The Dutch library program for the most deprived people

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Elderly citizens in the neighbourhood

‘Ouderen in de wijk’
What

- Libraries: Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague & Utrecht
- Program to activate vulnerable elderly population
- Period: 2015-2022
- With subsidy from the *Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived*
For whom

- Elderly on state pension (‘AOW’)
- Low income
- Socially isolated, or in danger of becoming so
Goals

To empower 5,000 vulnerable elderly citizens

After one year:
- 65% are still engaged
- 40% have a strengthened social network
- 60% have enhanced skills
How: informational meetings

Elections
Medicines
Secure digital
Taxes
Art
Living
Healthy aging
How: skills

Courses: Digiwise, Digibuddies, Click&Tap, Skype, WhatsApp
Digital café
Resilience training
Fall prevention
How: social contact

Walk-in coffee hour
Cinema afternoons
Old learned done young
Roundtable discussions
Gray hair orchestra
Walking trips
Knitting café
Libraries and Sustainable Development Goals

#1 - No Poverty
Activities for the less fortunate; debt assistance; advice regarding advantageous financial provisions

#3 - Good health and well-being
Combatting loneliness; building self-esteem, confidence and network; providing health information

#4 - Quality Education
Digital skills training
Lessons learned:

- role of libraries
- partnerships
- engaging and connecting with isolated elderly citizens
- effectiveness
- et cetera

More information
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Program changes due to Covid-19, in consultation with EU authorities

- Emphasis on more intensive contact
- Support for those who need it most
- Quality over quantity
Results

- Effective outreach to vulnerable elderly people
- Expanded social network
- Enhanced skills
- Enhance quality of life
- Expanded role for libraries

The Dutch National Institute for Public Health & the Environment (RIVM) monitors the project’s effectiveness. Results Q4 2021.
Thank you for your attention!