

Filling the Kasteelgracht with a stream of tacit knowledge

Finding solutions for a complex water problem by using tacit knowledge of people in a Working place



The Dutch water authorities, consisting of water boards, municipalities and Rijkswaterstaat experience increasing problems due to a lack of people with tacit knowledge. Tacit knowledge will be obtained by working for a longer time at the same company or location and it is difficult to transfer to others. Forms of tacit knowledge are acts, intuition and routines. By having a lack on tacit knowledge, organizations will have less power to act and problems will be detected and addressed slower. To address these problems, a new working method was developed; the Working place. The Working place is a method to find solutions for complex water problems by using tacit knowledge of different actors. These actors will be invited for the Working place, because of their knowledge and experience of these problems.

The objective of this research is to evaluate the effects of Working places as an approach for different actors to find solutions for complex water problems, by monitoring the process and outcome in a case study. The case was about the "Kasteelgracht". The "Kasteelgracht" is a moat around "Het Kasteel", which is part of the residential area "Osseveld-Woudhuis" in the city Apeldoorn. During periods of drought, multiple problems occur in the "Kasteelgracht" due to low water. These problems are very annoying for the residents of the residential area. They had hindrance for 13 years and the water board Valleij and Veluwe and municipality Apeldoorn did never found the final solution for the problems.

To find a solution for the problems, there was started a Working place. The effects of the Working place were determined by analyzing the process. In addition, the actors were interviewed and completed a survey before and after two sessions. The survey was based on the 22 factors of the Adaptive Capacity Wheel (ACW). This is a tool, which can be used to determine the weak and strong point of persons, organizations and approaches. By comparing the results before and after two session of the Working place, the effect of the Working place became clear.

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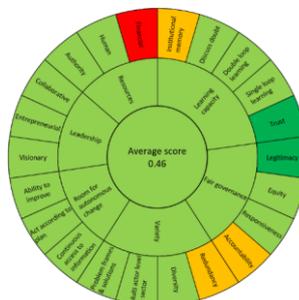


Figure 1: ACW before Working place

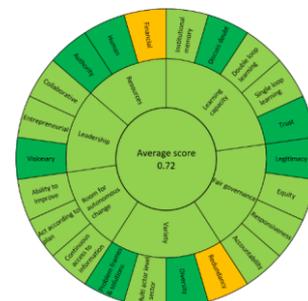


Figure 2: ACW after Working place

Based on the results of the survey, interviews and the analysis of the case, the Working place has a positive effect on finding solutions for complex water problems.