debate with the affected. It appears that sometimes, 'solving' a potential problem means simply reducing the fear over a potential problem not yet manifest.

Even though most of the respondents state that it is important for them to deal with complaints in a proper way, and worries and complaints indeed seem to lead to a debate or dialogue between the initiative and the affected, when it comes to *sanctions*, it is the initiative members themselves who

determine whether a complaint is justified or not. There is no protocol and, barring the following three exceptions, there are no (formal) sanctions.

Firstly, in construction and spatial planning projects, formal objection procedures are obligatory, and it is the local government judging these objections. Secondly, in the initiatives that have formally organized themselves as a cooperative association, the members can sanction the association board, for example by sending them away. Finally, some initiatives are financially dependent on their service users.

Who are owners and the affected?

Besides these general trends, the organization of accountability processes between the initiatives and their communities seems to develop along the lines of two differences. These differences are related to how the active citizens view a.) the *owners* or target audience of their project and b.) those *affected* by their activities. Are the initiatives accountable to the entire neighborhood, part of the neighborhood, or are they not accountable at all to their neighbors, over their plans and their consequences? This implies that the main differences in accountability practices for a large part are determined by how the initiative chooses to organize their accountability process.

With regard to who are considered the 'owners' - *to* those in whose interest the active citizens act and *about* what they do in their interest – four different 'options' appear throughout the initiatives. There is a difference between those initiatives that are there for the entire neighborhood and those with a specific target group – that may be located either inside or outside the local community. The former, in which the neighborhood as a whole takes the role of owner, include nearly all initiatives taking place in, or concerned with the reshaping of public places (1). The respondents representing them feel accountable to the neighborhood as a whole.

The latter are there for a specific part of the neighborhood community. Within this group we see two versions. There are the citizen run community centers that consider it their job to provide other active citizens with a place to organize their activities. They feel accountable to these *users* of their center (2). Next to these, there are the cooperative associations that are formally accountable to their *members* (3). These are usually organized around health care, like the care cooperatives in this study, but not exclusively. This study for example also includes a cooperative building project, that was organized similarly.

Finally, two of the initiatives also have a specific target group, but this group is not (yet) part of the local community (4). These are the projects for the homeless and for housing refugees. These

initiatives do not engage in an accountability process with the neighborhood over their plans, as their plans do not concern the neighborhood.

With regard to the affected – *to whom* the initiative feels accountable over the *consequences* of their actions, a similar division can be made. As mentioned in the general trends section above, a large part of the initiatives deals with affected citizens individually. These initiatives, in short, organize accountability over their effects to *part* of the neighborhood: the individuals confronted with consequences.

Secondly, three other initiatives engage in a broader conversation with the neighborhood over the effects of their project, for example by organizing a public dialogue or by engaging in a community council with representatives of the neighborhood.

Finally, one of the initiatives does not organize any separate accountability activities around potential externalities. Rather, they try to incorporate the consequences of their projects in to the regular decision making and accountability processes with their members.

The two aspects put together, four different combinations of 'owners' and 'affected' arise, that for a large part determine the accountability practices between the initiative and their community.

The first combination, that occurs most often, are the initiatives that organize accountability over their plans and their choices made towards the entire village or neighborhood and can be held accountable by individuals – part of the neighborhood - facing unintended externalities of these plans. This combination is named '***an inclusive process with unintended consequences***'.

Community	whole	part	none
Owner	X		
Affected		x	

The second combination occurring, is the initiatives that can be held accountable for their plans to a specific part of the community, namely their members or service users and, like the initiatives above, are also held accountable by affected neighbors in case of negative consequences. These combinations will be discussed later as '***accommodating service users at the community center***' and '***collective decision making and formal accountability at the cooperative association***'

Community	whole	part		none
Owner		members	users	
		x	x	
Affected		x		

The third combination found, of which there is only one example in this study, involves an initiative that also has a specific target group – their association members and clients. Here, the consequences for affected neighbors, however, are incorporated in the democratic process organized for the members and not handled separately. This combination will be discussed as '***incorporating the affected'.***

Community	whole	part	none
Owner		X	
Affected			x

Finally, there are cases with a specific target group that is not part of 'the community' and the initiative, hence, does not owe accountability to them in the role of 'owners'. In both cases, such an external target group combines with a broader accountability arrangement with the neighborhood over the consequences of their project, while also dealing with individual complaints. This combination is named '***embedding in the neighborhood***'.

Community	whole	part	none
Owner			X
Affected	x	x	

These four combinations and their consequences for the different phases of the accountability process will be elaborated on in the following sections. When analyzing these different types of accountability relationships with the community, we will look at their implications for the accountability practices, in terms of their form, content and organization, and how they are initiated. In addition, we look at possible patterns in the types of initiative that can be connected to the different types of accountability relationships, to look at what factors may explain the organization of the accountability process.

In order to illustrate the various accountability relationships that occur, examples of four cases that have been explored in more detail will be presented at the start of each section: the refugee home

in Amsterdam that was initiated by local community members, a citizen run community center in Utrecht, a health care initiative for the elderly citizens in a village in Brabant and the project group refurbishing the entry of their village in the municipality of Hengelo.

An inclusive process with unintended consequences

An inclusive village project

In 2012, the village council of Beckum (one thousand inhabitants), called for ideas for the village development plan that was to be developed together with the municipality. As the village is intersected by a provincial road, traffic safety was one of the twelve key issues incorporated in the plan, and a voluntary project group taking on the issue was installed. As their initiative was born directly from the ideas of their community, the project group members share a strong sense of responsibility towards for their village. This sense of responsibility becomes visible when the municipality informs the project group that they will be replacing the lampposts alongside the provincial road, and the project group has been given say in what is done with the old lamps and what is placed in return.

The project group did not hesitate to call a town meeting to have the community vote over which type of lamppost to be placed along the roadside. They informed the community about the lampposts and town meeting through various channels – including social media for 'the young' and the local newspaper as 'in the countryside there are a lot of elderly people that lack the necessary computer skills '. They tried to actively involve the owner of the Turkish community center located by the provincial road, who does not always 'feel accepted in the village' and when a local farmer reported a lamppost being too close to his driveway, it was moved immediately.

The community, however, is not always as keen to respond. The leader of the project group wishes *'that people would respond more actively.'* Unfortunately, *'like in most places, people are busy doing their own things and are more passive when it comes to other activities … if it does not hit you personally, or you are not interested, you don't respond'*. As a result, it took '*three, four, five efforts to share information and get enough people to come to the informative meeting.*' Only then, they feel they can legitimately speak on behalf the community. Eventually, they usually manage to get enough people involved, if they do not, their efforts, will fortunately still have a strategic function and may generate legitimacy in itself. The community has been informed, meetings were planned, and people could call or e-mail, and that should be enough to say 'too bad if you don't agree, but you have had your chance to respond'.

In the first type of accountability relationship with the community, that is reflected in the example of Beckum above, the initiative organizes accountability over their plans and their choices made towards the entire village or neighborhood. In addition, they can be held accountable for the consequences of their actions by the individuals facing these consequences. This combination seems to be most common, as it covers half of the initiatives in the study. With one exception, the initiatives included in this group are physical projects, focusing on building and refurbishing public places. The underlying factor however, is not their physical character in itself, rather, it seems to be the public character that follows from (re)developing public places. The only physical project not included in this group, is a housing project that has a distinctively private character.

The high frequency of the combination of ownership being located in the entire community, and individual solutions for affected neighbors, in addition, seems to be due to the fact that these individual complaints tend to concern *unintended* externalities of the project, that could not have been included in the project from the outset, as they were not expected. As these initiatives aim to please the entire community, they do feel that they have to deal with these unintended consequences.

In general, the initiatives in this group share a strong connection with their community and are keen on involving the community in their decision making. As a result, all initiatives inform the neighborhood beforehand about their ideas to develop a project, in nearly all cases they do this by planning a town or neighborhood meeting. The *information and debating phase* emphasize shared decision making, and are concentrated at the start of the project.

During the course of the project, the active citizens involved also inform their community on what that have achieved, which is important as *'you want to maintain support and you want there to be applause at the end, that you achieved something that the village appreciates'* (respondent 11). Most of the initiatives do this by reporting about their activities regularly in newsletters or the local newspaper. Only some of the initiatives, in addition, report about their process and potential hiccups, and organize meetings in the mean time. As mentioned in the example at the start of this section, it may be difficult, though, to involve the community in such a debate or generate feedback during the course of the project. Most initiatives in this category, however, organize the implementation of their project and subsequent decision making and debate about the course of action in a smaller project group instead.

With regard to the debate about unintended effects, this is handled individually in most cases. In one of the cases, a project group sent leaflets to all households surrounding a lot in which they wanted to refurbish the planting, asking them to respond if they had any objections, but this remains an

exception. As the effects that are subject to debate are unintended, and not at the heart of the initiative, the 'debates' in this category of initiatives usually take the form of a conversation over how to solve the issue.

With regard to *sanctions*, in this type of project, there are little formal opportunities for the community to punish project groups failing or drifting away from the course of action decided on behalf of the neighborhood. To most initiatives in this group, however, as mentioned above, the support of their community does matter a great deal. The legitimacy of their project is based on this support as they all emphasize they do it for their community. Losing this support would mean a failure and loss of legitimacy. Three accountability practices should be mentioned in this respect.

Firstly, as with the general course of action and the 'ownership' perspective, the accountability process organized by these initiatives may also serve a strategic function, such as in the example of Beckum above.

Secondly, with regard to the unintended consequences and the 'affected', throughout the cases it appears, that these individual problems can be solved practically and the project groups are willing and able to change aspects of projects that lead to trouble. This was the case in the following example from a neighborhood group that is responsible for the maintenance an refurbishment of the planting around the neighborhood:

'We hebben een ijsvogelwand verkeerd gerealiseerd. Toen vlogen mensen me zowat naar de strot, dus dat gaf heel veel animositeit. Uiteindelijk is ie dan afgebroken en op een andere plaats weer opgebouwd. Dat is dan toch het uiteindelijke compromis. Mensen wilden dat niet voor de deur. Maar dat is wel een uitzondering op de regel, maar het gebeurt wel. ... Dat is trouwens ook met de andere voorzieningen. Jeu de boules baan, functioneert het niet? Dan halen we het weg. Escaleert het, ruimen we het op. Dat was voor een aantal criticasters de afspraak die ze over de drempel heeft gehaald.' (respondent 14).

Thirdly, the support of the local community may be a requirement for obtaining the support of municipality. In one of the cases it is a requirement for a subsidy, in another it is a condition for the municipality to have their public servants to assist them. In addition, as mentioned before, local government has a formal role in handling objections in the case of larger construction projects , which some of the initiatives in this group are. Such a requirement of support, cannot, however, be enforced by the local community itself.

Accommodating service users at the community center

> **Change at the community center**
>
> The Utrecht community center was at the verge of being shut down, when a group of active citizens, long time users of the building and worried neighbors, stepped in and decided to take on the management of the building. They wanted the place to become a cultural center for and by the neighborhood. Visitors of the center and the organizations renting the center's spaces, can introduce new ideas that together make up the centers' program. '*What you really want is that volunteers and neighbors come here and start doing more things by themselves'* (respondent 7). This does not mean, however, that they engage in a big, collective decision making process. Rather, keeping the center running financially places demands on the program, and taking over a center without the subsequent subsidies, means having to make some changes. The approach adopted sparked some debate with the long term visitors of the center, but eventually most debates can be resolved: '*'change, change… why is everything constantly changing?'* [said some of the elderly visitors]. *I say: not every change is bad, you can at least give it a try. If you don't like it, we will talk about it then. And two weeks later: 'oh, we are so pleased with how things are now, much better!''* (respondent 7)

Unlike the initiatives discussed above, the second group of initiatives has a specific target audience towards whom they feel accountable over their plans and general course of action. These are, in the case of the community centers, their service users, and in case of the cooperative associations their members. Like the initiatives in the group before, they may be confronted with unintended consequences for which the feel responsible, and deal with the individuals that are affected. As nearly all initiatives with a specific target group located within the neighborhood, which is about one third of the initiatives under study, organize some separate form of accountability towards the affected individuals, this type is the second largest category of initiatives.

From the interviews, and the additional information from the in depth cases, it appears that it makes a difference whether the owners are service users, or members. This section will elaborate on the *community centers*, the initiatives that have 'service users' rather than members as their owners. The organization of accountability towards *cooperation members* as the owners of the initiative will be discussed more elaborately in the next section[5].

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[5] It is possible to discuss the accountability relationships with the different types of 'owners' separate from the accountability relationships with the affected, as the organization accountability over unintended effects does not differ between the two types, and the organization of accountability to the users does not differ entirely if the relationship.

The accountability relationship of the community centers towards their users – both visitors and renters - is not characterized by an organized accountability process. In these cases the perception of accountability as a virtue, rather than a process is in effect most strongly. As was mentioned in the perceptions section, being accountable, to these respondents means being able to explain why certain choices were made: which activities are organized and how rooms are divided among users.

With regard to accountability *practices*, this translates into an *information phase* focused strongly on announcing activities and events and recruiting participant, rather than on decision making or the general process or the 'performance' of the initiative. One exception is the Amsterdam community center, that in addition, provides a booklet with the centers results at the end of the year.

With regard to the *debating phase,* this type of initiative stands out in the fact that there is a 'traditional' debate in which the actions of the initiative are questioned, explained and defended if necessary. This debate, however, is not organized by the initiative, but initiated by individual. This debate is usually of an informal character, only sometimes labeled as a formal complaint. These debates, generally seem to concern decisions or developments that are to at odds with the personal preferences of the particular service user, as in the example of the community center above. As a result, the debating phases is usually not about the general management or course of action of the community center as a whole, rather it focuses on individual issues. Across the interviews, there was one clear exception in which there was such debate, however, that is worth mentioning. At this center (center 3), it happens that people show up that would like to take over the center. According to the respondent providing the example, however, this debate is also fueled by a personal interest:

'Er komen hier met enige regelmaat mensen die vragen: kan ik de keuken hebben? Is een mooie keuken, daar kan je catering mee doen, daar kan je een bedrijf mee beginnen… Dan zeg ik: natuurlijk kan dat. Voor 50.000 euro. En dan zeggen ze: ben je gek? Dan klopt. Maar de keuken is van iedereen en als ik het weghaal bij iedereen dan moet ik iedereen iets geven. Elke bewoner 2 euro en dan mag je hem hebben – per jaar. En dan krijg je daar een gesprek over, van hoe zit het in elkaar en hoe is het georganiseerd. Dan overtuig je langzamerhand of ze zien dat hun ding hier niet past.' (respondent 5).

This brings us to the *sanctions phase*. This is a complex one for the community centers. On the one hand, the respondents state that their success largely depends on how much their center is being used. And the centers are financially dependent on their service users as they either pay for using the building, or their subsidy is based on the degree to which the local community uses the building. This,

however, is not in their hands and therefore, as discussed in the perception section, they feel they cannot (entirely) be held accountable for the results they produce.

Furthermore, there are little formal opportunities for the service users to 'sanction' the center boards. Most of the initiatives have a supervisory board that may intervene in cases of general mismanagement, but complaints from users directed at them are handled by the initiatives themselves. Organizing it differently is difficult, appears from the Amsterdam community center in which they have tried to establish a complaint committee with other local initiatives. These, however, did not feel for giving up their autonomy. In addition, some disappointed service users have tried to take their complaint to the municipality, but the municipality stated that 'who gets to use the building' is outside their jurisdiction, as this is not part of the subsidy requirements.

With regard to the affected neighbors, the pattern in these cases is similar to the projects that were characterized, organized for the neighborhood as a whole. Here too, in some case externalities appear – e.g. noise from music lessons, bicycles that are in the way – that are dealt with by practical solutions and a lot of listening. In addition, however, it can be said that here, the service users that can be considered as the 'owners', also take the position of the affected in the debating phase.

Collective decision making and formal accountability at the cooperative association
As mentioned above, when the initiative is accountable to a specific target group in the community, it matters whether these are service users, in case of the community centers, or *members* of a cooperative association. The latter type is characterized by collective decision making and a formally organized accountability process, including debate meetings and formal sanctioning mechanisms, that is created by the initiative itself. This group of cooperative associations with formal accountability are mainly focused on health care, but not exclusively.

When it comes to the *information phase* of the accountability process, like in most initiatives, new developments, events and activities are presented beforehand. This takes the form of regular newsletters, but the emphasis in these initiatives is on meetings, that are also held regularly.

Regarding the content of the information provided, it is clear that these initiatives value shared decision making. Firstly, when presenting new ideas and developments, the emphasis is on those aspects that are still open for discussion and the various options. Secondly, it appears that unlike in the majority of initiatives, the associations also actively inform their members about the process and progress they have made. In addition, they also present the dilemma's they encounter along the way, such as the *'problems arising in the cooperation with partners'* at the care cooperation:

'Dan vertellen we daar ook onze gedachten bij en stellen we voor een nieuwe overeenkomst te sluiten. We denken dat die er zo en zo uit komt te zien - dat weten we nog niet helemaal - maar dat is de lijn waar wij op insteken. Zijn jullie het daar mee eens? Hebben jullie daar opmerkingen bij? Hebben jullie daar vragen bij? (respondent 2)

As the primary place of information provision are the (usually) biannual meetings, the information and *debating phase* are closely connected. In the meetings, the initiative board presents a.) their general plans for the coming months and b.) the actions they have taken since the previous meeting, for the members to give their opinion and provide feedback. As these meetings are only twice a year, and the cooperations sometimes need to proceed in the mean time, they '*dare to make decisions and present them to the members afterwards, as long as they are in line with the vision and mission statement'* (respondent 2).

These meetings, however, are generally not severe debates as the members of a cooperation have a share a general goal and interest: *'We geven dan een presentatie, daar wordt gevraagd het beleid te steunen en ons mandaat te geven voor het vervolgtraject. En dat wordt dan afgesloten in de praktijk, meestal met applaus. Zo werkt dat. De discussie zit m niet bij ons intern.'* (respondent 10). As a result, the debate tends to focus not on performance, but on filling in the details and choosing between alternative options.

Finally, when looking at the *sanctioning phase*, the cooperative associations can be distinguished from all other initiatives in the sense that they provide their members with formal sanctioning instruments: '*in fact, the members can always send the board home' (*respondent 2). These sanctions also seem to have a strong selection effect: *'either you love the idea or you hate it'.* A board member of one of the cooperations included in the study believes that it '*is in the nature of those establishing a cooporation to not even think about giving in to the temptation'.* The respondents representing the associations thus not only value accountability as a process, they also all refer to it as an important virtue. This is also reflected in the fact that when these respondents talking about sanctions, they all refer to integrity and trust, and not necessarily to results. As the respondent from the first care cooperation puts it: '*as long as the board does not book a one way ticket to Brazil, I think not much can go wrong. As long as everyone does their job, keeps u their integrity and not throws money around and keeps an eye on our goal'.*

Incorporating the affected

A case of 'not in my back yard'

When the board of the local care cooperation made plans to build a small scale nursing home for elderly citizens struggling with dementia, they ran into resistance from some 'worried members' that wanted to talk. *'Gee, you get the nicest lot available in the village, I would have liked to build something there'* and worried neighbors: *'what am I going to do with all these crazies living next to my home?'* This very conversation taught the board members not to try and settle the issue amicably by themselves, as it 'of course, did not work out'. The issue continued to brood under the surface for two years – as the board found it difficult to turn people down - until eventually one of the members stepped up and asked for a real debate and vote: who are these dissatisfied people? When it became clear that it involved only ten people, the active member asked his fellow members what they thought of the course taken by the board. *'do you think they should go on like this, or do you agree with these ten people?'* after this intervention the matter was settled and the decision made. *'And then it was over, the democratic process had been run and we started building. Some people will still not look me in the eye. But that's life.'* In retrospect, the board member explained, the board itself should have explicitly put the issue on the agenda in an earlier stage to consult their members. It is a learning process.

When it comes to the affected, most of the cooperative associations, like the types of initiatives that have been discussed in the previous sections, deal with these as unintended consequences that need to be resolved. One exception, however, is the case of care cooperation described above. As was illustrated above, in this association, the consequences and those affected by them are deliberately incorporated in the regular decision making and accountability process of the initiative. This considered *'more fair and more democratic, than if we would talk to them without permission of our members'*.

This dynamic lead to a direct debate between the owners – the members – and the affected that, after a long period of discussion, was settled by voting. The interest to continue the project, won from the interest of the affected, represented by ten of the members. It should be noted however, that as the particular discussion involved building project, formal objections were also handled by the municipality and turned down.

Embedding in the neighborhood

Accountability and integration

For the Amsterdam refugee project integration is key: the integration of refugees in Dutch society and the integration of their project in the neighborhood. One year ago, a group of active citizens from Amsterdam Oost concerned about the refugee crisis came together. They connected over the idea that integration of refugees in Dutch society could be improved if they are placed in small units within the community, rather than the horrible large containers outside the community. Supported by a social housing corporation, they decided to take action and start a temporary, small scale housing project for refugees in an empty building in their neighborhood. One of the first steps was to organize a public meeting to inform their neighbors about their plans. This may be unsurprising as the integration of the refugees in the neighborhood also depends on their acceptance in the neighborhood, and it was the anonymous, 'unaccountable' nature of large refugee centers, that was the problem they wanted to tackle in the first place. These meetings provided the active citizens with the opportunity to have the neighbors meet the people that will residing in their neighborhood and talk about possible practical problems. This turned out to be key in soothing latent worries: '*there were a few people looking worried at first, but you know, they visited the property once and their worries disappeared. Now they're the first there to help install the new furniture*' (respondent 8).

Besides the associations and community centers, there are three more initiatives with a specific target group and a 'sensitive' topic. As these groups, homeless and refugees and a group of people building their own new homes, are not (yet) part of the neighborhood, these initiatives do not feel accountable towards the neighborhood for their approach to the issue at heart and they *'do not ask for their permission'*. These initiatives, however, do care about the embedding of their initiative in the neighborhood and work on creating a positive relationship with their neighbors. This relationship is important to them, as they aim to create a positive living environment for their clients and their integration is at the heart of these initiatives, as is illustrated in the case of the refugee project above. As a result, they collectively discuss the implications of their project for and with the neighborhood. They talk about how to reduce potential nuisance and make sure they are approachable. In sum, these initiatives organize an accountability process focused on effects towards the entire neighborhood – which they would not necessarily describe in terms of accountability themselves, though. This perspective is summarized perfectly by one of the board members of the Amersfoort housing project:

'We hebben het volste recht om dat te doen bij wijze van spreken. Het is meer dat we dat in een context willen doen, we zijn niet bij wijze van spreken een losstaand eliteclubje binnen zo'n wijk. We willen iets doen dat daar past, dus ook in samenhang, esthetisch, met de omgeving. Maar ook de

relatie met de mensen om ons heen dat dat ook daarin een rol heeft. Het is niet zozeer

verantwoording, maar het is meer vanuit verbinding die rol nemen.' (respondent 15)

This accountability process of these initiatives starts, like with most initiatives, with *informing* the neighborhood beforehand about their plans. These three, however, choose to do this informing in the form of a public meeting, to be able to immediately engage in a conversation and reduce potential worries and objections from neighbors. In addition, a meeting provides the initiative with the opportunity to have the neighbors meet the people that will residing in their neighborhood, which was a key strategy in the example of the refugee center above.

When it comes to the *debate,* the general plan and approach of the initiatives are not up for discussion. The focus is on the worries and potential objections that live among the neighbors. In the course of the conversation, the initiatives find out that these worries are generally are either a matter of trust or practical in nature. These can often be overcome by listening carefully and showing understanding, organizing a dialogue with future clients of their project, and making clear agreements. In the case of the three initiatives included in this study, this approach seems to work, as they – despite some initial distrust – did not encounter any real resistance. In the case of the homeless shelter, the originally monthly 'neighborhood meetings' with the neighbors and local police to discuss complaint, now only need to take place twice a year as '*there have not been any troubles during the past years*' and '*they know we keep our promises'* and '*they can always call if there is anything wrong, and we will settle the matter'* (respondent 6).

In these cases, though, we see that even though public discussion of the consequences is provided, unintended consequences and individual complaints still occur. Both the homeless shelter as well as the refugee center have anticipated this by installing a contact for complaints or organizing regular meetings to discuss complaints.

With regards to *sanctions*, we see that in these cases too, there are no direct means for the neighbors to sanction the initiatives. Due to either their politically sensitive nature, or the standard procedures involved in building projects, though, the municipality also plays a (background) role when it comes to complaints. In the case of the homeless shelter, the municipality *'really focused on the relationship with the neighborhood'* and made regular meetings with a neighborhood committee a formal requirement for the initiative to open its doors at a new location. As in the end, the municipality is responsible, and can be held politically accountable if anything goes wrong. '*If they [the police] decide that the project leads to too much importunity, they, via the initiative, will eventually come back to Stadsdeel Oost, we have the final responsibility. Yes, definitely.'* (public servant involved with the Amsterdam refugee project). The municipality, formally responsible, is in

position to shut the initiatives down. This, however, will not happen overnight, as the relationship of these initiatives with the municipality (has grown to be) very positive.

As a result, though, the accountability processes organized by the three initiatives also serve a strategic purpose, to prevent themselves from coming to an intervention by the municipality. *'On the one hand, it is because they are our future neighbors, on the other hand, you just don't want them to torpedo your plans with all kinds legal procedures'* (respondent 15).

5.2.2. Accountability practices towards local government

Besides the accountability relationship with the local community, the initiatives also engage in some form of an accountability relationship with local government – the municipality, and in some cases the province. This section explores the general observations regarding this accountability relationship, before distinguishing more in-depth four ways in which the practices differ.

Remarkably, but in line with the expectation from the literature, all 16 initiatives studied in this research at some point encountered local government. Over half of them receive some kind of subsidy from the municipality or province, another five are supported in other ways: free use of a building owned by the municipality, a paid employee, regularly sharing knowledge. The others are confronted with rules, laws and policies.

These 'encounters' generally lead to some expectations on the part of the initiatives, to an agreement, and in most cases an arrangement on how to report about the agreed. These expectations include production agreements over activities or results related to a subsidy, or expectations regarding community support. Other often occurring rules are related to the 'social' or 'temporary' character of the use of certain buildings or lots, and contracts regarding their maintenance. These agreements, though, are not always subject to regular control or an accountability process. On the other hand, a small amount of initiatives engage in voluntary accountability.

With regard to the *information phase* of the accountability process, the encounter between initiatives and the subsequent agreements generally result in initiatives informing local government beforehand about their project. They present or discuss their plan of action, for government to review whether they will grant permission or a subsidy. After the events, little under half of the initiatives is asked for information as a check. This information, in most cases, focuses on the activities the initiative has conducted, and is used to judge whether government money has been spent rightfully. In four cases, the municipality is committed to an evaluation and gathers information regarding results or client satisfaction and in another two cases, the progress of the

initiative is regularly discussed. In total, one third of the initiatives engages in regular meetings with local government.

This brings us to the general observations of the accountability *debate* between initiatives and local government. In short, it should be remarked that even though most initiatives need to provide information beforehand, a debate does not follow often. The regular conversations between the initiative and public servants more often focus on helping out the initiative, often with attuning the initiative to government rules and policies. In some cases, however, a debate is sparked about the accountability demands themselves. In a third of the initiatives the active citizens try negotiate the terms of accountability.

With regard to *sanctions*, there are more clear differences between the initiatives. In those initiatives that receive subsidies or for some reason require permission from government – especially those initiatives operating in politically sensitive policy areas - face serious formal consequences, such as being shut down or losing their subsidy. As was mentioned in the previous section, however, these consequences are experienced as *formal* possibilities only. Most initiatives experience a growth in trust from the local government, after having set a positive reputation, reducing the threat of formal sanctions. In some other cases, the trust and very useful support of local government are at stake. These, however, are the cases in which there is a good relationship and serious government involvement to begin with, and severe disagreements are an unlikely scenario. Finally, it should be noted that in most cases there is not a clear threat of government sanctions at all, at least not experienced as such by the respondents.

Four styles of accountability demands

Besides these general observations, there are some key difference between accountability practices. Two interrelated aspects in the relationship with local government seem to account for these differences. Firstly, there seems to be a large difference between initiatives that engage in a traditional, pre existing accountability arrangement, and those that do not. This may be the case when an initiative applies for a subsidy that was originally and primarily granted to traditional, large (social, cultural or care) institutions. As was expected based on the literature review, it matters whether an initiative receives public money, though not exactly in the way that was expected. In this study, it becomes clear that there are differences in accountability between those initiatives receiving public money depending on the *type of subsidy* that is granted: traditional, incidental, or developed especially to support active citizenship. These differences and their effects have not been emphasized in the pre-existing accountability literature, possibly because the studies describing

accountability mainly focus on 'top-down do-ocracy', that comes with its own specially designed subsidies.

Initiatives also encounter such traditional accountability arrangements if they cooperate with, or may even be incorporated in such a large institution, and operate in a strictly regulated policy field, such as intramural care. The initiatives that do not fit in this category either engage in a newly developed accountability process or are not being held accountable at all.

Secondly, there is a difference in accountability processes are organized around the *process* - rules and regulations - and arrangements that focus on *financial* accountability. This characteristic is related to the distinction above, in the sense that the specially developed accountability arrangements tend to focus on the process. The same goes for the initiatives in the regulated policy fields, whereas in the traditionally subsidized initiatives are held accountable financially. This financial focus involves both an aspect of rightfulness as well as an aspect of results and sometimes the financial situation of the initiative itself. The combination of these two aspects, leads to four different types of accountability relationships with local government, summarized in the grid below. The four different types are further elaborated below.

Process focus

Regulated area	New accountability
o Homeless shelter[6] o Care cooperation 2	o Traffic safety o Public green initiative 2 o Care cooperation 1 o Redevelopment project village center
Traditional subsidy	No accountability
o Homeless shelter o Community center 3 o Community center 4 o Cleaning initiative	o Community center 1 o Community center 2 o Community building project o City Park o Refugee initiative o Public green intiative 1 o Community garden

← traditional   Financial focus   new →

Initiatives in a regulated area

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[6] The case of the homeless shelter operates in a regulated area and cooperates closely with a traditional organization, in addition, it receives a traditional subsidy. As a result the initiative can be qualified as both a 'regulated area' project as well as a 'traditional subsidy project'

Negotiating accountabilities

At the care initiative, the board is confronted with strict rules and accountability procedures that were originally developed for large scale institutions, like the organization they have merged with. Care cooperative 2 may be the case in which the accountability demands placed on the initiatives, conflict the strongest with the conceptions of accountability held by the initiative itself. They try to manage these accountability demands and the resulting conflict, by balancing on the edge of what is permitted, while at the same time sticking with their own quality requirements. They '*do what they do and sit close to the rules'*. This does not mean, however, that they act regardless of the rules. They have actually carefully studied and reviewed them:

'Wij hebben wel samen met een jurist alle wetgeving die van toepassing is een keer kritisch doorgenomen vanuit het perspectief van 'wat bedoelt de wetgever hier nu mee?' En vanuit dat perspectief van bedoeld wordt en wat wij vinden dat voor ons relevant is, dat houden we bij en daar zorgen we dat we aan voldoen. … Het is constant zoeken naar wat belangrijk is. Wat is voor ons belangrijk en daar dan de grenzen in opzoeken.'

Eventually, though, the initiative manages to negotiate a more balanced accountability process. In the regular accountability meetings with their managers, in which the conversation generally focuses on *'the numbers',* as *'money always comes first with health care organizations',* the cooperation board members, try to incorporate their perspective of quality control, that is focused not on the numbers, but on client satisfaction and self-dependence. Focusing on mutual interests seemed to be key. It is *'not without reason that they decided to cooperate with us, as they saw it as an opportunity to learn from us. We have the courage to say that we are ahead of them in our thinking of how the future care for people with dementia should be organized'.*

Two of the initiatives in this study take on a task in a highly regulated policy field, a task that usually is conducted by large institutions. A telling example is the case of intramural care at the initiative above that is illustrated above. The other is the Utrecht night shelter for homeless people. These initiatives need to oblige to rules and protocols regarding the treatment of their clients and the safety and hygiene conditions, and the explicit accountability demands that follow. In order to cope with these rules, the initiatives in this category have chosen to cooperate or even merge with a larger institution. In the case of the homeless shelter such a merger has been their saving, as '*otherwise we could not cope anymore. There were more and more demands, hygiene, fire prevention, commodities act, evacuation plans and whatever other things that have been added during the past years '* (respondent 6).

Even though these initiatives receive subsidies too, their accountability relationship with local government is dominated by regulations and procedures, that are handled by the specific departments handling these policies. The municipality does not question the general concept of the two initiatives, especially after they have proven to be successful during the past years.

The *information provision* regarding the protocols follows a standard procedure itself. There are guidelines describing what should be registered and what data to be provided every month. The required information seems to be mainly numerical, varying from the number of homeless staying at the center to the care cooperation's clients weights. In addition, there may be visits by the inspectorate, collecting information first hand. The respondents representing the two initiatives believe this essentially a good thing, but the accountability requirements are too demanding and not always focused on the aspects they find relevant.

The *debating phase* of the accountability process is not necessarily subject to, or incorporated in standard procedures. In the case of the care cooperation, however, there are standard two monthly meetings with the organization they work with 'to talk numbers'.

With regard to *sanctions*, the formal character of these initiatives' accountability processes stands out again. The inspectorate has the power to give formal warnings and in the end, in case of serious misbehavior, shut the initiatives down. These reprimands, however, do not strike directly with the initiatives though, as it is the organizations they have merged with that are formally responsible. Because the initiatives for a large part depend on these organizations, it is in their interest to try and cope with the rules. As a board member of care cooperative 2 initiative puts it: *'the inspectorate can go and tell them* [the organization the initiative has merged with], *they need to be more tough on us and maybe change some of the personnel. So we need to deal with our responsibility to the organization that is responsible for us in the end. We take that seriously and you need to tackle these issues together with mutual trust, otherwise it won't work.'* They do however, try to negotiate the terms of accountability, as is reflected in the example at the start of this paragraph.

Receiving a 'traditional' subsidy

Coping with clashing demands at the community center (4)

The Utrecht community center while aiming for financial independence, at the moment still receives some project subsidies. These arrangements were originally developed for traditional welfare organizations, placing demands on the initiative they find hard to fulfill. This was the case especially, when the center's board was confronted with rules regarding the 'social character' of the building they manage. Like the other community centers included in this study, center 4 is not allowed to

engage in commercial activities as the building is destined for social, and not commercial purposes. Permitted to compete with conference centers, restaurants and cafés in the neighborhood, they cannot ask for commercial prices for renting out their meeting rooms, or for the food and drinks that can be purchased in their bar. This social character demand in itself is not problematic, as center 4 like the other community centers included in this study agree with having a social function and share a strong sense of 'being there for the neighborhood'.

This demand does lead to trouble, however, when it become apparent that both the social character of the center, and their revenue -their striving towards financial independence - are connected to the subsidies they receive: '*Op een gegeven moment iemand was er iemand [van de gemeente] die zei: 'nou, jullie kunnen ook wel meer vragen voor die computercursus want dat is helemaal niks'. Dan denk ik: nou, weet jij hoeveel mensen moeite hebben om 50 euro te betalen? Want daar moest je dan maar winst op maken…*' (respondent 7). As they are not allowed to raise their bar prices or the renting out their rooms to private renters, they need to profit from their core business, in which the 'real' social character of their project lies.

The second group of initiatives that is on the 'traditional side' of accountability, are the initiatives receiving a subsidy for their work as a social or cultural organization, for which the municipality demands accountability. Initiatives receiving such subsidies include two of the community centers, a project for systematically cleaning up litter that is polluting the town, and the homeless shelter that was also discussed above (see note 6). These initiatives are characterized by clear agreements with local government and a subsequent, formal accountability process that is focused on the *results* that the initiatives produce. This focus on results is derived from the fact that the subsidy involved is connected to a specific policy goal. Their effectiveness in terms of the policy goal is evaluated and in addition, an element of financial accountability may be introduced to check whether public money was spent rightfully. In the case of the shelter and community centers, the municipality is interested in the occupancy rate of the buildings and in the case of the cleaning project, the emphasis is on the amount of rubbish collected every week. This type of accountability process can be experienced as demanding, as it was developed for larger organizations, but this is not the case for all initiatives in this box.

With these traditional subsidies, come fixed formats regarding the form and content of the information to be provided, ad fixed moments for providing the information. This information usually takes the form of an annual report and financial statement, or in case of a project subsidy more specific reports and photographs. The cleaning initiative, for example agreed to write weekly reports on what they have done that week,*' the hours spent, the amount of litter collected in kilo's, which*

areas they have cleaned… all things needed to measure the impact.' These reports have so far not prompted a debate.

For the other three initiatives in this group, though, regular meetings or debates are a fixed part of the accountability process. These often involve a discussion of the terms of accountability beforehand, and an evaluative meeting afterwards, both involving a financial aspect and a substantive aspect focused on results produced and progress made of the initiative. The latter is evaluative in nature: *'how are things going, how do you plan to achieve these goals, did you achieve them or not and why is that? Have you done everything you could? '* (respondent 7). This evaluative conversation, usually does not cause much trouble, as it is focused on pre-established, shared goals and the municipality generally seems to be considerate if there is a reason that goals are not achieved a hundred percent and it just *'turns out to be a tedious job to get such a project going'* (respondent 7).

A returning, more difficult debate, for the community centers, though, involves the financial exploitation of their buildings that is reflected in the case of the community center above.

Unsurprisingly, therefore in these cases there is also some negotiating going on regarding the accountability demands. This is illustrated most clearly by the following quote from the director of the Amsterdam community center:

'Nou, een aantal ambtenaren geleden hebben ze gevraagd of we rapportages wilden maken. En toen was ons antwoord: dat willen we graag doen. Elke rapportage kost 3500 euro, en dan kan je 'm zo gedetailleerd krijgen als je wilt. Hoe vaak wil je 'm? als je 'm dagelijks wilt kan dat ook. Want dat kost gewoon geld en dat zit niet in onze subsidie, dus als je rapportages wilt, dan moet je een aparte subsidie geven voor rapportages. … Maar uiteindelijk zijn ze teruggevallen naar het niveau van: we zitten hier vaak en we zien gewoon dat het functioneert.'

Finally, there is clear *sanctioning* instrument for the municipality as they are in the position to withdraw the subsidy if the demands are not met. As mentioned above, the initiatives have learned that the municipality is usually rather accommodating, and will not withdraw a subsidy at once. The threat of no longer receiving subsidy or even having to pay back, however, is still effective, as is illustrated below.

'Dat we wel bang waren dat we achteraf dat geld terug zouden moeten betalen. Zo'n gevolg kan dat hebben, of dat ze zeggen: dit werkt niet, dus voor het volgende jaar geven we je geen subsidie meer en betekent dat we het ook niet meer kunnen doen.' (respondent 7)

It should be noted here, that as the subsidies are connected to a specific project or policy goal, however, unlike the initiatives involved in 'process focused' accountability, bound to rules and procedures, the municipality's sanctioning instruments are bound to these specific goals and subsidies. The municipality does not have a say in the general management of the initiatives.

'In principe zijn we natuurlijk in zelfbeheer, dus wij huren dit pand en dat betekent dat je dus gewoon kan doen wat je wilt. Behalve dan dat we subsidie krijgen dus dat moet binnen die kaders. En we kunnen natuurlijk niet alles zomaar doen, vergunningstechnisch. Volgens mij zijn we daarnaast geen verantwoording verschuldigd.' (respondent 7)

New accountability practices

What's in it for the municipality?

In Beckum, the relationship with local government is important to the members of the project group running the traffic safety initiative. As the project leader of Beckum's summarizes: *'we have always have had close contact with the municipality. I have been a member of the village council for a few years, and there we used to say: relations before content.'* Their structural contact with the municipality, through the borough manager, leads to useful advice and assistance with permits and regulations. There is a mutual interest in the projects of the village council, as the municipality was planning to write a new policy for the area during the same period of time, and may lead to positive publicity: *'you get some media attention: 'municipality grants lampposts to the village'. … We forget about the costs, and they [the project group] can show that their activities have yielded some results'* (public servant case 11). This positive attention was especially relevant, as the municipality had made plans for the region in the past, that had not been realized, leading to some disappointment in the village. Investing in the projects of the village council, is investing in the relationship with the village community.

These investments, in terms of time and man power, however, are connected to some conditions. The activities of the project group should be durable and need to be supported more broadly by the community. The project group leader feels he can be held accountable by the municipality for satisfying these conditions, and feels accountable for the progress they have made, supported by the investments made by the municipality. Local government, however, may not characterize this as accountability, as appears from the interview with the borough manager. The respondents describe the same process, but interpret it differently: *what right do we have to ask from them, hey, what have you done so far?* (public servant Bekcum). That is, as long as there is no public money involved.

On the other side of the grid, there are the initiatives that are not involved in a traditional accountability process. Some of these initiatives, like the Bekcum project, are in contact with the municipality regularly and engage in some sort of a new accountability relationship that was developed in the context of the specific initiatives. Regarding the content of these processes, the municipality seems to focus on the *process*, on attuning the project to local policy and rules, on the barriers the initiatives encounter, the results they produce and on the support among the local community. When looking at the form of these processes, they usually do not concern fixed reports, rather, they involve regular meetings. The respondents describe the involvement of the municipality mainly as 'advisory', but they also experience it as a form of accountability. It should be remarked, however, that local government may not characterize it as such, as appears from the Beckum case.

When looking at the type of initiative that falls in this category, a diverse picture emerges. The four initiatives include both physical and social projects, for both a general and specific target audience. In addition, they also differ in significantly when it comes to the involvement of public money. This type of new arrangement does seem to arise, though, in a context with a history of active citizenship. In all four cases there initiatives have emerged from a neighborhood or village council or association, in which there were prior ties with local government.

After these general remarks on the relationship between these initiatives and their local government, we can look at their implications for accountability practices. As the communication between these initiatives and local government mostly takes the form of regular meetings, the *information phase* and the *debating phase* of the accountability process tend to be integrated. The content of these meetings is varies broadly, ranging from the initiatives' progress and results to the problems they encounter, mostly in the context of rules and policies. It is remarkable that in these cases the municipality also makes demands regarding the support from the local community. In one of the cases, local support was a requirement for a 'neighborhood subsidy' that the initiative applied for, to finance one of their sub projects, in one of the care cooperations the municipality issued an evaluative inquiry among the clients, and in the Beckum case, they feel that broader support among the community is an important condition for the assistance of public servants.

In general, though, the interaction in these meetings can be characterized as problem solving and/ or evaluating, for example when replanting and refurbishing the roadside:

'Voor die vakken [beplanting van vluchtheuvels] *moesten we gewoon een plannetje indienen: waar leggen we ze neer, want dan kunnen zij even kijken of het verkeerstechnisch wel veilig is, dat mensen bij oversteekplaatsen het verkeer wel goed kunnen zien… dat soort overleg heb je dan'* (respondent 16)

With regard to sanctions, it follows that in these initiatives there are no general sanctions. There are however, sanctions for the misuse of the subsidies two of the initiatives receive and in some cases, permission for certain activities in public space or on government property is required. In general, however, it is the positive relationship with local government itself that is at stake. This positive relationship is of great value to the initiatives as the financial or professional support from the municipality generally speeds up their process . '*Mutual respect and exchange of information leads to better results …keeping the public servants in the loop, whether they are the borough manager or in the review committee, keeping close contacts work. Things are just a bit easier and faster that way'* (respondent 11). That there is indeed a *mutual* investment in these types of cases appears from the other interviews. Sometimes, this involves a financial investment made by the local government, but it may also be a political interest at stake, as is explained by a board members of the one of the care cooperations: *'I believe that the municipality may have had more to explain, were blamed more severely by the people, when they would have decided not to do it* [continue to support the initiative]' As a result of this mutual involvement, it seems unlikely that the initiatives are sanctioned, unless something severely goes wrong.

No accountability required

The troubles with being exceptional

In the case of the Amsterdam refugee project, the municipality was happy to support the initiative. Their small scale and community based approach represents the city's plans for the future. In addition, local government is in favor of active citizenship and neighborhood based policy. From both perspectives, this project is an exemplary project and the city is '*proud that the community takes on the issue by themselves instead of sitting and waiting. They love it.'* (respondent 8). As a result, the municipality supports their project financially and politically.

When the active citizens got to work, though, they were confronted with what one of the project's founders calls '*the bureaucratic hassle'.* Even though the municipality is in favor of their approach, the fact that it is not standard procedure means that working on it is hard to justify by the public servants involved. Individually, they are positive about the project and promise to bend the rules. When it comes to a concrete example, though, it turns out that they cannot 'just do it' as '*it is just really difficult for a municipality to throw rules over board'.* This tension is recognized, by one of the public servants involved in the project, as the central issue for municipalities facilitating citizens' initiatives:

> *'Kijk, het lastige is dat je als gemeente dingen zoveel mogelijk georganiseerd wilt krijgen en tegelijkertijd willen we heel graag bottom up, en willen we ruimte geven aan wat er in de buurt ontstaat. Dat bijt soms, dat schuurt wel eens.'*

Eventually, the initiative has managed to meddle through and implement a successful project. They are afraid, though, that without formal or structural embedding in the organization and evaluation, they and initiatives like them will continue to have to fight for their position:

> *'Af en toe denk ik wel, interesseert het jullie wel dat we met iets bezig zijn? Het is niet dat wij op het matje worden geroepen van wat doen jullie nou eigenlijk, maar van wat betekent dit nou eigenlijk? En kunnen we niet kijken of we dit verder kunnen brengen… en wat dit financieel betekend. En je kan ook kijken hoe goed dit is om verder te doen. Wat dit oplevert voor integratie. Amsterdam moet 2 en een half duizend vluchtelingen opvangen ene waarschijnlijk volgend jaar ook nog een paar duizend. Die komen in je stad wonen. Dan zou ik belangstelling hebben voor hoe we dat doen.'*

Finally, there is a substantial group of seven initiatives (seven) that, like the refugee project mentioned above, is not subject to accountability demands from local government. This group is diverse in nature, and there are several reasons for an initiative to end up in the 'no accountability' box. As some of these initiatives are located in cities (Amsterdam, Amersfoort, Utrecht) in which other initiatives also included in this study do engage in an accountability process these reasons cannot be attributed to a matter of 'different city, different approach'.

In the case of the Amersfoort building project and community center 1, there is no public money involved, the initiatives fit within the boundary of laws and regulations, and in case of resistance from neighbors, there is a formal objection procedure, as both projects involve (an element of) spatial planning. In the case of a park designed by citizens in Utrecht, a similar situation occurs, here the implementation of the project, in addition, is executed mainly by the municipality itself. There is, following accountability theory, no inducement for the municipality to hold them accountable. In the case of another community center, there are specific rules – conditions for using the building, similar to those seen at the community center discussed before, but these are not subject to regular check-ups.

Finally, there are three initiatives that do receive public money, but in practice are not held accountable for how they spend this money, one of which is the example of the refugee project described above. In these three cases, local government is positive about the projects, and their (financial) support is generally incidental in nature, aimed at stimulating active citizenship itself, rather related to a specific policy goal.

With regard to accountability practices, it should be noted that even though local government does not demand accountability, this does not mean that there is no contact between the two. The municipality often initially encounter the initiatives in an early stage of the project, when the initiative for example asks for permission to take over a building or to build something new or applies for assistance. In addition, in some of these initiatives aldermen who politically support the initiative are involved and informed. Finally, it should be noted that the grid reflects the accountability *demands made by local government.* Two of the initiatives in the 'no accountability' box actually voluntarily provide accountability information to the municipality in the form of their annual reports.

Even though, in most cases reports about the initiatives' course of action reach the municipality, this does not come to a *debate* regarding their performance as the municipality either sees them as a exemplary project or is not in the position to make any demands. The 'give a little, take a little' perception of accountability that we have found in most initiatives in section 5.1, in these cases seems to be shared by local government. Three of the initiatives, though, state that they would appreciate some form of evaluation, and engage in a mutual learning process with local government:

'het jaarverslag wordt niet eens besproken. Dat stuur ik op en dat is het dan. Dat is wel jammer, want in mijn ogen gaat de gemeente voorbij aan de leerervaring. Er is niet een sectie zelfbeheer in het stadshuis, althans zo ervaar ik het op een afstandje' (respondent 14)

Finally, in the *sanctions phase*, three main observations can be made. Firstly, the main reason for some of these initiatives to be in the 'no accountability' box, is that what they do fits within all laws and regulations. As long as this is true, the municipality cannot sanction their conduct. The second observation - that was already mentioned in 5.2.1 – brings some nuance to this point, as in most cases, the municipality in the end is responsible for the public order and can intervene when things run out of hand entirely. Thirdly, as also appears from the voluntary accountability efforts of some initiatives, it does matter to some of these initiatives what local government thinks of them. Especially as some of these initiatives deliberately aim to show that things can be done differently. They are, or view their work, as a pilot project, and hope that their approach will eventually gain a more structural status within the municipality.

Conclusion

In the above sections I have set out to answer the question *'What accountability processes do citizen initiatives engage in?'* In short, this question can be answered as follows. Citizen initiatives engage in political or democratic accountability processes with (a part of) their local community. In addition, they are often involved in an accountability process with local government, usually in the form of the municipality, that is more financial or administrative in nature.

Designing accountability for the owners and the affected

To be more elaborate, the political/ democratic accountability towards the local community can be divided into two parts. The active citizens engage in an accountability relationship with (part of) their local community from the perspective of 'ownership', as the target audience of their initiative. It should be noted here, that for the initiatives, ownership is connected to the goal of the initiative and not to who is paying for the project or contributing in another way. In addition, the active citizens often organize some form of accountability towards 'affected citizens' that may experience negative consequences of their project. As the theory predicts, and half of the initiatives have a specific target audience , these are often two separate groups and separate processes. Even in cases in which the initiative is directed at the entire community, there often are some unintended effects to account for, that were not included in the 'regular' accountability process.

We have seen that these accountability processes in large are the result of a deliberate choice for a specific arrangement by the initiative itself, rather than being forced by the community or another external party. These choices regarding accountability design and the resulting differences , however, are also closely connected to the type of initiative. Nearly all initiatives involved with public places, for example, are aimed at the entire community and engage in an accountability process towards this broad community.

In practice, feeling accountable to the neighborhood' generally entails informing the neighborhood about your plans beforehand – often in the form of a meeting in which the plans can be discussed - and presenting them with the (positive) results afterwards. The emphasis in the information provision is usually on the plans and positive results, and the debate is concentrated at the beginning of the project, after which usually a small group of people is made responsible for the implementation. For initiatives that do try to involve the community in later stages of the process, this turns out to be a difficult task. The exception, in which the community is structurally informed and involved in debates regarding the process and potential problems, are the initiatives organized as a formal cooperative association.

Another exception to the rule, in which the initiative lies with the community and the community does engage in a debate along the way, occurs when unintended consequences arise. In nearly all cases we have seen that individual citizens know where to find the initiative if they have any complaints. When looking at how these complaints are handled, however, it appears that the control over the accountability process still lies with the citizens. In one of the cases, the dissatisfied citizens are referred to the initiatives' general assembly that overruled the complaint. In the others cases, it is the initiative itself, that in the end decides whether a complaint is just or not. Usually, however,

these complaints are listened to carefully and can be resolved individually by finding a practical solution. The affected neighbors themselves, however, are generally not in position to force such a solution. The opportunities to sanction the initiative are fairly limited. As they often are individuals, and their complaints are directed at an individual interest, collective actions against the initiative do not appear.

Government 'taking a little' accountability

Moving on to the accountability relationship with local government, we see that the initiative for an accountability process moves from the actor – the initiative – to the forum – the municipality. With exception of a few cases of voluntary accountability, it is the municipality making accountability demands. Little over half of the initiatives in this study are held accountable. The 'give a little, take a little' principle guiding active citizens' perceptions of accountability towards government, also seems to lead the accountability demands made. The local government seems to demand accountability in cases in which:

a.) they provide support, often in the form of a subsidy, connected to a specific policy goal. These initiatives are generally held accountable for their *results and financial integrity*, or:

b.) the initiative engages in an activity that is regulated and bound to certain conditions. These initiatives are formally held accountable for following the rules, and accountability is focused on the *process*

As a result, the accountability processes towards local government are more administrative and/ or financial in nature, especially for those initiatives engaged in 'traditional', pre existing accountability arrangements. There are no accountability demands if the initiative fits within the laws and policies – and the initiative has obtained the necessary permit, if there is no public money involved or in some cases, if there is a subsidy connected to active citizenship and participation, rather than a specific policy goal. In the latter cases, however, the (desire for) voluntary accountability rises among the initiative, as the they do have a specific (policy) goal and feel the need for mutual learning and recognition regarding their contribution to these goals.

Besides the initiatives involved in the traditional accountability relationships, there are a few that engage in a newly formed accountability arrangements, developed in the context of the initiative and its predecessors, that seem to have risen from the recognition of some shared interest. These new accountability arrangements are set apart from the traditional ones in the sense that they seem to be more open ended. They do focus on the underlying rules, laws and policies, but the accountability process itself is not fixed in strict protocols. These accountability arrangements generally take the

form of regular meetings and they focus on aligning the activities of the initiatives and the activities and policies of local government, and on solving possible problems arising in this alignment.

At the crossroads of community and government

At some points, the accountability towards government intersects with the accountability to the community. In some of the new accountability arrangements between government and initiative, the broader support of the neighborhood is a requirement for the municipality to provide support. In most of these cases, though, local government does not play an important role in the process – dialogue, research, meeting - to achieve this goal. In general, however, local government is mostly concerned with 'the community' at the scale of the entire city or municipality, in the sense that they care for the alignment of projects with local policies. Here they take the role of democratic principal. With regard to caring for the 'affected', the municipality traditionally has a role in handling objections and complaints when it comes to spatial planning and building projects. In other areas, as became apparent in the Amsterdam community center case, the government explicitly does not take this role, as it is not in their jurisdiction. When things run completely out of hand, though, and the public order is under threat, the municipality is in position to intervene. Fortunately, it has so far not come to this point in any of the cases included in this study.

VI.   Two democratic reviews

A normative analysis

Having explored the data in terms of a descriptive analysis of the accountability processes, we have come to the normative analysis. In order to answer the final sub question *'How can these processes be reviewed from the perspectives of representative democracy and do-ocracy?'* the accountability practices identified are compared to the two normative analytical frameworks that were developed in section 4.2.

As in the sections above it has become clear that citizens' initiatives, as was expected based on the theory, indeed engage in (largely) separate accountability processes towards the local community and towards local government, this section can be structured conveniently along the lines of the two 'forums' and their related normative framework. First, we will evaluate the accountability processes towards the local community from the perspective of do-ocracy, showing how they contribute to self-organization by incorporating neighbors' feedback from the outset, and by correcting unintended consequences. The normative analysis of the processes, however, also point out potential problems, lying in the fact that the possibilities for affected neighbors to demand a fundamentally different course of action may be limited.

Next, the accountability arrangements with local government will be reviewed from the perspective of representative democracy. Here, we will see that the existing accountability arrangements indeed seem to effectively connect the citizens' initiatives to the 'democratic chain of delegation', if this is deemed necessary by the democratic principal himself. Along the way, we will discuss how the accountability arrangements with local government may contribute to accountability from the do-ocracy perspective and the other way around.

6.1.   Reflexive accountability for self-organization?

To recap, the central idea of accountability in do-ocracy, as was developed in 4.2, is that a form of 'reflexive accountability' may contribute to a system of self-organization. The central evaluation criterion for accountability from this perspective, therefore is whether the local community affected by an initiative, and the users of the initiative's services are able to judge whether they would want an alternative decision, and whether this alternative is possible.

In order to fulfill this central criterion, the *information* provided by the actor (citizen initiative) should be sufficient for the forum (affected community and service users) to judge the effects and performance of the initiative. When looking at the initiatives, this is partly true. All initiatives provide

information to the entire neighborhood before they start with their project. The local community, therefore generally is informed about what can be expected, though in most initiatives some unintended effects occur. This information often seems rather general in nature and aims to enthuse neighbors and recruit new members, visitors or volunteers. Half of the initiatives, though, present the information in the form of a meeting, creating immediate opportunity for further questions.

Next, there should be a *debate* between the actor (citizen initiative) and the community about the initiative's effects. In a quarter of the initiatives, the active citizens formally organize such a debate. In most other cases the neighbors confronted manage to find and confront the initiative, if they experience nuisance. At this point, the benefits of the small scale and local nature of the initiatives, predicted by the theory of 'associative democracy', become apparent. There is room for direct conversation between the initiative and the affected neighbors, and the initiative can take immediate action to deal with the issues pointed out by them. Most issues regarding individual, unintended effects can be settled in this way, by listening carefully, recognizing the issue and finding a solution together.

When looking at the debate between the citizen initiatives and their users about effectiveness, we see that the debate with the service users generally is concentrated at the start of the project and focuses on how to shape the services in the first place. Especially when the target audience of a project is the neighborhood in its entirety, is difficult to organize a debate on effectiveness throughout the process, even though a few initiatives try. Usually, though, the discussion on progress and effectiveness are limited to a smaller project group.

In initiatives with a more specific target audience, there is more of a debate with the service users throughout the course of the projects. In citizen run community centers, the visitors and renters occasionally demand a debate. They do this, however, primarily individually, in the role of the 'affected' rather than debating the general approach and effectiveness of the centers' management. It is the initiatives that have organized themselves in the form of a cooperative association that do explicitly organize a debate for their service users on effectiveness. These associations typically organize a general assembly twice a year for their members to comment on the course of action, progress and decisions to be made. These debates, however, are usually not severe as the associations are organized around a specific shared interest. The 'real debate', therefore is not with the members, but with the affected, or with other parties involved in a collective project. It seems that the debate is organized most strongly in the initiatives in which the interests are least likely to strongly diverge, whereas it is more difficult to organize if the target audience is much broader and views are likely to differ.

Finally, in order to meet the criterion of 'do-ocratic accountability', the affected local community members need to be able to organize an 'alternative', and service users should be in position to demand change if they find activities are ineffective. With regard to the affected, as mentioned above, the main gain of these initiatives – as opposed to traditional public service provision – seems to be the ability of initiatives to quickly settle or correct problems encountered by neighbors. In several cases, aspects of the projects were changed or (re)moved when they proved to be a nuisance to a neighbor. The biggest downside, at the same time, is that in the end, it is the initiatives themselves that judge complaints and decide whether they make these changes or not. If the project involves spatial planning, the municipality, however, takes on a role in judging the complaints.

The affected citizens themselves in these cases do not seem to be in position to enforce such changes. In none of the cases under study, the neighbors managed to 'organize an alternative'. Especially because complaints often involve individual problems and - as appears from the community center 3 and care cooperative 2 examples, where there were neighbors demanding change - organizing an alternative approach to the initiative requires broader support. The fact that they did not enforce change in these cases may not be as problematic, though, as the complaints in these cases were related to individual consequences, and not directed at the initiative in general. In the light of one of the main criticisms of do-ocracy, of initiatives being organized by and for 'a small group of likeminded citizens', the fact that individuals do not manage to organize an alternative is not necessarily a negative thing. It should be noted though, that in some cases the individual interests of citizens could be protected more.

When it comes to the position of the service users, there are some initiatives in which they are in the position – informed and attributed with sanction instruments – to formally demand change. Some other initiatives are financially dependent on them. These are the initiatives – associations and community centers – with a more specific target audience. In the public initiatives, the opportunities for sanctioning are considerably more limited.

To conclude, affected neighbors and service users are usually placed in the position to judge whether they want an alternative course of action at the start of an initiative. In the case of unintended consequences, the cases in this research show that small changes of plans are still possible after the initial course is set out. These small changes seem to cover the lion's share of the 'alternatives' desired by affected citizens and service users. More fundamental alternatives have not occurred in the cases under study, either because there has not been an inducement for them, or because there was not enough support for them. Theoretically, therefore, it still seems possible for affected citizens and service users to organize and alternative. The question whether this is feasible in practice,

though, cannot be answered based on the 16 initiatives included in this study. The accountability processes towards the local community, therefore mainly contribute to self-organization by incorporating neighbors' feedback from the outset, and by correcting unintended consequences.

6.2. The democratic chain of delegation

From the perspective of representative democracy, accountability legitimizes government actions by linking them effectively to the 'democratic chain of delegation'. The central criterion here is whether an accountability arrangement enables democratically legitimized bodies to monitor and evaluate the behavior of citizens' initiatives, and induce them to modify that behavior in accordance with their preferences.

In order to live up to this central criterion, firstly, democratically legitimized principals need to be informed about the conduct of a citizens' initiative, and the social consequences of that conduct. At first sight, this seems to be true for nearly all initiatives included in this study. It seems to be nearly impossible for initiatives not to encounter local government at some point in their process. As a result, local government is informed about the initiatives' plans, usually beforehand. Based on this information, local government judges whether an initiative, for example, is granted a subsidy or permit, and more importantly, in the light of this research, whether a further accountability process is required. If this is the case, the initiative provides the municipality with additional information throughout the process, to provide evidence of their efforts or effectiveness and/ or their rightfully following the rules or spending their subsidy. This information is usually generated by the initiative itself. In a few cases, more 'evidence' is needed in the form of receipts, photographs, or a report from an auditing committee.

With regard to information on the social consequences of an initiative, critical remarks can be made, though. Firstly, it should be remarked that in the more traditional accountability arrangements, the information required is predefined by the municipality, often related to specific rules and procedures based on traditional large scale organizations. The social consequences are defined in terms of a specific policy goal and approach. These accountability arrangements do not incorporate the often new approach of the initiatives towards a the policy goal, and as a result their novel approach is not evaluated. In addition, the accountability arrangements of citizens' initiatives towards local government, therefore, tend to have a financial, administrative or even constitutional character rather than being distinctively democratic or political in nature.

A similar dynamic is seen in some of the 'no accountability' initiatives that are appreciated for their contribution to active citizenship, seemingly regardless of their social consequences in terms of their

effectiveness in achieving their own policy goals. In more than three quarters of the initiatives, any new approach to a social issue seems to be approved, as long as it fits within the rules, or because active citizenship is to be stimulated in itself.

Secondly, in these 'no accountability' cases, the decision to support an initiative seems to be based on the plans of the initiative itself, and the information to judge the social consequences is provided by them as well. In these cases the emphasis in the municipality's involvement is on the perspective of the 'owners' and not 'the affected', and is focused on activities rather than results. The four newly developed accountability processes on the other hand, do incorporate an evaluation of the specific approach that in most cases also includes an evaluation of local support for the initiative.

After the information phase, there should be a debate between the accountability forum and actor, focused on whether the behavior of the latter accords with the democratically legitimized principal's standards and preferences. In this study, such a debate occurs in nearly all initiatives that local government has decided to held to account, both in the 'traditional' as well as the 'modern' arrangements. The only exceptions are the cases in which it clearly appears from the information provided, that the targets have been met. In addition, some of the initiatives that are not held to account also engage in frequent conversations with the municipality. With regard to the 'standards and preferences', it has been said above, that these are mostly defined by previously formed policies, laws and rules. In the 'new' accountability arrangements, though, these meetings over policies and rules can be characterized as alignment rather than debate.

Finally, the accountability arrangement should provide sufficiently significant incentives for the initiatives to commit themselves to the agenda of local government as a democratically legitimized principal. In the cases of traditional accountability arrangements, the answer is yes. Government is in the position to withdraw subsidies or even shut down some of the initiatives. Even though in most cases the threat that this will actually happen is reduced as the municipality's trust in the initiative grows, the initiative take these consequences into account. Some of the initiatives actively push the boundaries of the rules and demands or try to negotiate, but usually, they stick to them. As the governments' requirements in these cases are connected to specific rules and policy goals, the incentives to commit to local governments' preferences, in most cases are limited to these specific rules, and the initiatives are free to continue their alternative approach to the issue at hand. This is could be seen as the other side of the 'no accountability' medal.

In the newly developed accountability arrangements in which there is no subsidy involved, there are no formal consequences, but the initiatives are very aware of the benefits of the support of their municipality. Diverting too far from government policy may therefore have negative consequences.

The 'no accountability' initiatives, lastly, sometimes share this feeling as they often get the support of the relevant alderman of their city. These aldermen do not, however, seem to have more specific preferences for the initiative other than fulfilling their role of exemplary citizen participation project.

To conclude, the existing accountability arrangements indeed effectively link the citizens' initiatives to the 'democratic chain of delegation' if this is deemed necessary by the democratic principal himself. In the traditional accountability arrangements it is clearly defined when this is necessary, in the rules and subsidy requirements. Some newer arrangements may arise, in addition, if an accountability process is considered mutually beneficial. This primarily positive conclusion should be accompanied, though, by two critical remarks. Firstly, there are three initiatives receiving a subsidy for their contribution to active citizenship, but these are hardly subject to control regarding their effectiveness (with regard to their own policy goals) or how they spent their money. In the same vein, the initiatives in the traditional accountability processes are generally judged based on predefined policy goals and rules, even though their approach to these goals may be significantly different from the regular approach. The accountability process therefore tends to be administrative rather than 'democratic' or evaluative in nature.

VII.   The concluding remarks

This research has set out to answer the question '*What practices of public accountability do citizen initiatives engage in, and how do these contribute to do-ocracy's democratic legitimacy?*' In this chapter, the pieces of this puzzle that have been presented in the sections above, are put together.

Accountability practices in the world of citizens' initiatives

In short, we have seen that citizens' initiatives engage in accountability practices towards two 'forums', their local community and local government. Whereas in the do-ocracy literature, discussions of accountability were mainly focused on local government, this research has shown that to active citizens, accountability towards their community plays an equally, possibly even more important, role. The initiatives under inquiry value accountability towards their community as an important *virtue*, prompted by their desire to be *responsive* towards those for whom they have developed their project in the first place. This sense of accountability can be understood from the perspective of *ownership*.

From this sense of responsiveness, practices of voluntary accountability arise. Unlike in the existing literature (Van de Wijdeven 2012, Van de Wijdeven & Cornelissen 2007, Verhoeven et al. 2014; Van De Wijdeven and De Graaf, 2014), these practices are not merely informal in nature. The initiatives provide their neighbors with information in door to door leaflets and newsletters, and half of them organize discussion meetings. They try to involve the community beforehand, check their ideas with their neighbors and often communicate their achievements. Discussing performance and progress along the way, seems more difficult, though, especially when the target audience covers the entire neighborhood. Trying to involve the entire neighborhood in the process may even slow down the course of the project. If an initiative is organized around a more specific issue or interest, and service users are joined together in a formal association, this is possible though. Here too, however, the emphasis is on decision making beforehand and on integrity, instead of performance. The organization of accountability towards the owners, therefore seems to strongly reflect the initiatives' experience of accountability as a virtue. The community, however, is not only involve on the role of owner, there are also arrangements made with the 'affected'. Even though most initiatives would describe this as 'taking into account' rather than being accountable, most of them organize a separate process, sometimes even create a formal procedure, to deal with affected neighbors, as their embedding in the neighborhood matters to them.

Besides the community, local government – usually in the form of the municipality – may also take the role of accountability forum. The accountability practices towards local government that were found in this study, reflect the observation made based on the existing do-ocracy literature, that

these practices are predominantly administrative in nature. These practices often involve fixed reports and meetings, connected to regulations, policies and subsidy requirements. Even though the accountability demands, as expected, are often related to spending public money, the strictness of the demands does not seem to be related to the amount of money that is received by the initiative (as was suggested by Tonkens and Kroese,2009). Rather, a difference could be observed between initiatives engaging in pre-existing, traditional subsidy arrangements, and incidental or citizen participation related funds. The fact that this difference does not appear in Tonkens' and Kroese's study, can be explained by the fact that their study focuses on top down do-ocracy, only including initiatives funded by participation budgets, whereas this study mainly involves examples of bottom up do-ocracy, that are funded in different ways.

The findings in this study also reflect the existing do-ocracy literature (e.g. Hazeu et al, 2005; Hurenkamp, Tonkens & Duivendak, 2006; Hendriks & van de Wijdeven, 2014), in the sense that the way accountability is organized within local government, in a number of cases is experienced as 'not well attuned' to the context of do-ocracy. If there is an imbalance between the accountability demands, and what the initiative gets in return, this may even lead to an (experience of) *accountability overload*, putting pressure on the initiatives' responsiveness to their communities. The opposite situation, of an *accountability deficit*, though, may also occur when a subsidy is purposed to encourage citizen participation, rather than being connected to an underlying policy goal. The interviews with both the initiatives and the public servants suggest that the tension between setting boundaries and keeping control on the one hand, and creating space for the projects of active citizens, on the other, poses a challenge for local government.

Besides the traditional forms of accountability, some examples have been found of the potential movement towards new, 'meaningful' accountability with regard to active citizenship, that has been detected in some of the do-ocracy studies (Van Caem, 2008; Hazeu et al, 2005; Hendriks & Van de Wijdeven, 2014). These accountability arrangements, that were specifically developed in the context of the initiatives, are characterized by regular meetings instead of fixed reporting and focus on alignment rather than debate. These new forms seem to be less likely to cause tensions, as they are based on mutual interests and are attuned to the initiative and its approach.

Do-ocracy's democratic legitimacy

When reviewing the accountability practices from two perspectives on democracy, it becomes clear that these practices contribute to do-ocracy's democratic legitimacy in a number of ways.

The accountability practices towards the local community contribute to democratic legitimacy from the do-ocracy perspective – by '*self-organization through reflexive accountability*' - in three main

ways. Firstly, by ensuring that the local community, both the users and potentially effected neighbors, are informed about their plans and can make up their minds. By involving them - or providing the opportunity to get involved- from the outset, the initiatives try to attune their plans to the demands of potential service users, and overcome negative reactions from neighbors afterwards. Accountability thus also serves a strategic function.

A second major contribution to democratic legitimacy from the do-ocracy perspective, was predicted by Hirst's theory of associative democracy (1994). As the initiatives are – often deliberately - small, approachable and organized closely to the community, neighbors confronted with negative externalities can approach the initiatives, engage in direct dialogue with the project groups. As a result, unintended consequences can be solved quickly. This can be considered a form of small scale 'reflexive accountability' and self-organization.

Thirdly, in the case of the cooperative associations, arrangements arise in which service users are structurally placed in the position to debate the effectiveness and course of action of the initiative, and to demand change if they feel the current approach is ineffective. These are key aspects of the normative model for accountability in do-ocracy. In the other types of initiatives it seems more difficult to consult the local community about effectiveness, although this may also be a sign that the local community does not feel the need to make such a judgment or has no reason to be dissatisfied.

Remarkably, two out of these three main contributions - the consultation at the start of the projects and the formal arrangements at the associations - could also be understood in terms of (small scale) representative democracy. This may be unsurprising considering that most respondents feel that they, to some degree, act *on behalf* of their community, and the accountability processes towards the community have been characterized as democratically or politically natured in this study before. Organizing such a 'representative democracy', however, may be difficult for small, informal initiatives wanting to involve their entire neighborhood.

In addition, a small number of cases in this study suggest that it may be very difficult for affected neighbors, who have no formal sanctioning instruments, to demand 'an alternative' if their demands go beyond unintended consequences that cannot be fixed by small adaptations. Do-ocracy's real contribution in light of democratic accountability, therefore, in line with Hirst (1994), lies in the small scale of citizens' initiatives and their resulting approachable and adaptive nature.

The accountability practices towards local government, on the other hand, are generally not politicized by the respondents, and do not connect to a perspective of 'ownership' or democracy. Rather, they are administrative in nature. From the perspective of representative democracy – in

their function of *'legitimizing initiatives' actions by linking them effectively to the 'democratic chain of delegation',* however, these practices can be judged positively (see chapter 6). The democratic principal, represented by the municipality is in the position to judge whether an initiative is required to participate in a further process of accountability. If this is the case, the municipality contributes to democratic legitimacy of do-ocracy, by providing checks and balances on public money spent by initiatives, by keeping an eye on their results with regard to policy goals connected to this public money, and by ensuring their activities are in compliance with rules and regulations. In their interaction with the initiatives, they represent the city as a whole and indeed, focus on the their 'democratic anchorage in the aggregative representative democracy in which they are nested' (Verhoeven, Van de Wijdeven and Metze, 2014). The main exception to this rule are the initiatives in the 'no accountability box' that do receive public money.

The accountability processes with local government, may also affect the initiatives' democratic legitimacy from the do-ocracy perspective. Traditionally, government's role towards initiatives is sharply demarcated. In the traditional accountability arrangements, demands may be experienced as severe, but they are limited to the pre-defined requirements related to a subsidy and to what is permitted according to the law. Government cannot make demands on the initiatives' approach outside these agreements. These sharply demarcated accountability demands, however, may affect the democratic legitimacy from the do-ocracy perspective, specifically because they do not bother with the initiative's specific approach. Because of their origins in traditional, large scale institutions, the rules may be at odds with the small scale and innovative nature of the initiatives, creating a tension with responsiveness to their clients. The exception lies with building projects, in which the municipality provides affected neighbors with the opportunity to formally object, which contributes positively to the democratic legitimacy from the do-ocracy perspective.

At the other side of the grid, in the examples of newly developed accountability processes, local government is involved with the specific approach, goals and environment of the initiatives. Community support, here may even be a requirement to receive their government support. In these cases, the experience of an accountability overload is less likely to occur, and the accountability processes towards local government may even positively contribute to responsiveness and legitimacy from the do-ocracy perspective.

Besides these two points of overlap, the accountability towards local government and the accountability towards the local community seem to be two distinctive processes, with distinctive purposes that exist alongside each other. This distinction, however, may be blurred by the development of new, tailor made accountability processes.

VIII. Discussion

This research has set out to structurally and systematically explore what is known of accountability in do-ocracy, and what actually happens in practice when looking at do-ocracy through the lens of accountability. This has resulted in new insights into both, and in the relationship between what is known and what was found. The main contribution of this systematic approach must be the finding that there is actually a lot going on with accountability in the world of do-ocracy. Firstly, citizens' initiatives generally engage in some form of an accountability process towards their community. Unlike the existing literature suggested, these processes can be structural, sometimes even formal, rather than merely loose and informal. Secondly, whereas do-ocracy in the literature is criticized for a potential accountability deficit, a more systematic look at the empirical sources actually points towards an (experienced) accountability overload in the relationship with local government. This picture of an experienced overload has been confirmed in some of the cases included in this study. This seems to occur most often in forms of bottom up do-ocracy, in which the accountability demands that initiatives are confronted with are not attuned to such small scale voluntary activities. This is a particularly relevant observation, given the fact that most do-ocracy studies describing accountability before, were based on forms of top-down do-ocracy, in which demands - at least those related to subsidies - are tailor made.

The societal debate: it's not that bad!

Now what do these findings have to add to the societal debate regarding the democratic legitimacy of citizens' initiatives? A first reaction would be, that it may not be so bad after all. Nearly all citizens' initiatives in this study try to engage their community. They inform their neighbors beforehand and give them a chance to respond. In addition, due to their small, approachable character, neighbors and service users can easily engage in discussion with the active citizens and small problems regarding unintended negative consequences can quickly be resolved. In addition, local government seems to be in position to judge whether an initiative should be held accountable by them as well, and indeed hold them accountable if they believe this is the case. From this perspective, the accountability practices identified throughout the initiatives in this study may actually provide a solution to what is considered the main democratic problem of do-ocracy: the idea that citizens' initiatives only represent a small group of people and only act on their own interests. The initiatives in this study – as well as those in the literature review – are often aimed at the entire neighborhood, and even if they are not, the initiators care about their embedding in the neighborhood. In both cases, they actively try to involve the community as a whole and they deal with those who encounter the negative consequences of their projects. At the aggregate level, in addition, local government ensures that their activities remain within the boundaries of the law and local policy.

There are, however, some critical remarks, and some issues to be tackled if 'public accountability' were to be the answer to the problem of democratic legitimacy. Firstly, the accountability towards the neighborhood remains voluntary in nature. Even though most initiatives included in this study choose to organize accountability processes and deal with complaints, the affected neighbors often do not have an external party to go to, when the initiative decides to not accommodate their wishes. Here, two suggestions can be made. Firstly, it may be relevant to explore the possibilities of such an external party to judge complaints and objections. As we have seen in the larger scale construction projects, the municipality may take on this role, and in the Amsterdam community center case, it is suggested that this role may be fulfilled by a committee of other initiatives from the neighborhood. A second suggestion would be to study additional cases in which the initiative organizes accountability to neither owners nor affected. Are the neighbors in position to settle complaints by themselves? Do they find new ways to enforce accountability? These types of cases have not been encountered in the course of this research.

A second critical remark concerns the dilemma faced by local government, between regulating the activities of active citizens by using standard requirements that may not fit the specific nature of the initiatives, and not demanding accountability, while running the risks that come with letting go of control. The question is, how to ensure some degree of democratic control and appreciate and learn from the initiatives' innovative approaches, while at the same time not impeding their projects by overwhelming them with accountability demands. It seems that some of the newly developed accountability processes in this study manage to find such a balance. This, however, seems to require an investment from local government and commitment to mutual interests, which also implies a new approach for government (and the initiative?) for judging whether an accountability process is required. In addition, it also means that government's influence over the initiative may be extended from the demarcated terrain of subsidies and laws, to the very nature of the initiative itself. A third suggestion for further research, therefore, would be to indentify and study more of these new forms of accountability, to see what we can learn and to learn what it takes.

The limits of the reflexive model

The systematic analysis of accountability in the context of citizens' initiatives, using the new normative model of accountability, has revealed new accountability practices and showed how these may contribute to democratic legitimacy – in ways that cannot be understood in terms of 'hierarchical delegation'. Parts of the model were indeed found in practice – the information provided, debates with service users and affected neighbors. At a small scale, when solving the unintended consequences encountered by neighbors, there indeed are instances of 'reflexive accountability' that contribute to self-organization in the do-ocracy system.

The analysis, however, has also pointed out some of the limitations of the model. Two main, interrelated issues will be discussed. Firstly, the 'reflexive' character, focused on alternatives emerging, that most clearly sets apart the do-ocracy model from the representative model, only seems to occur at a small scale, related to individual issues. This may be the case, because in this research, neighbors generally were pleased with the initiatives, and did not have the desire for any alternative approach. In the two cases in which they did, the care cooperative 2 and community center 3 examples, the neighbors did not have enough support to realize an alternative.

Secondly, the main dilemma of democratic legitimacy of citizens' initiatives, seems to be in its separation of the owners and the affected – as could be expected, following Mulgan (2003). We have seen that when small, unintended consequences arise, these can be dealt with easily. The question remains what happens, though, when the consequences experienced by the affected are not unintended, and dealing with them requires a substantive change in the project's approach. What will happen when the complaint concerns the domain of the 'owners'? This dilemma cannot be solved by applying the new normative model, as it treats the owners and affected separately. This may be the main limitation of the model. In this study, there has, however, only been one clear example of such a confrontation between owners and affected, namely in the care cooperative 2 case. A fourth suggestion for further research, would therefore be to look at initiatives in which a substantial tension emerges between the initiative and its surroundings, to see whether it is possible for alternatives to arise, and to improve the normative model.

A fifth, related direction for future research is to explore the topic from the perspective of these affected citizens. As this research is exploratory in nature, and limited in time, the main focus has been on the perspective of the active citizens. Even though this perspective has so far not been contradicted by additional document analysis and interviews with public servants, the perspective of the affected citizens, may shed a new light on the issue, that is particularly relevant when exploring more sensitive cases.

The political dimension within: accountability tensions

This research has pointed out that citizens' initiatives are confronted with different accountability claims and processes, related to the two models of democracy in which they are nested. When organizations try to satisfy such different types of accountability demands, it is likely that they will come across tensions (Koppel, 2005). When exploring the different accountability processes in this research, it became clear that citizens' initiatives are no exception. Three different types of accountability tensions can be identified, that can be connected to the typology developed by Koppel (2005). Firstly, a tension arises between responsiveness to the target audience, and 'responsibility' -

the accountability for laws, rules and procedure. Initiatives involved in a formal accountability process over regulations or subsidies, need to meet requirements that were designed for the traditional large scale organizations, that are at odds with being fully responsiveness to clients and service users. The health care initiative that is confronted with procedures taking up time that would otherwise be spent with the client, and rules that impede aspects of homely atmosphere at their nursing home, is a telling example.

Secondly, the initiatives that, because of the municipality's desire to support active citizenship, do not have to participate in accountability processes, are often confronted with issues related to the municipality's internal accountability processes. If there is no accountability demanded, there are no external accountability arrangements linking the initiative to this internal process. This clash between political support for participation and the bureaucracy that follows, may be understood as a tension between Koppell's democratic control perspective – *did the initiative do what local government desired?* – and the responsibility perspective - *does the initiative follow the rules?* (2005). For the initiatives themselves, in addition, this lack accountability demands may lead to a loss of (their sense of) legitimacy and a lack of evaluation. In short, the occurrence of these two 'opposite' tensions show that too much responsiveness may lead to difficulties, but too much freedom may as well.

Thirdly, as appears most clearly in the case of the road safety project in Beckum, a tension may also rise between being responsive to the wishes of the community, by effectively and efficiently realizing a project, on the one hand, and being fully inclusive on the other. Involving the village in the process and accommodating the affected, simply do not speed up the process. This tension between different parts of the local community may be understood as an issue of responsiveness versus democratic control, in which the local community is considered the democratic forum.

These tensions are summarized in the figure below:

Two competing models?

As put in the introduction, competing accountability claims may reflect the relationship and potential competition between the underlying models of democracy. As Olsen puts it, when accountability is conceived as the politics of the terms of political order, *'who-is-accountable-to-whom-for-what is part of the processes through which order is formed, defended, maintained, challenged and changed'* (2016, p. 4).

With the exception of the responsibility versus responsiveness tension, the two models, however, seem to involve two separate processes, with separate forums, performing separate functions. They can exist alongside each other in good harmony. When looking beyond the perspective of responsibility, it becomes clear that municipalities usually are supportive of the initiatives and their activities. They focus on promoting active citizenship, and – except in the new accountability arrangements – often do not try to control the initiatives from their role of democratic principal. As a result, there are no tensions between accountability from the control perspective and responsiveness of the initiatives towards their clients or service users, in this research.

In addition, it can be remarked that the initiatives that engage in a newly developed accountability relationship with local government, in this study, do not seem to be confronted with tensions. The development towards the new accountability processes, may, however, be an interesting object for further studies from the perspective of power struggles for a different reason. These new forms of accountability on the one hand reflect a movement towards the ideal of do-ocracy, while at the other hand, they may expand the influence of the municipality.

The research process: benefits and limitations

Having reflected on the findings of this study in terms of contributions to the scientific and societal debate, a final point of reflection and source for suggestions for additional research is the process in which these findings have been obtained. In this light, three points regarding the design and methodology are particularly relevant.

In terms of the research design, a decision that has affected the course of the project has been to adopt a broad, exploratory approach including a larger number of respondents, rather than an in-depth approach with a small number of cases. The main benefit of this approach, and the reason to opt for this design in the first place, has been the development of a broad overview of the practices of accountability across different types of initiatives. The study has shown that there indeed are different approaches to accountability. Though, this approach has its benefits given the unexplored subject of the research, it has important consequences for the normative analysis. Regarding the

normative analysis, the broad approach has resulted in an exploration of the applicability of the normative frames developed, rather than an elaborate evaluation, which may be the main limitation of this research. The design has shown, that the normative frameworks are of practical relevance, has revealed potential limits of the reflexive model and has pointed out types of cases that may be relevant to further evaluate in terms of potential problems and potentially successful arrangements. In further research, a more thorough, in-depth evaluation of these types of cases should lead to a more concise and elaborate view of the democratic legitimacy of specific do-ocracy practices.

A second choice that is likely to have had consequences for the findings in this study, has been the use of elite, semi-structured interviews as the main method of data collection. This method, in part, also resulted from the exploratory nature of the research. The series of interviews with well informed respondents has indeed allowed me to gather detailed information about many cases, of a relatively unknown research subject. In addition, the interviews enabled me to explore the active citizens' perspectives on accountability and their relationship with their neighbors, and how these influence the organization of accountability in practice. This has proved to be relevant information, as the accountability practices towards the local community is largely voluntary in nature. The empirical and normative analysis, using these perspectives have therefore, painted a rather positive picture of accountability in do-ocracy. The question remains, however, to what degree the experiences of the active citizens reflect their actual practices. Even though the document analysis and initial interviews with two public servants have so far not contradicted this picture, further research could include more perspectives – such as that of the affected neighbors, as mentioned before – and adopt a more ethnographic approach, using observations to trace the actual practices.

A final design choice, in the selection of respondents, has been to focus mainly on instances of bottom up do-ocracy, instead of top down do-ocracy, triggered by citizen participation policy. This approach has revealed both the tension between responsiveness and responsibility when initiatives are confronted with traditional accountability procedures, and emerging new forms of accountability when there are no such arrangements. From the literature, it appears that accountability in top-down do-ocracy may be somewhere in between, in the form of general arrangements designed specifically for citizens' initiatives. With regard to further research it may therefore be relevant compare the practices found in this study, with those in top-down do-ocracy.

IX. References

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Wijdeven, T. M. F. van de, de Graaf, L. J., & Hendriks, F. (2014). *Actief burgerschap: Lijnen in de literatuur*. Tilburg: Tilburgse School voor Politiek en Bestuur

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Appendix

A. Eligible Studies

Round 1 - eligible studies in direct search results 'doe-democratie' (25-2-2016)

1. Wijdeven, T. M. F. Van de (2012). *Doe democratie: Over actief burgerschap in stadswijken.* Delft: Eburon

2. Wijdeven, T. Van de & Graaf, L. de (2014). *Kernkracht: over doedemocratie in het landelijke gebied.* Tilburg: Tilburgse School voor Politiek en Bestuur.

3. Brounen, R. (2014). *Doe-democratie op ziek naar een nieuwe balans. Een explorerend onderzoek naar de betekenissen die betrokkenen, actief binnen de lokale sport(beleids)omgeving, geven aan de ideaaltypische rolomkering*. (mastert thesis). Retrieved from: dspace.library.uu.nl/handle/1874/300828

4. Boogers, M. & Wijdeven T., Van de (2012). *Meer doen met doe-democratie nieuwe coproducties voor een veerkrachtig lokaal bestuur*. Tilburg: Tilburg University. Retrieved from: http://doc.utwente.nl/87604/1/rapport_BZK_burgerinitiatieven_-_nw.pdf

5. Hendriks, F., & van de Wijdeven, T. M. F. (editors) (2014). Loshouden en meemaken: Over samenredzaamheid en overheidsparticipatie. Den Haag: Platform 31.

6. Igalla, M. & Meerkerk, I. van (2015).De duurzaamheid van burgerinitiatieven. Een empirische verkenning. *Bestuurswetenschappen*, *69* (3), pp. 25-53.

7. Tonkens, E., Trappenburg, M., Hurenkamp, M. & Schmidt, J. (2015). *Montessori Democratie*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University press

8. Henkel, L. (2015). *Van een verzorgingsstaat naar een verzorgende participatiestaat*. (Master Thesis). Retrieved from: https://www.movisie.nl/sites/default/files/Lorene-Henkel-Van-verzorgingsstaat-naar-participatiestaat.pdf

9. Breugel, A. J. Van (2015). *Participatiemotivatie in Barendrecht. Een onderzoek naar de invloed van netwerksturing op de participatiemotivatie in de doe-democratie van Barendrecht.* (master thesis). Retrieved from: https://thesis.eur.nl/pub/18505/scriptie-A.van-Breugel-377889-definitieve-versie.pdf

10. Snel, E., Hoogmoed, K. & Ode, A. (2015). Actief burgerschap en leefbaarheid in twee Rotterdamse wijken. *Bestuurswetenschappen, (69)* 2, pp. 71 – 84.

11. Dam, R. van, Duineveld, & During, R. (2015). Delineating Active Citizenship: The Subjectification of Citizens' Initiatives. Journal of environmental policy and planning (17), 2, pp. 163 – 179

12. Timmerman, J. (2014). Bevorderende en belemmerende factoren van burgerinitiatieven. (master thesis). Retrieved from: http://dspace.library.uu.nl/handle/1874/296306

13. Boskamp, J. A. (2015). *Inwonerinitiatieven in een veranderende samenleving. Een analyse van de rol van de gemeente Harderwijk in inwonerinitiatieven gedurende 2012-2014*. (master thesis). Retrieved from: http://dspace.library.uu.nl/bitstream/handle/1874/319451/Thesis%20Politiek%20en%20Maatschappij%20in%20Historisch%20Perspectief.pdf?sequence=2

14. Verhoeven, I., Wijdeven, T. van de & Metze, T. (2014). Do-ocracy's Democratic anchorage. Forthcoming

15. Wijdeven, T. M. F. van de, de Graaf, L. J., & Hendriks, F. (2014). *Actief burgerschap: Lijnen in de literatuur.* Tilburg: Tilburgse School voor Politiek en Bestuur

16. Wijdeven, T. van de & Hendriks, F. (2010). *Burgerschap in de doe-democratie.* Den Haag: Nicis Instituut

17. Oude Vrielink, M. Verhoeven, I. en Wijdeven, T. van de (2013). *Meedoen met de Overheid? Over de stille beleidspraktijk van de doe-democratie.*

18. Wijdeven, T. van de (2013). *Wat kan de overheid doen in de doedemocratie?* Christen Democratische Verkenningen

19. Roorda, C., Verhagen, M., Loorbach, D., Steenbergen, F. van. (2015). *Doe-democratie: niche, visie of hype?* Rotterdam: DRIFT Dutch Research Institute of Transitions.

20. Kleistra, Y. & Walraven, G. (2014). Van eerste overheid naar eerst de burger, maar hoe? *Bestuurskunde, 23* (4), pp. 54 - 63

Round 2 – eligible studies references from round 1

21. Denters, S. A. H., Bakker, J.H.M., Oude Vrielink, M. J. & Boogers, M.J.G.J.A. (2013). Burgerintiatieven in Overijssel. Een inventarisatie. Enschede: Universiteit Twente.

22. Denters, B., Tonkens, E., Verhoeven, I. & Bakker, J. (2013). *Burgers maken hun buurt.* Den Haag: Platform 31

23. Oude Vrielink, M. & Van de Wijdeven, T. (2007). *Wat kan wel! Kan. Hoe bewoners zelf bijdragen aan sociale binding in de wijk.* Tilburg: Universiteit van Tilburg.

24. Oude Vrielink, M. & Van de Wijdeven, T. (2008). *Met vertrouwen vooruit in de Deventer Wijkaanpak.* Tilburg: Universiteit van Tilburg.

25. Wijdeven, T. van de & Geurtz, J. (2008). *Met vertrouwen aan de slag in De Smederijen van Hoogeveen*. Tilburg: Universiteit van Tilburg.

26. Wijdeven, T. van de & Graaf, L. de (2008). *Met vertrouwen van start in het Groningse Lokaal Akkoord.* Tilburg: Universiteit van Tilburg.

27. Wijdeven, T. van de, Geurtz, J. & Oude Vrielink, M. (2008). Vertrouwen in de Enschedese stadsdelen. Tilburg: Universiteit van Tilburg.

28. Oude Vrielink, M. & Wijdeven, T. van de (2008). Bewonersinitiatieven: een prachtkans voor wijken? Bestuurswetenschappen, 62 (3). pp. 66-83

29. Verhoeven, I. (2006). Alledaags politiek burgerschap en de overhead. In: P.L. Meurs, E.K. Schrijvers en G.H. de Vries. (eds.). *Leren van de Praktijk. Gebruik van lokale kennis en ervaring voor beleid.* Den Haag: WRR

30. Ankeren, M. van, Tonkens, E. & Verhoeven, I. (2010). *Bewonersinitiatieven in de krachtwijken van Amsterdam: een verkennende studie.* Amsterdam: Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research (AISSR)

31. Basten, F., Heideveld, A., Logghe, K. & Verhagen, M. (2015). *Quick scan: aard, omvang en impact van maatschappelijk initiatief.* Rotterdam: DRIFT Dutch Institute for Transitions

32. Tonkens , E. & Verhoeven, I. (2011). *Bewonersinitiatieven: proeftuin voor partnerschap tussen burgers en overheid. Een onderzoek naar bewonersinitiatieven in de Amsterdamse wijkaanpak.* Amsterdam: Universiteit van Amsterdam/AISSR

33. Hurenkamp, M., Tonkens, E. & Duyvendak, J. W. (2006). *Wat burgers bezielt. Een onderzoek naar burgerinitiatieven.* Amsterdam/ Den Haag: Universiteit van Amsterdam / NICIS Kenniscentrum Grote Steden

34. Mujde, A. & Daru, A. (2005). *Actieve burgers en vrijwilligersorganisaties.* Civiq instituut vrijwillige inzet.

35. Wilde, M. de, Hurenkamp, M. & Tonkens, E. (2014). Flexible relations, frail contacts and failing demands: How community groups and local institutions interact in local governance in the Netherlands. *Urban Studies, 51*(16), pp. 3365–3382

36. Montfort, C. van, Griffioen, H., Bokhorst, M., Asbeek Brusse, W. & Visser, M. de (2014). *Op maat voor later. Maatschappelijke initiatieven op de snijvlakken van wonen, zorg en pensioenen*. Den Haag: Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid (WRR)

37. Salverda, I. & Dam, R. van. (2008).*Burgers en Landschap deel een: voorbeelden van burgerparticipatie en maatschappelijk initiatief*. Wageningen: Alterra.

38. Tonkens, E. H. & Kroese, G. J. (2009). *Bewonersparticipatie via vouchers: democratisch en activerend?* Amsterdam: ASSR (Amsterdam School of Social Science Research) Universiteit van Amsterdam

39. Vermeij, L., Houwelingen, P. van & Hart, J. de. (2012). *Verantwoordelijk voor de eigen buurt.* Den Haag: Sociaal Cultureel Planbureau.

40. Dam, R. van, Salverda, I. & During, R. (2010). *Burgers en landschap deel 3: strategieën van burgerinitiatieven.* Wageningen: Alterra.

41. Dam, R. van, Salverda, I. & During, R. (2011). *Burgers en landschap deel 5: effecten van burgerinitiatieven en de rol van de rijksoverheid*. Wageningen: Alterra.

42. Dam, R. van, Salverda, I. & During, R. (2014). Strategies of citizens' initiatives in the Netherlands: connecting people and institutions. Critical Policy Studies (8), 3. pp. 323 – 339

43. Floor, L & Salverda, I. (2006).Zelforganisatie in het landelijke gebied. Signalen uit de praktijk. Wageningen: Wageningen Universiteit en Research Centrum

44. Tonkens , E. & Verhoeven, I. (2011). *Bewonersinitiatieven: proeftuin voor partnerschap tussen burgers en overheid. Een onderzoek naar bewonersinitiatieven in de Amsterdamse wijkaanpak.* Amsterdam: Universiteit van Amsterdam/AISSR

45. Tonkens, E. (2010). De kwaliteit van burgerparticipatie in de stad: de casus bewonersbudgetten. *Bestuurskunde, 19* (4), 34-42.

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46. Uitermark, J. & Duyvendak, J. W. (2006). *Een gezellig beschavingsoffensief. Mogelijkheden en onmogelijkheden van Mensen Maken de Stad als assertief sociaal beleid.* Amsterdam: ASSR, Universiteit van Amsterdam

47. Wijdeven, T. van de & Ostaaijen, J. van (2007). Beleving *van beweging: hoe zien Heuvelbewoners hun wijk anno 2006.* Tilburg: Universiteit van Tilburg.

48. Caem, B. van. (2008). *Verborgen kracht. Burgerparticipatie op het vlak van veiligheid.* Amsterdam: Universiteit van Amsterdam.

49. Verheijde & Bosman (2013*). Regel die Burgerinitiatieven. Hoe gemeenten en maatschappelijke initiatieven in de openbare ruimte en publiek toegankelijke gebouwen omgaan met aansprakelijkheid.* Den Haag: Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties.

50. Luttik, J.; Aalbers, C.B.E.M.; Donders, J.L.M.; Langers, F. (2014). *Groen dichterbij : Wat maakt groene buurtprojecten tot een succes?* Wageningen: Alterra

51. Hazeu, C.A., Boonstra, N. G. J., Jager- Vreugdenhil, M. & Winsemius, P. (2005). *Buurtinitiatieven en buurtbeleid in Nederland anno 2004.* Den Haag: Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid.

52. Dam, R.I. van; During, R.; Salverda, I.E. (2008). *Trends en theorieën over betrokkenheid van burgers : quick scan ten behoeve van de Agenda Landschap*. Wageningen: Alterra

B. Topic list

Het initiatief

1. Activiteiten
   Vertel eens over jullie initiatief? Wat doen jullie precies?
2. Doel en doelgroep
   Wat willen jullie bereiken?
   Voor wie doen jullie dat? Waarom?
3. Partners en contacten
   Wie zijn belangrijke partners, andere organisaties die jullie tegenkomen? Hoe ziet dat contact eruit?)

Verantwoording

Voor gemeente / buurt / gebruikers/ andere actoren

1. *Informeren*
   Hoe ziet de relatie met g/ b/ g eruit? Met wie hebben jullie dan contact?
   Vertellen jullie over jullie activiteiten? Hoe? Wanneer? Waar gaat het over? Wie bereiken jullie?
   Waarom doen jullie dat (op die manier)?

2. *Debatteren*
   Hoe zou je het gesprek met g/ b/ g omschrijven?
   Worden er dan nog vragen gesteld? Of om extra info gevraagd? Waar gaan die vragen over?
   Hoe is dat gesprek? Bereid je je voor?
   Heb je het gevoel dat je uit moet leggen waarom je die dingen zo doet?

3. *Oordelen*
   Weet je wat g/ b/ g ervan vindt wat jullie doen? Wat dan? Hoe weet je dat?
   Hebben ze bepaalde verwachtingen van jullie?
   Wat gebeurt er als ze het er niet mee eens zijn? En als ze het wel goed vinden?

Invloed

1. Belang relatie
   Wat betekent de relatie met X voor jullie? Is het belangrijk wat zij vinden? Waarom?
2. Gevolgen
   Neem je hen mee in je overwegingen voor activiteiten? Waarom?
   Passen jullie je plannen wel eens aan, aan wat zij vinden? Waarom (niet)? Wanneer zou je dat wel/ niet doen?

Spanningen

1. Belangen en verwachtingen
   Verschillen de verwachtingen van g/ b/ g wel eens? Wanneer? Hoe gaan jullie daar mee om?
2. Gevolgen

Waar gaan jullie op af en waarom? Wat is daarvan het gevolg?

Lukt het om aan de verschillende verwachtingen te voldoen?

Wat gebeurt er al het een keer mis gaat?

Verantwoording ervaringen

1. Ervaren verantwoording

   Leggen jullie verantwoording af over wat jullie doen?

   Waarom?

   Hoe?

   Welke rol speelt dat in jullie initiatief? Hoe gaan jullie daarmee om?

C. Code Tree

The initiative

- o Activities
- o Goals and mission
  - ➢ For the village/ neighborhood

Relationships

- o Municipality
  - ➢ Cooperation
    - ▪ Regular meetings
    - ▪ Contact person
    - ▪ Informal contact
    - ▪ Role aldermen
  - ➢ Subsidies
    - ▪ Standard
    - ▪ Participation related
    - ▪ Custom
  - ➢ Rules
  - ➢ Expectations
    - ▪ Preconditions
    - ▪ Production agreement/ results
    - ▪ Social character of activities
    - ▪ Temporary character of activities
    - ▪ Community support
    - ▪ Financial expectations
    - ▪ Exemplary project
    - ▪ No expectations
    - ▪ Demands and not control
  - ➢ Trust
- o Province
- o Other financers
- o Neighborhood
  - ➢ Trust
  - ➢ Involving neighbors
    - ▪ Meetings
    - ▪ Difficulties

Experienced accountability

- o Mentions of 'accountability'
- o To the municipality
  - ➢ Financial = normal
  - ➢ Evaluation
  - ➢ Recognition

- To the neighborhood
  - Ownership
  - Inherent
  - Checks and balances
  - None
  - 'Taking into account'

Accountability practices

- Informing
  - Channel
    - website
    - social media
    - newsletter
    - leaflet
    - annual statements
    - meeting
    - door to door

  - Content and purpose
    - plans
    - announcement of activities
    - financial
    - results
    - process and progress
- Debate
  - forum
    - affected
    - individual users
    - members
    - target audience
    - municipality
  - form
    - meeting
    - individual conversation
  - contents
    - complaints
      - protocol
      - municipality as mediator
    - plans
    - progress
  - strategies
    - explaining
    - listening and showing understanding
    - problem solving

- o Consequences
  - ➢ municipality
    - ▪ financial – withdrawal of subsidies
    - ▪ shutting down the initiative
  - ➢ neighborhood
    - ▪ reputation and justification of activities
    - ▪ recognition

- o Negotiating accountability

- o Final responsibility
  - ➢ Insurance
  - ➢ Municipality