

An alliance to enhance the effectiveness, timeliness, reach and quality of the Dutch national humanitarian aid effort

A case study of the Dutch Relief Alliance

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Executive Summary

The nature of humanitarian disasters has changed dramatically, with the twenty-first century defined by population displacement in the international community, prolonged state insecurity and looming climate catastrophe (Van Aalst, 2006). With fears of growing frequency and intensity of disasters, humanitarian actors in the form of national governments, Non-Government Organisations (NGO's) and international organisations (such as the UN and the Red Cross) have increased the scale of their efforts.

Now more than ever does the humanitarian sector have the capacity to detect and respond to crises, with significant reach and ability to save lives in places that could not have been conceived of a century ago (Davies, 2012). However, despite this growth the humanitarian sector not keeping up with the growing demands of more frequent, protracted and recurring humanitarian crises (de Castellarnau and Stoianova, 2016). This has resulted in weakening coverage of responses as funding cannot keep up with the costs of more people needing assistance in a greater variety of services in more complex crisis conditions (Healy, S. and Tiller, S., 2014; Canyon and Burkle, 2016; ALNAP, 2018). The result are calls for all levels of disaster response to improve efficacy, to do more with the current base of resources available to them. Therefore, promoting successful collaboration seems to be the most effective method of achieving reform as suggested by the UN's High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing (2016).

In the Netherlands, these global challenges have been met by the establishment of the Dutch Relief Alliance (DRA). The DRA is a network consisting of sixteen of the largest Dutch NGO's that work together to produce Joint Responses (JR's), collaborative arrangements for distributing funding from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to further encourage collaboration in international disaster responses.

The DRA changed the Dutch humanitarian landscape, as there has been a significant change in funding practices. Prior to 2015 the amount of humanitarian funding afforded directly to Dutch NGOs was a small portion of the MFAs humanitarian budget, with the majority going to both the ICRC and UN programs. Until 2013, NGOs received just 4% of the Dutch government's humanitarian funding directly, compared with an average of 19% for other Northern European donors. Now funding sits at around 20% of the humanitarian budget, equalling roughly €60 million a year (Pottelbergh and Singh, 2017). No extensive evaluation of the DRA has been conducted to determine whether the DRA has improved the efficiency of humanitarian responses, however evaluations of staff perceptions so far indicate the vast majority believe it has improved collaboration in the sector (Pottelbergh and Singh, 2017).

The purpose of this dissertation is then to explore how the DRA functions as a network for the governance of collaborative efforts between humanitarian actors. By examining the factors that contribute to successful collaboration it is the hope of this research to gain an insight in how to successfully promote collaboration in the international humanitarian sector.

The research in this dissertation is conducted with theoretical foundations from a rich academic literature on collaborative and network governance, with an aim of building on the Collaborative Emergency Management (CEM) literature. Identified is a gap in the examination of how successful networks are created and sustained to promote collaboration in the international humanitarian aid sector. The DRA represents an early attempt at

providing this and hence is a highly relevant case study to the CEM literature. Through the literature on governance networks, particularly the work of Klijn and Koppenjan (2016), Ansell and Gash (2008) and Provan and Kenis (2008), the factors identified as critical to successful collaboration are the context of the network, features of the collaborative process, the structure and management of the network. By identifying the specifics of how these factors contribute to successful collaboration this research contributes to an early understanding of how to achieve reforms suggested by the UN's High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing (2016).

The approach of this research is to emphasise the perspectives of those directly involved in the collaborative processes of the DRA through semi-structured interviews. These perspectives are supported by an analysis of key documents produced by the DRA and a coding method to determine positive and negative outlooks on the quality of collaboration produced.

Evaluation of the critical factors found that an interplay among them allowed deliberative negotiations that resulted in a network conducive to collaboration. A context that already had an existing demand and momentum for such an arrangement was present. Each participant had a strong financial incentive to participate in processes, promoting compromise which was amplified by (and in turn amplified) a consensus-based decision-making process which was simultaneously implemented. 'Step-by-step' decision-making and structure formation complimented by a facilitation of participant initiative to drive processes resulted in an initially flexible structure that suited the unique demands created by the context and relations between actors.

Therefore, some general characteristics that allowed this network to promote collaboration can be summarised as a shared contextual demand, financial-incentives to participate, consensus-based decision making, inductive governance arrangements and facilitative management. It must be emphasised that the relationship between these characteristics is complex and characterised by feedback. This is especially apparent where negotiated processes establish the structure of the network which in turn influence future processes through the precedent established. Furthering the implications of this, the outcome of processes has implications for the context of future processes, creating an overall reciprocal arrangement.

The characteristics of the DRA derived from this research suggest that replicating the networks success does not equate to replicating a snapshot. The inductive governance approach implies a dynamic network that is characterised by a complex and reciprocal relation between the context, process and the mechanisms that define it. If national governments are attempting to replicate the DRA, taking the established processes and mechanisms of the network ignores what made it successful. Instead the approach should be replicated, possibly resulting in a successful collaborative network that has different features to the DRA.

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Abstract

Humanitarian relief provides urgent aid for those in life threatening situations. A growth in scale and occurrence catastrophes, both natural and man-made, has put increasing pressure on the humanitarian sector to improve efficiency. This is no small task due to the fragmented and overwhelmed nature of the sector, yet experimental solutions are starting to emerge. The Dutch Relief Alliance (DRA) is an initiative that brings together a network of the Netherlands largest Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) to provide collaborative emergency relief. Fifteen Interviews were conducted with a range of DRA participants and three key strategy and evaluation documents were reviewed. The results show that the DRA is a very complex initiative, dependent on the context it was established in. The DRA is characterised by self-management, which relies on negotiated processes to inductively determine structure. According to participants the DRA is a significant success that has shifted the fragmented way of working. Collaboration has developed remarkably in the Netherlands with leaps in information sharing and trust building. A next step could be to determine the effects of Dutch collaboration in the field as organisations still operate separately outside of the Netherlands.

Chapter 1. Introduction

A disaster has struck. It could be a sudden, acute event such as an Earthquake or Tsunami. It could be a protracted phenomenon such as a drought or famine. It could be a combination of the two, such as conflict or epidemic, prone to sporadic outbreaks or periods of relative stability. Disasters require response. Emergencies require management. Without effective humanitarian response the effects of disasters can multiply and expand. In a globalised world the effect of disasters can spill over not just to neighbouring countries but also to the global community.

However, response is no straightforward task. The resources and personnel, as well as the administration required to alleviate the effects of an emergency is significant. Often times the country where the disaster is located takes the significant burden of response, although many national governments are currently fragile or unable to adequately address all the effects of crises on their own. There are numerous international and national Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) that specialise in assistance, along with the governments of foreign nations. Private companies may be needed for critical assistance in relief and recovery. Local actors and communities must be engaged for the recovery process. This all requires a multitude of specialisations. Medical assistance is required to aid survivors, emergency logistics ensure adequate supplies, technical assistance is required to re-establish utilities and alleviate catastrophe. Most importantly and underpinning all forms of response, financial aid is needed urgently for access to food and water, hospitals and medicine, schools and education, work and livelihoods.

Here already there are significant issues of coordination and communication across a broad range of actors. Adding further complexity, sometimes the effects of emergencies, direct and indirect, are not isolated to one country. Coordination within and between countries may be required, not just between governments but also between NGOs and other groups offering assistance. Evidence suggests that emergencies, natural and human induced, is increasing (Van Aalst, 2006). With fears of growing internal and external displacement in the international community there are calls for all levels of disaster response to improve efficacy.

On an international level, coordination attempts are made by the UN. Four UN entities, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme (WFP) have primary roles in the delivery of relief assistance. Additionally, the World Health Organization (WHO) coordinates the international response to humanitarian health emergencies. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) oversees the coordination of these agencies and supports them through the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), typically provides funds to the other UN agencies listed above (Charnovitz, 1996; Natsios, 1995; Stephenson & Schnitzer, 2006).

No national programs of international humanitarian come close to matching the extensive specialisation or subsequent coordination of the UN approach. In fact, a High-Level Panel authorised by the UN secretary general to investigate humanitarian aid efforts in 2016 concluded;

“With a few exceptions there is very little practice of working together to reduce overhead or procurement costs. While the need for joint planning is often talked about, in reality every organisation is an island. ‘Turf wars’

are a common occurrence, with each organisation trying to position itself as the best implementer—and therefore most deserving of donor funds. This duplicates efforts and saps energy which humanitarian aid can ill afford to lose.” (High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing, 2016; 3)

The Grand Bargain is the result of the UN High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing appointed by the UN Secretary General, concluding that greater efficiency through funding reforms will create a virtuous circle by drawing in more funding. A growing body of literature focuses on Collaborative Emergency Management (CEM) as a way to improve the efficacy of disaster response. CEM is inspired by the governance movement towards networks management as a way to address complex issues.

Yet much of this literature focuses on the United States of America and her response to domestic emergencies. International aid from governments and NGOs forms a significant part of emergency management. Coordinating this form of assistance with the intent of enhancing cooperation between independent organisations for more effective humanitarian response has not had significant attention in academic literature. At the same time there is acknowledgement that much work can be done at a national level, where these organisations are usually embedded, to improve coordination. The Dutch Relief Alliance represents a national level plan, one that fully acknowledges the Grand Bargain (*Dutch Relief Alliance Strategy 2018 - 2021*, 2017).

1.1. The Dutch Relief Alliance (DRA)

In January 2018, a warning was issued by Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET) alerting of drought and famine in risks in Somalia and eastern Ethiopia. A Response Task Forces (RTF) is convened and four million euros is made available to CARE Nederland as the designated lead organisation to share amongst seven organisations already operating in the two countries. The active organisations coordinating their efforts in Ethiopia consisted of; Dorcas, ICCO & Kerk in Actie/ACT Alliance, SOS Kinderdorpen and ZOA. While in Somalia the organisations where; CARE, Save the Children and World Vision.

Through network processes plans are made to target 191,030 people in both countries through programs that address agriculture and livestock, food and nutrition, WaSH (Water Sanitation and Hygiene) programs and emergency health interventions.

From 2015 to 2017 €180 million worth of humanitarian aid was delivered across eighteen countries through the DRA to address disasters and crises alike. Responses to earthquakes in Nepal and Sulawesi, Cyclones and floods in Mozambique and Vanuatu, Refugees in Bangladesh and South Sudan or alleviating the effects of conflicts in Afghanistan, the DR Congo, Yemen and Iraq.

For each of these responses, only a general target such as overall budget allocation and size of population targeted are made available to the public, while the structure and process of the DRA remains generalised.

The organisational set-up of the DRA comprises, in brief, a formal overarching agreement between some combination of the 16 member agencies (CARE Netherlands, Cordaid, Dorcas, ICCO and Kerk in Actie, Oxfam Novib, Plan Netherlands, Save the Children, Tear, Terre des Hommes, Refugee Foundation, War Child, War Trauma Foundation, World Vision

and ZOA) to work jointly in receiving funds and delivering humanitarian response through umbrella grants awarded on a crisis-by-crisis basis to a single selected lead agency.

There are then at least four different levels to a DRA response with different stakeholders (Poole and Willitts-King, 2016):

- (1) DRA/Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) level. Stakeholders include the DRA Committee and MoFA (DRA Coordinator, Humanitarian Advisor, Humanitarian Director and staff of DSH).
- (2) DRA/Netherlands NGO Head Offices level. Stakeholders include NGO CEOs, Humanitarian Coordinators and Joint Response Managers.
- (3) Joint Response level. Stakeholders include NGO Country Office staff, the JR Field Coordinator, UN, ECHO, Royal Netherlands Embassies.
- (4) Joint Response implementation level. Stakeholders include field office staff, local partners and beneficiaries.

The DRA was conceived as an emergency response financing instrument. It is divided into Protracted (around 70% of funds) and Acute Crisis (around 30% of funds) windows (Poole and Willitts-King, 2016). The DRA changed the Dutch humanitarian landscape, and the vast majority of staff in the Netherlands and the field surveyed for an evaluation report believe it has improved collaboration in the sector (Pottelbergh and Singh, 2017). There has also been a significant change in funding practices as a result of the DRA. Until 2013, NGOs received just 4% of the Dutch government's humanitarian funding directly, compared with an average of 19% for other Northern European donors. Now, primarily through the DRA, funding sits at around 20% of the humanitarian budget, equalling roughly €60 million a year (Pottelbergh and Singh, 2017).

1.2. Relevance

If international humanitarian efforts are to be improved, action is needed to incentivise collaboration and coordination, especially at a national level (High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing, 2016). Despite the widespread recognition of the need for change, the academic literature does very little to outline and examine the processes and mechanisms that can promote collaboration like the DRA does. Much of the academic literature focuses on operations of humanitarian relief and how responses can be organised, particularly from a domestic US perspective. Instead the DRA represents an ambitious and forward-thinking way to introduce collaborative networks into international emergency management at an administrative level. This research therefore aims to provide a detailed case study of this network, thereby providing an early example of national humanitarian coordination academically. The relevance of this is significant; as calls for reform in the humanitarian sector grow, so too will attention to innovative solutions that can be practically implemented. National governments in particular are major actors in implementing reform (High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing, 2016) and so the DRA presents an important case study. The following research questions and sub-questions will aid this endeavour.

1.3. Research Question

How is the DRA structured and managed and how does this influence the success of collaboration in instances of decision making in emergencies over time?

Sub-questions

1. *How does context, defined by the characteristics of involved actors, along with their interactions defined by history, incentives/interdependencies and asymmetries influence the success of collaboration?*
2. *What are aspects of the Dutch Relief Alliances' process that promote successful collaboration?*
3. *How does the Dutch Relief Alliances' structure promote successful collaboration?*
4. *How does Network Management promote successful collaboration?*

Chapter 2. Literature Review

This literature review is structured to provide an understanding of concepts critical to answering the research questions. First a review of the what has been done so far to realise collaboration in the humanitarian sector provides an understanding of why governance networks are relevant. This is naturally followed by a definition of governance networks, with an emphasis on their purpose that allows an examination of how ‘successful’ collaboration should appear. After providing the criteria for successful collaboration, this literature review explores the factors that are emphasised to produce these criteria; context, process, structure and management.

2. 1. The Collaborative Emergency Management Literature So Far

Two catastrophes have been of particular significance for the public perception of emergency response in the early Twenty-First Century. The 2004 Boxing day tsunami that affected South-East Asia and Hurricane Katrina in the United States (Keys, et al., 2006; Kapucu and van Wart, 2006; Eikenberry, et al., 2007; Farazmand, 2007; Horwitz, 2008; van de Walle and Turoff, 2008; Tomasini and van Wassenhove, 2009; Du Bois, 2016). Combined with an observed increased in occurrence and severity of natural and man-made disasters exacerbated by the consequences of climate change have made individual countries more vulnerable, undermining the international community and making CEM a prominent task (O'Brien, et al., 2006). Despite this the CEM literature is overwhelming American and focused on operational response to domestic issues (Lester and Krejci, 2007; Kapucu and Garayev, 2011), with much of the literature on international disasters focusing on political economy (Keys, et al., 2006). Exploring power dynamics between developing and developed nations in emergency management is an important task, however it poses the risk of overlooking the immense task that is emergency management, after all the ‘poor’ response to Hurricane Katrina was not due to the United States being a ‘weak state’ (Du Bois, 2016; 11).

Instead, the ‘complexity’ of emergency management can be explained by the CEM concept of ‘multiplicity’ (McGuire, 2006). Four phases of emergency management are identified in the literature: mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. For each phase, various emergency management networks are formed. These can be to share information, plan for emergency scenarios, and coordinate response and recovery efforts during and after an emergency (Kapucu & Ozerdem, 2013). However, the type of network is not uniform, Mandell and Steelman (2003) identify at least three structures of organisation, in increasing levels of cooperation and intensive of resource exchange. The first is ‘intermittent coordination’, which is objective based, temporary coordination. Interaction occurs at a low level, and the commitment to each other is kept at arm’s length. The second type is a ‘temporary task force’, which is also temporary structure established to address a specific purpose that contains multiple objectives. The third type of collaborative context is ‘permanent’ or ‘regular coordination’. Regular coordination occurs when multiple organizations engage over a purpose through more formal arrangements. While the first two coordination structures are typically found in emergency response, regular coordination is typically found in emergency preparedness (Mandell and Steelman, 2003).

Already the Emergency Response field seems complicated, what would make it complex is the sheer number of organizations that could be potentially involved in each phase. These organisations have unique missions, structures and management, but also subject to change,

as are the relationships between them throughout the different phases of Emergency Management. Organizations aren't singular nodes either. They consist of people, knowledge, resources, and tasks, along with sub-organizations. Inter-organisational relationships may then consist of multiple interactions between each subcomponent and form different types of networks. These can range from social networks to knowledge networks, resource networks, and interorganizational networks (Kapucu & Hu, 2016). Social networks are outlined as particularly important in emergency response with awareness of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak to the international community and WHO officials coming from an informal email sent from a doctor in China. This case is frequently cited as an example of the importance of informal networks for bypassing bureaucracy and delays in reporting (Bryant et al., 2007; Kapucu, 2011).

This sheer range of networks has been helpfully refined in the literature to three types of purposeful emergency management networks: friendship networks, disaster preparedness networks, and disaster response networks. This is what is meant by 'Multiplex' or 'Multicply'. Multiple types of interactions, among multiple types of organisation, across multiple contexts and phases. This 'Multiplexity' indicates a high level of interdependence and interaction among the organisations in the field, but also a significant challenge when trying to measure and plan coordination (Kapucu & Hu, 2016). When a crisis occurs, the aftermath can be so unpredictable and widespread that no single organisation can hope to address the multitude of problems. Responding to emergencies are therefore an extreme example of the 'wicked problems' that make governance networks so appealing.

There was unanimous agreement across all sectors that collaboration was a necessary strategy in situations where there was a crisis or where "old ways of working" were no longer effective or appropriate (Keast, Brown and Manning, 2007). Moore, Eng & Daniel (2003) claim that the success of international humanitarian aid at an operational level 'ultimately' depends on the ability of organisations to coordinate in the field, however an important characteristic of the *international* relief environment is that it is unregulated; there is usually no single organization with the authority to cause other actors to engage in a particular coordination activity.

While the benefits of a network approach are generally agreed upon (Kapucu, 2016), the need for quick response, flexibility and resources has created a divide in the CEM literature as to whether networks should be centralised or decentralised (Moynihan, 2008; Waugh and Streib, 2006; McGuire and Agranoff, 2007; Selves, 2008). Katrina revealed the inadequacies of a centralised hierarchical command system to address the complexities caused by a catastrophic disaster (Comfort, 2007). At the same time, collaborations are considered as not appropriate in situations where quick decision-making processes are needed (Kapucu, et al., 2010). Farazmand (2007) praises the centralised command structure that was used in Iran's response to the 2004 earthquake that organised different levels of government and volunteers while Choi and Kim (2007) also argue that leadership in the form of emergency managers should be the centre of any network in order to process and disseminate relevant information. Lester and Krejci (2007) even compliment the US military's leadership approach to emergency management due to its centralized command and control while emphasising leadership at all levels.

Leadership in CEM networks is recognised as a difficult task (Waugh and Streib, 2006; Derthick, 2007). Wise (2006) suggests that although command and control structures are important, adjusting to changing circumstances is just as important. Leadership problems

were cited specifically by the House Select Committee that investigated the poor response to Hurricane Katrina. As a result of this, Lester and Krejci (2007) call for 'transformational leadership' approaches that focus on solving problems through decentralized approach that engages organizational members, inspiring a sense of common vision and mission by utilising the principles of Elton Mayo's 'human relations approach'. The US literature on domestic response calls for more adaptive management - that is, processes that encourage the sharing of information and more collaboration - to organizational learning and facilitate adaptation and improvisation (Wise, 2006; Waugh and Wight, 2006).

While each of the actors involved in disaster response has the same general humanitarian goal, their primary motives, missions and operating constraints may differ. There are barriers to achieving this effective coordination among the various disaster relief organisations that are embedded in the environment and institutional arrangements. CEM literature identifies a few significant barriers organisations must also overcome; unpredictability, competition for funding and the effects of the media, donor expectations/funding structure and the cost of coordination.

Emergencies are very unpredictable in nature. This can be due to the sudden occurrence of a natural disaster or the sheer number of potential scenarios in a crisis. Therefore, organisations responding often have to be flexible and reflexive. Time consuming collaboration processes may be unappealing in this context. Most often, the exact location, timing and extent of an emergency is an unknown. Accurate information is critical to relief operations, while a scarcity of information is unwanted, so too is an oversupply of sources which can further complicate efforts. Additionally, organisations may face uncertainty away from the field. Politics, public relations and funding pose constant unknowns that makes collaboration difficult (Kapucu, Arslan & Demiroz, 2010; Moore, Eng, & Daniel, 2003).

After any emergency, especially those that are global in nature and draw in the attention of the media, potential funding for response efforts is high. For a humanitarian organisation this is an opportunity to secure funding for their own relief effort, however the funds available are limited and usually have an expiration attached to the attention span of the media. Humanitarian organisations have to capture as much of this funding as they can, leading to competition for funding and visibility in the early stages of relief response. Seeking competitive advantages in media and donor attention can lead to humanitarian organisations hoarding information or resources. This competition can be a significant barrier to attempts at cooperation, collaboration and coordination.

A reliance on donors to fund humanitarian efforts can further restrict incentives to coordinate. Donors can be regarded as the 'customers' of humanitarian organisations, contrary to the aid recipients. As the outcomes of collaboration may be unclear and time consuming to achieve, it can be difficult for organisations to justify these actions. Instead the expectation may be to immediately implement responses, or risk losing donations to other organisations (Stephenson and Schnitzer, 2006). Such a funding structure is not necessarily conducive to coordination among relief agencies.

Coordination initiatives cost time and money for relief organizations (Fountain, 1994; Stephenson, 2005). At the strategic and tactical levels, coordination costs may also include staff salaries and travel costs for coordination meetings held during the pre-disaster period. The workforce of relief organisations is also subject to frequent change and commonly contains short-term volunteers or temporary employees, neither of which may possess

adequate experience to facilitate coordination activities during relief planning (Kapucu, 2006; Stephenson and Schnitzer, 2006).

Acknowledging that a networked approach towards collaborative emergency management is difficult, particularly in international response, Natsios (1995) proposes incremental changes in the form of nudges and incentives within organisations. Similarly, Stephenson (2005) suggests the development of working cultures within organisations that promote trust and collaboration with other organisations. Kapucu produces a number of collaboration design features that have successfully promoted coordination within humanitarian response networks. These include cultivation of interpersonal relationships and trust among disaster relief partners, the development of standards and norms among partners, the existence of a lead agency and the best practices guidelines (Kapucu, 2011). Many of these recommendations are mirrored in the governance networks literature.

There are many barriers and conflicting perspectives in the CEM literature for what works best. However, what is critical for this research is what can be added. A heavy emphasis on domestic response, particularly in the USA means that a focus on international collaboration is a valuable contribution. Similarly, the literature heavily emphasises the operational response, that which occurs on the ground, not in the offices. Finally, there is very little focus on how exactly these networks form, with much emphasis on the networks that already exist.

This leaves a significant gap that this research can contribute to covering. The formation and details of a Collaboration ‘emergency’ network has not been covered in the literature. Therefore the literature on collaboration and networks is critical to understanding what successful collaboration can be and how it can be achieved.

2. 2. Governance and Collaboration

The literature on governance networks links effectiveness and efficiency with cooperation, coordination or collaboration. These three ‘Companion C-words’ (Lawson, 2002; Keast Brown and Mandell, 2007) are often used interchangeably but represent a spectrum of integration. ‘Cooperation’ means that organizations simply take each other’s goals into account and try to accommodate those goals, similar to the concept of ‘Networking’ (Keast et al., 2004; Keast, Brown and Mandell, 2007).

‘Coordination’ requires organizations to ‘work together’ via already established, often external-to-the-group goals, and more structured mechanisms, just like the concept of a ‘network’ (Keast et al., 2004; Keast Brown and Mandell, 2007). Typically, coordination has been classified as either vertical or horizontal. Vertical coordination refers to the extent to which an organization receives coordination from a more authoritative body or delegates coordination to a less authoritative body. Horizontal coordination refers to the ability of separate organisations to coordinate or collaborate through negotiation (Agranoff and McGuire, 2003; Balcik, et al., 2010). Governance Networks are a form of horizontal coordination, allowing autonomous actors to steer their actions towards certain overarching objectives (March & Olsen, 1995). These actors may come from a diverse background of private or public sectors that have some degree of interdependence. They come together and negotiate outcomes within the creation of some framework or self- regulation, typically in the ‘shadow of hierarchy’ (Sørensen and Torfing 2007).

‘Collaboration’ requires much closer relationships, connections and resources and even a blurring of the boundaries between agencies, similar to the concept of ‘Network Structures’ (Keast et al., 2004; Keast Brown and Mandell, 2007). While cooperation and coordination have been dominant modes, the identification and prominence of ‘wicked issues’ have led to growing awareness for the need to break-down sectoral silos and address issues ‘holistically’ leading to increasing popularisation of the concept ‘collaboration’.

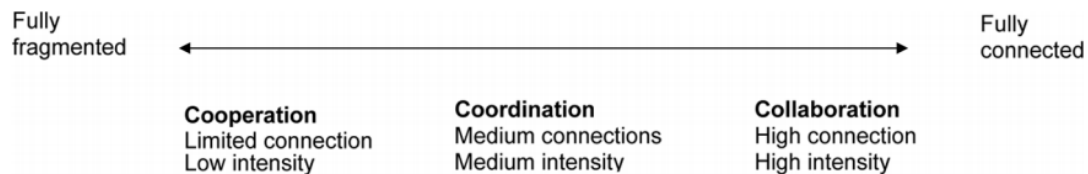


Figure 1 - The spectrum of collaboration (Keast, Brown and Mandell, 2007)

The reality is an overlap between the three concepts, as they can be difficult to separate and often work together in a complementary fashion. A “Network” stresses a formal, structured relationship of coordination among a set of stakeholders, who may not be working together in a common forum (Ansell and Gash, 2007). ‘Collaboration’ points to a deliberative process among a set of somewhat independent and autonomous stakeholders working together in a common forum (Ansell, 2012). Network governance is the process of organising and coordinating networks and can consist of activities ranging from managing the interactions between participants to designing the process and mechanisms of decision making. Again, collaborative governance is a consensus-oriented *process* in which the affected stakeholders work together in a common forum that is allocated to produce collective actions (Ansell, 2012). This involves the use of existing institutions and structures of authority along with the ‘*collaboration process*’ to allocate resources and coordinate efforts across a network (Provan and Kenis, 2008; 231). In regard to networks, collaborative governance overlaps considerably with the concept of network governance.

Regardless the driving force in the formation of governance or collaboration networks is the participating actors’ recognition of their mutual dependence (Provan and Kenis, 2008). Along with diverse institutional backgrounds, network actors often have different resources bases that create asymmetrical power relations necessitating negotiations (Klijn and Koppenjan, 2015). The relations are therefore horizontal in the sense that no one actor has the power or authority to resolve or dictate a solution to the disputes that emerge in the network (Klijn and Koppenjan, 2004; Klijn and Koppenjan, 2015). Even if interdependent, network actors will retain their operative autonomy. Since their participation is voluntary and actors are free to leave the network, they cannot be forced to think or act in a certain way. Therefore, Provan and Kenis (2008) also emphasise time and trust, along with interdependence as the main values emphasised in a collaborative governance process. Time and trust are needed in the process and other actors to promote the sustainability of network activities. Actors will participate if they realize that they need to cooperate by sharing information, coordinate their resources, or collaborate in their planning to achieve their goals (Keast et al., 2004; Keast, Brown and Mandell, 2007; Provan and Kenis, 2008). However, willingness to participate in these processes and accept the subsequent results do not depend solely on a recognition of interdependence, as compromise may be the only avenue for achieving consensus.

Legitimacy is then the indicator of how prepared a set of actors are to accept the outcomes of a process as ‘proper’ (Suchman; 1995; Klijn and Koppenjan, 2015). Human and Provan (2000) claim legitimacy must come from a network being accepted as a legitimate form of organising, a network being recognised an independent entity, and a network as a forum for effective and sustained interaction. Furthermore, they defined separate stages at which it is critical for the development of these legitimacies to survive internal and external threats (Provan, Kenis and Human; 2014). Klijn and Koppenjan (2015) distinguish sources of ‘Democratic’ Legitimacy coming from transparency (‘accountability’), avenues for participation (‘voice’) and fair procedure (‘due deliberation’). Therefore, it is not enough for actors to be interdependent, but they must also view the network that their interdependence is channelled through to be fair and effective.

Once achieved, the proposed advantages of network and collaborative governance can be extensive, including enhanced learning and innovation, more efficient use and mobilisation of resources, improved capacity and resilience along with joint ownership of bold ideas (Sørensen and Torfing 2007). Networks have their ultimate strength in the absence of complete knowledge about both the internal and external environment, organizations are continually confronted with the need to recognize and deal with uncertainty. This is particularly relevant in relation to growing number of “wicked problems” where specialized knowledge is often required, there are many relevant stakeholders and a high risk of conflict (Klijn and Koppenjan, 2004).

It is exactly the contextual challenges governance and collaborative networks are uniquely situated to that make makes them rarely successful (Vangen and Huxham, 2011). Collaborative Networks are utilised to overcome complex challenges that require new combinations of relations, resources and perspectives to overcome. The need for these approaches typically takes place in complex contexts where there are highly autonomous actors with conflicting perceptions dealing with high levels of uncertainty (Klijn and Koppenjan, 2004).

2. 3. What is Successful Collaboration?

A network is typically formed and governed to overcome an issue that is too complex to be successfully addressed by a hierarchy form of organisation. The same complexity addressed often makes it difficult to evaluate the ‘successfulness’ of a network. This prevents the use of ‘rational perspectives’ of evaluation (Klijn and Koppenjan, 2016) which seek predetermined ‘ex-ante’ indicators to measure outcomes. In situations of high controversy and mutual antagonism there are a variety of goals and perspectives that the most ‘straightforward’ solution for one actor may be the least desirable for another (Pressman and Wildavsky 1984: 107). Various, autonomous actors participate in governance networks each with different goals and perspectives. This also prevents the use of goal attainment as the assessment criteria to determine the success or failure, as compromise can come about. Goal ‘displacement’ can be quite common in processes of negotiation, especially when little is known about other stakeholders’ perspectives prior to negotiating (Klijn and Koppenjan, 2016). Identifying all the costs of a collaborative process that does not have a clearly defined schedule is also problematic (Dye, 1972).

Recognising this issue of evaluation, Klijn and Koppenjan (2016) use three indicators to analyse the performance of networks. These outcomes are based on Koppenjan and Klijns’ (2004) previous categorization of three types of network uncertainty. The process of

overcoming these uncertainties is a process of learning, indicating a successful network that is active and innovative. The three uncertainties are; substantive, strategic and institutional.

Substantive uncertainty is the result of different perceptions of the problems the network is trying to solve. *Strategic uncertainty* is the result of the strategic autonomy of multiple actors, who may have ulterior motives or the appearance of such. *Institutional uncertainty* arises from trying to coordinate actors who have diverse norms and institutional backgrounds. If networks are formed to overcome complexities, then a network can be judged successful if it adapts to address complexities. Klijn and Koppenjan use ‘content’, ‘process’ and ‘institutional’ outcomes to observe whether a network is adapting.

Content outcomes, or substantive learning, relate to substantive complexities and seek to measure the extent of joint image building and perception alignment specifically whether “goal intertwinement and a win-win situation has been achieved.” (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016: 248). Process outcomes, or strategic learning concern the alleviation of strategic uncertainty, seeking to evaluate the duration, transaction costs, level of accountability and process quality of network collaboration (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016: 249). A straightforward method to assess process outcomes could be through the collection of actors’ satisfactions with the process. Institutional outcomes, or institutional learning, focus on “how the institutional structure of the network has changed during the process.” (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016: 250). Evolution and persistence of a network are key indicators of learning and sustainability.

Table 1 - Classification of Network Outcomes from Klijn and Koppenjan (2016)

| Network Outcomes | Indicators |
|------------------|--|
| Institutional | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal and external support The development of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relationships, - Shared perceptions, - Institutional rules, - Trust |
| Process | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inclusiveness - Transaction Cost - Quality |
| Content | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Joint Image building - Goal Intertwinement |

The production of trust in a network deserves special attention as it is repeatedly emphasised and its importance is unanimously supported amongst academics and practitioners alike (Provan and Kenis, 2008; Klijn and Koppenjan, 20016; Edelenbos and Klijn, 2007; Klijn et al., 2010). Trust is the mutual belief that actors will engage in fair play, keeping promises and refraining from opportunistic behaviour. Joint decision making can be hampered by a mistrust of actor’s intentions/interests which reduces commitment and information sharing. Meanwhile, higher trust increases the probability of actors investing resources, sharing information and learning which leads to greater innovation and lower transaction costs (Ring & Van de Ven, 1992; Edelenbos and Klijn, 2007; Klijn et al., 2010). Therefore, producing trust in governance networks is favourable due to evidence that its presence will lead to

outcomes that participants perceive to be of higher quality and greater legitimacy. Klijn and Koppenjan (2016) list the development of trust as one of the main criteria for judging whether institutional learning has occurred.

Provan and Kenis (2008) offer a perspective of network success that is based on the balance of three sets of outcomes. *Efficiency/Inclusiveness* refers explicitly to the decision-making process, where including actors in decision making processes can make those processes less effective and the network as a whole less attractive. However not including actors can lead to less optimal results which also makes the network as a whole not attractive (Provan and Kenis, 2008;). Therefore, a balance is including enough actors to enrich the network while keeping processes effective. *Internal/External legitimacy* means balancing the compromise of actors working together with the external expectations placed on the network. The outcomes and processes of the network have to be accepted by both members of the network and those outside of it for those results to be sustainable (Provan and Kenis, 2008;). *Flexibility/Stability* refers to how structured and predictable a network is. Over time, precedents and evidence-based mechanisms are established which shape interactions deliberately or automatically. The ability of a network to response to complexity, especially changing or complex contexts, can be hampered by entrenched processes. While ‘stability’ reduces transaction costs and creates predictability, it can also hamper innovation and effectiveness (Provan and Kenis, 2008). The value of this approach comes from its acknowledgement of key factors relative to other key factors, allowing for measurement through perspectives. For example, is a network more *inclusive* or *effective*?

Therefore, the success of collaborative networks can be viewed from the perspective of what they are trying to achieve. A network is a unique form of governance that attempt to solve a problem. In this research problem-solving is measured by the network learning evidenced through the outcomes provided by Klijn and Koppenjan (2015). Additionally the functioning of the network can be assessed by the balance of its outcomes, as per Provan and Kenis (2008). There is overlap between these two perspectives. It can be determined that it is not just the presence of these outcomes that should be observed by how they interact with one another. Below is a demonstration of this overlap that leads to an operationalisation of the independent variables.

Table 2 - Indicators of successful collaboration

| Dependent Variable | | Indicators |
|---------------------------|---------------|---|
| Collaboration Performance | Institutional | Level of Internal and External Support Balance Internal/External Legitimacy The development of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relationships, • shared perceptions, • institutional rules, • trust Balance of Flexibility/Stability |
| | Process | Inclusiveness Efficiency (Quality/Cost) Balance of Inclusiveness/Efficiency |
| Outcome | Content | Joint Image building Goal Intertwinement |

The rest of this literature review will examine the factors that contribute and balance these variables. The context of collaboration is vital, as it shapes the possibilities of what can be achieved. Features of the collaborative process itself are formative and cyclical, they continuously contribute to collaboration efforts. However, both of these are dependent on the deliberate efforts that structure and manage the process network.

2. 4. Context

With a growing emphasis on the complexity of wicked problems comes a growing awareness of the various, overlapping environmental factors that cause and sustain them. Gerrits (2012) provides an excellent explanation of ‘Complex Adaptive Systems’ in which networks operate in and are a part of; constantly changing and reacting to efforts that attempt to change them. There is no doubt in the literature that networks are embedded in their context, from the influential work of Ansell and Gash (2008) and also reflected in the work of Emerson, Nabatchi and Balogh (2012), context is emphasised in the collaborative process. For this reason, to examine any network and the degree of collaboration that is achieved, an examination must be conducted of the context in which that network is formed.

Representing the collaborative process is problematic due to the nonlinear and context-based character of interactions. Due to this they offer a circular representation of the collaboration process as a ‘simplification’, calling attention to the way in which feedbacks from early collaboration can positively or negatively influence future collaboration. ‘Stage’ models with cycles are utilised by many other scholars to demonstrate negotiated network processes as a series of strategies that change along with context changes (Edelenbos, 2005; Emerson, et al., 2012). The system context can be represented not just as a set of starting conditions but as a surrounding three-dimensional space because external conditions may influence the dynamics and performance of collaboration. This can be seen comparing the model of Ansell and Gash (2008) below, which presents the model in a linear fashion with starting conditions at the start, and Emerson, Nabatchi and Balogh (2012), which presents cyclical, systems model.

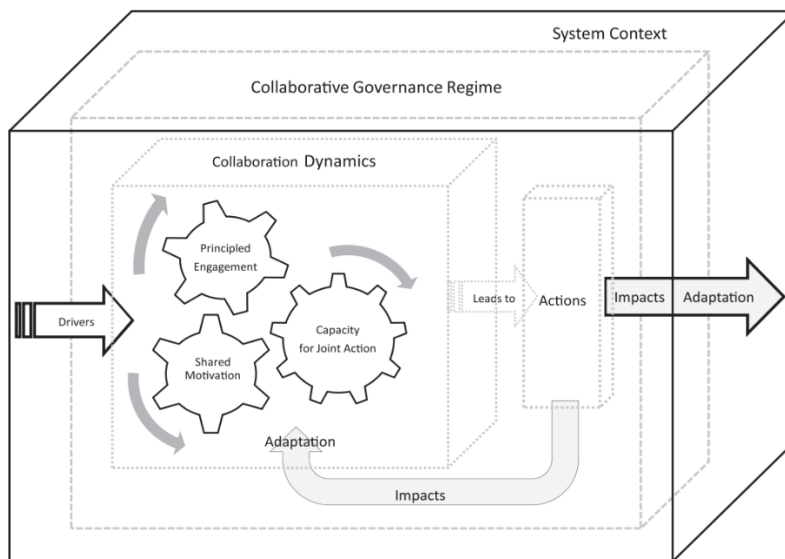


Figure 2 - Collaborative process according to Emerson, Nabatchi and Balogh (2012)

The starting conditions of a governance process are therefore to be considered by managers. Emerson, Nabatchi and Balogh (2012) emphasize a ‘multilayered context of political, legal, socioeconomic, environmental, and other influences’ (pg. 8) that affect the parameters and actions of a collaborative process.

While this emphasizes the importance and complexity of context, Ansell and Gash (2008) present a more straightforward list of relevant conditions; a ‘prehistory of antagonism and cooperation’, ‘incentives to participate’ and ‘power/resource imbalances’. Within these three ‘starting conditions’ the influences of previous interactions, contexts and expectations are considered. Perceptions of other actors may have to be managed and concerns addressed if there is a history of antagonism in the hope of reducing barriers and motivating successful cooperation. Similarly, actors are more willing to participate in collaborative processes if they perceive achievement of their goals to be dependent on the participation of other actors. At the same time participation may be hampered if participating in a collaborative process involves negotiating with actors of greater influence, requiring some actors to compromise more than others.

2. 5. Process

While these principles are still vague, Ansell and Gash (2008) provide more detailed information about what a ‘successful’ collaboration process may look like. Their research concludes that successful collaborative governance depends on three core principles: time, trust, and interdependence. The actual process of interaction that results in collaboration has many important features in itself. Special attention should be paid to face-to-face dialogue, trust building, commitment to process, fostering shared understandings and achieving short or immediate term outcomes.

Along with starting conditions and features of the collaborative process, facilitative leadership and institutional design are also highlighted as significant as part of this model. In this research these two factors are separated and expanded upon in later sections as network management and network structure.

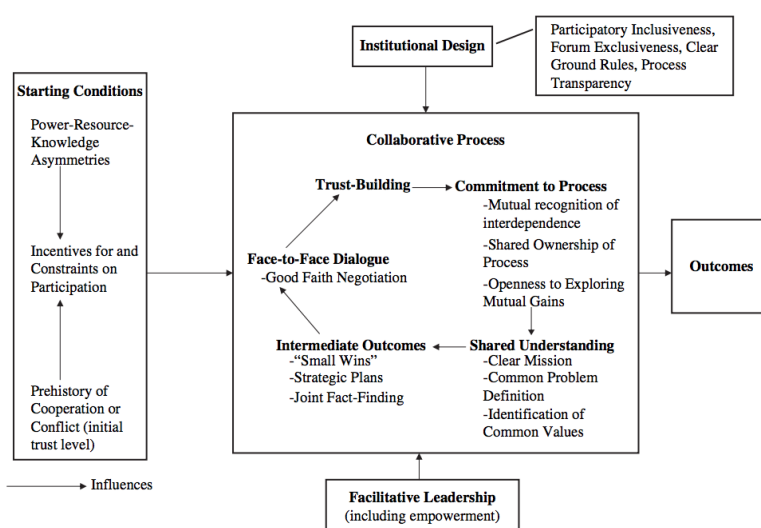


Figure 3 - Collaborative Process according to Ansell and Gash (2008)

All collaborative governance builds on **face-to-face** dialogue between stakeholders. As a consensus-oriented process, the “thick communication” allowed by direct dialogue is necessary for stakeholders to identify opportunities for mutual gain and break down barriers to communication that prevent exploration of mutual gains in the first place. **Commitment** is both related to the original incentive to participate in collaborative governance and the development of a shared sense of ownership that produces shared responsibility for the process. This leads directly to the concept of **shared understanding** which implies an agreement on cause or definition of a problem and agreement how to address a problem.

Intermediate outcomes are presented as critical process outcomes that are essential for building the momentum towards sustained successful collaboration. Intermediate outcomes such as ‘small wins’, combined with face-to-face dialogue ultimately feed back into the collaborative process, encouraging a virtuous cycle of **trust building** and commitment.

Table 3 - Contextual Factors preceding Collaborative Process

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| Contextual Factors | Actors | Prehistory of antagonism and cooperation | Incentives to participate | Power/resource imbalances |
| Derived from Ansell and Gash (2008) | Characteristics of actors, strategies and values | Previous interactions between actors | Recognition of interdependencies – the potential gain to be had through participation | The asymmetries that exist between actors in terms of capabilities and influence |

Table 4 - Features of the Collaborative Process

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|--|---|--|
| Process Determinants | Trust-Building | Face-to-face dialogue | Commitment to process | Shared understanding | Intermediate Outcomes |
| Derived from Ansell and Gash (2008) | Mutual recognition of non-opportunistic behaviour, reliability and good-will | Perception building through in person process | Shared responsibility and adherence to pre-defined pathways of negotiation and decision making | Common perception of problem definition, causes and solutions | Realisation of short to medium term outcomes of mutual benefit |

2. 6. Network Structure

Two different, non-contradictory positions exist in the governance literature on how network outcomes may be influenced. One position focuses on managerial strategies and activities (Edelenbos and Klijn, 2007; Klijn and Koppenjan, 2004; Klijn and Koppenjan, 2016), the other focuses on the structure and form of the network (Provan and Kenis, 2006; Provan and Kenis, 2008; Provan and Kenis, 2009; Provan and Milward, 2006; Klijn, et al., 2010). Networks may be constructed deliberately with both of these positions in mind. This literature will refer to the two factors as ‘management’ and ‘structure’ respectively,

Sorenson and Torfing (2009) refer to two types of governance strategies that managers can utilise, ‘hands-off’ and ‘hands-on’ ‘meta-governance’. ‘Hands-off meta-governance’ promotes the self-regulating capacity of the network. ‘Hands-on meta-governance’ aims to

directly resolving internal conflicts and influence the content of policy solutions. Both are concerned with the ‘governance of governance’, however Hands-off meta-governance is a recognition of the importance of structure and institutional design while Hands-on recognises managerial activity in network processes.

Network design and network framing appear to be the structure focused meta-governance tools. Network design concerns how institutional frameworks and processes of interaction will look, this has already been covered in some detail through an exploration of Ansell and Gash (2008). According to Sorenson and Torfing (2009) a well-designed network design is typically achieved when governance network is formed around a number of clearly defined policy objectives. This implies a dynamic network structure that changes with time, an example being the termination of unsuccessful networks or processes. Good network design may also include processes to ensure consistent policy output amongst changes in the network. Network framing concerns itself with how the discursive storyline or culture of the network is managed. This is achieved through the formulation of goals and the specification of network conditions; what features, and achievements are emphasised compared to what is ignored. Good network framing aims to emphasise interdependencies through goal alignment. Doing so should enhance relationship building, trust and stimulate resource exchange (Sorenson and Torfing, 2007; 2009).

Similar to ‘hands-on’ and ‘hands-off’ Ansell and Gash (2008) refer to as facilitative leadership and institutional design as critical factors in successful collaborative governance arrangements. In their model institutional design concerns the structure for negotiations in terms of its rules that set the parameters for negotiation such as participation and process rules. Recognising the link between structure and the collaborative process, Keast, Brown and Mandell (2007) also describe ‘network structures’ as the furthest recognition of interdependency autonomous actors can participate in. It is a self-recognition of that individual actors that they are only a small part of a necessary larger effort (Agranoff and McGuire, 1999; Agranoff and McGuire 2003; Mandell and Steelman, 2003; Keast, Mandell, Brown and Woolcock, 2004; Keast, Brown and Mandell, 2007).

Finally, Provan and Kenis (2008) provide the most comprehensive and specific account of structure in network processes by identifying three ‘configurations’ of networks, that is three variable structures of authority and collaboration that allocate resources and coordinate efforts across a network in different ways (p. 231). When presenting these different ‘governance apparatuses’ they propose a causality with the configuration of a network and that networks ‘effectiveness’ under different conditions (Kenis and Provan, 2006; Provan and Milward, 2006; Provan and Kenis, 2008).

The three forms are ‘Shared’ governance configurations, ‘Lead Organisation’ configurations and ‘Network Administered Organisation’ (NAO) configurations. Shared governed networks depend on the involvement and commitment of all or a significant subset of participants. They can be accomplished informally or formally but always involve negotiated coordination without separated, centralised representation. This means that network participants manage both internal and external relationships. Lead Organisation networks operate quite differently with a single organisation, who is also a network member, being the centralised authoritative figure, or lead organisation. Under this configuration the major network-level decisions and activities are coordinated and brokered by the lead organisation. The NAO configuration has a separate administrative entity is set up specifically to govern the network and its activities. Although network members still interact with one another, as with the lead organization

model, a Network Administrator acts as the centralized brokering organisation. The network broker plays a key role in coordinating and sustaining the network. Unlike the lead organization model, however, the NAO is not another member organization providing its own services. NAOs themselves come in some variation. They may consist of a single individual network administrator or a formal organization/committee.

Organizations join or form networks for a variety of reasons, including the need to gain legitimacy, serve clients more effectively, attract more resources, and address complex problems. Financially there isn't much variation on the incentive; Lead, NAO's and Shared governance networks may share the costs of the network or receive external funding, while Lead Organisations may also underwrite the costs themselves.

What structure best suits any given network is instead conditional on four variables; the amount of goal consensus present in the network, the amount of trust present between participants in the network, the interdependent need for specialisation in the network (network-level competencies) and the number of participants

The table below demonstrates the different conditions each configuration is more 'suitable' for.

Table 5 - Governance forms according to Provan and Kenis (2008)

| Governance Forms | Trust | Number of Participants | Goal Consensus | Network Level Competencies |
|------------------|----------|------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Shared | High | Few | High | Low |
| Lead | Low | Moderate | Moderate - low | Moderate |
| NAO | Moderate | Moderate - High | Moderate - high | High |

The reason for forming the network is critical to the most effective form it may take, although goals can change over time. While conflict in a network may be a source of innovation, being motivated by common goals that adequately represent common interests is key for an organisation's commitment and responsiveness. High goal consensus may result in self organisation, while low goal consensus may require a lead organisation structure to bind organisations. NAOs can manage varying levels of consensus by framing network level goals. In this case it is the task of the NAO and Lead Organisations to work with participants on a daily basis, resolving possible conflict and enhancing commitment to the network and its goals. All network configurations are seeking to achieve some end that they could not have achieved independently. Although there may be agreement on the desirability of a network and on the value of a Lead or NAO, there may only be modest agreement about what the network should be doing and how participants should be involved. These conditions are not favourable for shared governance structures as decisions would be constantly hampered or slowed down by a lack of consensus. Goal consensus is different from trust which is based on 'reputation and past experience' (Provan and Kenis, 2008; 240).

When trust is low the incentive to cooperate is also low, and network governance must be formally brokered. Similar to when goal consensus needs alignment and when interdependencies must be managed, a NAO or Lead structure also allows for active trust management. Shared governance exists primarily when trust is high. Trust is not something that can be developed easily or quickly, it is very fragile and can easily turn into distrust (Sydow, 1998). Consistent interaction, avenues for fair participation and sustained benefit as

part of a brokered network structure are therefore important to the emergence of trust (Axelrod, 1984; Deakin and Wilkinson, 1998; Ansell and Gash, 2008).

Critically Provan and Kenis (2008; 240) talk of the need to address network-level competencies, which come in two parts (1) internally, what demands does the network need to meet to fulfil its goals and (2) externally, what demands does the network need to accommodate for. Interdependent task requirements, such as the need for multiple specialisations on the same project often requires extensive coordination to be effectively delivered. If there is a high demand for competencies on the network-level, shared networks are typically less effective than Lead and NAO organisations. Similarly, External demands may also fluctuate, requiring flexible responses at the network level that may only be achieved by the quick organisation of competencies. The need to be reflexive in the face of environmental shocks such as shifts in funding or new regulations requires centralised action or coordination. This could take too long in shared governance arrangements. For the same reasons building external legitimacy to secure funding and new members is a process more effectively managed by NAO's or Lead organisations. Administrative entities can focus on the external environment and provide a single focal point for interactions with the network.

The final, and most straightforward condition is the number of participants present. This condition can be used to explain network evolution. A growing number of participants in a network requires increasing administration. Shared governance arrangements become protracted the more participants are attempting to reach consensus. At this point, network-level managers can either struggle with the current governance form, which is likely to become increasingly ineffective, or shift to a different form that is consistent with having more participants. For each condition, changing circumstances are the main driver behind the evolution of a network (Provan and Kenis, 2008; 246). In particular, the inefficiencies of collaborative decision making in shared governance with many organisations may mean that a far more centralized approach (NAO or Lead) is preferred.

According to Provan and Kenis (2008), the greater the inconsistency between a particular governance structure and the conditions of that network, the less likely that that particular form will be effective. This will lead to overall network ineffectiveness, dissolution, or change in governance form. Shared governance is seen as the most flexible and adaptable form, particularly because mechanisms and processes are a result of unbrokered negotiation. This also means it is the governance structure least effective for network level coordination. Therefore, a sustained network activity often requires an active consideration of what network structure is most effective. The different governance forms suggested by Provan and Kenis (2008) place different burdens on network members to achieve network level goals.

2. 7. Network Management

The management of governance networks concerns the management of steering processes and is referred to as 'hands-on' meta-governance or network management (Sorenson and Torfing, 2009; Klijn, et al., 2010).

Network management and participation are considered the two hands-on meta-governance tools. Network participation concerns more direct attempts to affect the substance of dialogues and interactions by having networks managers participate in them (Sorenson and Torfing, 2009). Network management concerns the management of dialogue and interaction in the network, aiming to affect the substance of the network indirectly through tools or

strategies. Ideally, network management initiates and facilitates interaction processes between actors, creates and changes network arrangements for better coordination, creates new content (e.g., by exploring new ideas; Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004), and guides interactions.

There is a role for managers attempting to govern networks when it comes to producing trust. Emphasising repeated interactions, designing processes to stabilize and manage interactions and using institutional design to set rules to frame risks and opportunistic behaviour can create predictability and encourage the emergence of trust. Additionally, framing to highlight expected future benefits and competence perceptions of other participants will enhance the level of trust. Klijn, Edelenbos and Steijn (2010) find that the more managerial strategies employed in a network, the higher the level of trust. The managerial strategies explored in their work seek to enhance process agreements, explore content, arrange the network, and connect specific members and the resources.

Klijn, Edelenbos and Steijn (2010) offer a more actionable outline of four network management strategies; process agreements, exploring content, arranging and connecting. Process agreements are arbitration mechanisms that set rules over conflict resolution and decision making. Exploring content involves attempts to arrive at joint fact-finding and goal-alignment to change perceptions and encourage cross-frame learning. Arranging involves setting the agenda and framing goals. While Connecting involves creative incentives to cooperate and selecting appropriate actors who can mobilise resources for network level goals. By implementing these strategies successful attempts hope to empower actors and lower the transaction costs of collaboration, therefore promoting innovation and efficiency (Klijn and Koppenjan, 2004).

Table 6 - Managerial Strategies

| Managerial Strategies | Process agreements | Exploring content | Arranging | Connecting |
|------------------------------------|---|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| Klijn, Edelenbos and Steijn (2010) | Rules for interaction and decision mechanisms | Perception management and information sharing | Organisation of network and processes | Guidance of interactions between participants |

Knowing that governance networks can be managed and identifying the strategies that can be utilised still leaves managers with a lot of interpretation in regard of how to proceed. The complexity of networks, especially compared to hierarchies has led to an emphasis on the concept of ‘leadership’ (Uhl-Bien, et al., 2007).

This is due to the unique characteristics of collaborative networks. These characteristics relate to the diversity and interdependency of participants and the idea that no one is in charge. Success in collaborative networks is based on establishing and maintaining appropriate interactions among partners. The unique conditions and subsequent challenges of collaborative networks has generated calls for ‘fresh’ leadership skills (Mandell and Keast, 2009). There is a growing acknowledgement of this in the Collaborative Emergency Management literature as discussed above (Wise, 2006; Waugh and Wight, 2006; Lester and Krejci, 2007).

Despite changing perceptions, there is an acknowledgement that management and leadership largely overlap. To manage is to accomplish goals through organising and planning. To lead is to influence, guide, build commitment, and convince others of a vision (Clarke, 2013; Mandell and Keast, 2009; Uhl-Bien, et al., 2007).

According to Huxham & Vangen (2000) there are three perspectives of leadership in networks. These are: manipulating and influencing activities; empowerment or facilitating access to agendas for all members; and opening up agendas in new ways: to think creatively and shift mind-sets. These can be compared to the strategies previously offered by Klijn, Edelenbos and Steijn (2010); process agreements, exploring content, arranging and connecting.

A brand of ‘facilitative leadership’ is highlighted by Ansell and Gash (2008) as critical to a successful collaborative process. In their model leadership is crucial for setting and maintaining clear ground rules, building trust, facilitating dialogue, and exploring mutual gains. Facilitation involves getting participants to reach their own win-win conclusions. A facilitating leader’s role vital to ensuring the integrity of the collaborative process itself (Ansell and Gash, 2008; 554).

Leadership is particularly important in coordination attempts, with boundary spanning and honest brokering being emphasised (Williamson, 2000). Lasker and Weiss (2003) argue that collaborative leaders must have the skills to promote broad and active participation, ensure broad based influence and control, facilitate productive group dynamics and extend the scope of the process. Successful collaborations may also use multiple leaders, formally and informally, rather than relying on one leader (Lasker and Weiss, 2003).

Newer, more sophisticated perspectives of leadership are gaining attention which present it as a process. Mandell and Keast (2009) propose leadership as a ‘process catalyst’ where instead of focusing primarily on achievement of tasks, it is primarily focusing on building trust and new, innovative ways of working together. Leadership in collaborative networks does not translate to getting others to do what needs to be done in terms of meeting goals in an efficient manner. Instead, it means that leadership in collaborative networks refers to those participants who are able to focus on the importance of the process by which new relationships are built, new behaviours, languages and paradigms are learned, and consensus can be reached.

In a similar fashion, Uhl-Bien, Marion and McKelvey (2007) and Clarke (2013) present leadership as a process that balances the tension of emergent initiatives with administered boundaries of control. While ‘administrative leadership’ ensures coordination, ‘adaptive leadership’ emerges to overcome challenges and solve various problems a network may face. ‘Enabling leadership’ then seeks to catalyse emergent initiatives in a coordinated manner (Clarke, 2013; Uhl-Bien, et al., 2007).

This ‘Complexity Leadership’ perspective is premised on several critical notions. Context is emphasised as significant, the process of leadership occurs from a ‘Complex Adaptive System’ to overcome ‘adaptive challenges’ that require new assemblages of resources and expertise leading to learning, innovation, and new patterns of behaviour. Complex Adaptive Systems are the organisations themselves that have become ‘complex’ from overlapping interactions between its constituents and their contextual environment (Cilliers, 2001; Uhl-Bien, et al., 2007).

There exists a tension in the attainment of ‘enabling’ leadership from the complexity perspective. While flexibility and informality, as opposed to rigid administrative leadership, is essential to deal with contextual challenges, emergent interdependency results in auto-coordination serve to informally restrict emergent initiatives (Clarke, 2013). In a collaborative network, the emergence of adaptive leadership can be beneficial. It then depends on the administrative leadership and the ability of enabling leadership to overcome auto-coordination to foster adaptive leadership.

To know if leadership and management attempts are successful Klijn and Koppenjan’s (2016) distinction of content and process outcomes make use of participants perceptions to measure the success of a network. Provan and Kenis (2008) meanwhile refers to the three tensions outlined above that must be managed (efficiency/inclusiveness, internal/external legitimacy and flexibility/stability). Network management is then the process of balancing these tensions to enhance efficiency.

Chapter 3. Conceptualisation and Operationalisation

The first step to conceptualisation is defining the independent and dependent variables from the research question;

How is the DRA structured and managed and how does this influence the success of collaboration in instances of decision making in emergencies over time?

Here, Network structure and management are seen as deliberate attempts by the DRA committee to influence processes and obtain outcomes. Therefore, the dependent variable is 'outcomes as perceived by participants' and the independent variables influencing this are factors of the 'Collaborative Process' 'network structure' and 'network management'. From the literature there is also an emphasis on 'context' which shall be included. A conceptualisation of this then follows:

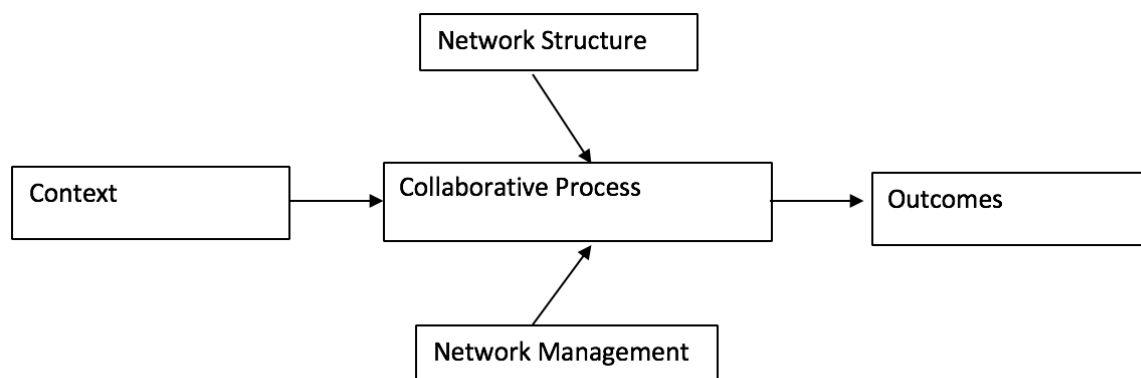


Figure 3 - Research question conceptualised

3.1. Sub-Questions

1. *How does context, defined by the characteristics of involved actors, along with their interactions defined by history, incentives/interdependencies and asymmetries influence the success of collaboration?*
2. *What are aspects of the Dutch Relief Alliances' process that promote successful collaboration?*
3. *How does the Dutch Relief Alliances' structure promote successful collaboration?*
4. *How does Network Management promote successful collaboration?*

3.2. Operationalisation

3.2.1. Dependent Variables

Due to the number of literary sources utilised some synthesis of concepts is required to better define the variables and their indicators. Primarily the work of Ansell and Gash (2008) list

‘Trust-Building’ and ‘Shared-Understandings’ as primary factors of the ‘Collaborative Process’.

| Process Determinants | Trust-Building | Face-to-face dialogue | Commitment to process | Shared understanding | Intermediate Outcomes |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|--|---|--|
| Derived from Ansell and Gash (2008) | Mutual recognition of non-opportunistic behaviour, reliability and good-will | Perception building through in person process | Shared responsibility and adherence to pre-defined pathways of negotiation and decision making | Common perception of problem definition, causes and solutions | Realisation of short to medium term outcomes of mutual benefit |

At the same time, Klijn and Koppenjan (2015) list ‘Trust’ and ‘Shared Perceptions’ as primary outcomes associated with ‘Institutional’ outcomes and ‘Joint-Image Building’ as a primary outcome associated with ‘Content’ outcomes, as seen in table by comparing table 3 above and table 1 below.

| Network Outcomes | Indicators |
|------------------|--|
| Institutional | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal and external support The development of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relationships, - Shared perceptions, - Institutional rules, - Trust |
| Process | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inclusiveness - Transaction Cost - Quality |
| Content | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Joint Image building - Goal Intertwinement |

This overlap in independent and dependent variables presents a dilemma associated with a vibrant and decentralised body of literature. The complexity of networks, especially their reciprocity, makes it hard to determine causality; exactly what influences what. For this purpose, a decision is made in this research to have ‘Trust-Building’ and ‘Shared Understanding’ not factors of the collaborative process, but outcomes to be desired by networks; a purpose for them to form. This results in a set of independent variables as follows:

Table 7 - Independent Variables

| Independent Variables | Forms | Explanation | Indicators |
|-----------------------|---|--|---|
| Contextual Factors | Actors | Characteristics of actors, strategies and values | Mission Values Size (Large/Small) |
| | Prehistory of antagonism and cooperation’ | Previous interactions between actors | Personal account on perception and intensity of relations |
| | Incentives to participate | Recognition of interdependencies – the | Benefits of participation in DRA to the mission, |

| | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|--|---|
| | | potential gain to be had through participation | value and size of organisation; New Opportunities, etc. |
| | Power/resource imbalances | The asymmetries that exist between actors in terms of capabilities and influence | Strategies corresponding to the size of organisations Differences in capacity and effect on relations in the network |
| Process determinants | Face-to-face dialogue | Perception building through in person process | Personal recount of experience in meetings Regularity of meetings |
| | Commitment to process | Shared responsibility and adherence to pre-defined pathways of negotiation and decision making | Consistency in recount of processes between interviewees Agreement with process legitimacy and efficiency Instances where processes are adhered to or not |
| | Intermediate Outcomes | Realisation of short to medium term outcomes of mutual benefit | Identification of win-win solutions Achievement of short term goals |
| | Mode of Governing | Qualities of structure resembling Shared, Lead or NAO | Shared, Lead or NAO characteristics |
| Network Management | Managerial Strategies | Actions of network management | Evidence of; Process agreements, exploring content, arranging and connecting |
| | Sources of Leadership | Where momentum for process initiation and change come from | Evidence of administrative, emergent or adaptive leadership |

3.2.2. Independent Variables

| Dependent Variable | | Indicators |
|---------------------------|---------------|---|
| Collaboration Performance | Institutional | Level of Internal and External Support Balance Internal/External Legitimacy The development of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relationships, • shared perceptions, • institutional rules, • trust Balance of Flexibility/Stability |
| | Process | Inclusiveness Efficiency (Quality/Cost) Balance of Inclusiveness/Efficiency |
| Outcome | Content | Joint Image building Goal Intertwinement |

Chapter 4. Methodology

The methodology adopted in this research utilised a constructivist approach that placed emphasis on the individual experience of a phenomenon, in this case the DRA. Document Analysis was utilised to promote triangulation for the results. First, the research design will be outlined followed by the research steps. The methods for conducting research, that is the coding and data collection methods are used. The methodology section is finalised with a discussion on the epistemology and validity of results.

4.1. Research design

Baxter and Jack (2008) emphasise the importance of ‘binding’ a case study, that is the establishment of boundaries on a case to prevent research becoming too broad. Citing Yin (2003) and Stake (1995) they outline extensive research that attempts to address too many objectives a common ‘pitfall’ of case studies. Research can be binded by limiting the time and place, activity and context of the case. By defining what this research is not about aids in this exercise. This research examines strategic, headquarter coordination of NGOs by the DRA aided by the MoFA. This is not a study of operational coordination like much of the other literature cited in the literature review.

Yin (2003) places importance on the use of propositions in any case study, while Stake (1995) applies issues. These act as anchors for the research that keeps the researchers on track and answers relevant. Both of these were utilised in this research, clarifying key concepts used for conceptualisation, forming the backbone of interview questions and finally being used to formulate sub-questions.

An expectation of multiple sources of evidence is used to seek convergence and legitimise results (Yin, 1994). Triangulation, ‘the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon’ (Denzin, 1970, p. 291) is achieved through document analysis in combination with interviews.

4.2. Research Steps

Actors are identified based on their participation in the network (step 1) consisting of the sixteen alliance NGOs and DRA committee. Interviews will aid in reconstructing these actors perspective with strict adherence to the dependant and independent variables (step 2). This is extended to perspectives on their position in the network, including questions on the value of participation (step 3). The DRAs processes and procedures are then explored, including its history and developments. This is critical to do in interviews as secondary literature remains vague on these processes (steps 4 & 5). Klijn and Koopnjans’ (2016) three criteria of substantive, institutional and strategic learning are utilised to evaluate the process, along with an emphasis on network sustainability based on observations from the CEM literature (step 6). Finally, explicit network management efforts are examined (step 7).

4.3. Coding

As part of the methodology a system of coding and memo taking was utilised. This ‘inductive coding’ consisted of ‘cycles’ as put forward by Saldaña (2013). This involves a first cycle to determine codes, a second cycle to refine codes and a third cycle spurred by memo taking to

consolidate or inject new concepts. The five steps of the coding process taken where as follows:

1. Literature review provided initial coding variables. First cycle coding.
2. Document analysis conducted of DRA reviews. First cycle coding
3. First set of 5 interviews conducted April/May. Second cycle coding.
4. Memo taking that lead to the introduction of leadership theories.
5. Rest of interviews. First and Second cycle coding finished prior to analysis.

Table 8 - Research Coding

| Codes, First Round | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Codes groups | 'Cooperation' | 'Conflict' |
| | Efficiency | Inefficiency |
| | Trust Building | Trust Breaking |
| | Instances of Process Confirmation | Instances of Process Alteration |
| | Instances of Decision Unanimity | Instances of Decision Rejection |
| | Instances of Leadership Confirmation | Instances of Leadership Rejection |
| | Perception Binding | Perceptions Degrading |
| | Team efforts | Go-alone strategies |
| | Process Breakthroughs | Process Blockages |
| | Inclusion | Exclusion |
| Codes, Second Round; Categorisation | | |
| 5. Institutional Outcomes | | |
| 6. Process Outcomes | | |
| 7. Content Outcomes | | |
| a. Network Structure | | |
| b. Network Management | | |

This set of coding was used to organise concepts for presentation in the results section. The positive and negative dichotomy allowed a comparison of 'successful' or 'unsuccessful' processes that were further categorised by outcomes, which is how they are presented in the results section.

4.4. Qualitative data collection methods

Fifteen interviews were conducted, primarily face-to-face and all lasting between forty minutes and two hours. Interviews were organised through email, with every organisation contacted. Due to time and scheduling not, every organisation could be reached, however some interviewees were from the same organisation. A selection was made based on the knowledge gaps present. As such every 'level' of the DRA present in the Netherlands was interviewed; past and current committee members, past and current Joint Response Leads, current Working Group leads and a representative from the MFA.

Table 9 - List of interviewees organisations

| Interviewee organisation |
|---------------------------------|
| Cordaid |
| Save the Children |
| Oxfam Novib |
| ZOA |

| |
|-----------------------------|
| SOS Kinderdopen |
| Terre Des Hommes |
| Care Nederland |
| World Vision |
| Dorcas |
| Ministry of Foreign Affairs |

The research questions demand a type of conceptualization that demonstrates the different parameters identified while simultaneously demonstrating the theorised influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable. Klijn and Koppenjan (2016) developed a research design to evaluate networks. They promote a nine-step procedure to analyse a network.

4.4.1. Interviews

These nine steps include;

- (1) the identification of relevant actors,
- (2) the understanding of the actors' perceptions,
- (3) an assessment of the position and dependencies of the actors,
- (4) the identification of arenas,
- (5) the identification of rounds and actions within the rounds,
- (6) evaluation of the process,
- (7) the identification of managerial efforts,
- (8) assessment of interaction patterns, and lastly
- (9) the identification of patterns of trust and perception.

They also form the structured interview question order, shown below. These questions form a semi-structured pathway to allow for serendipity. Leadership and trust are not explicitly mentioned in to questions, rather it was left to interviewees to bring up these concepts.

Table 10 - Concepts and Interview Question Framework

| Indicators | Definition | Interview question(s) |
|----------------------------|--|--|
| Network Context | | |
| Actors | Characteristics of network participants | What makes your organisation unique? |
| History of cooperation | Nature of previous interactions between participants | Have organisations collaborated prior to the DRA? |
| Incentives to Participate | Reasons for joining the network/ Appeal of being a partner in the network | What are your goals when participating in the DRA? |
| Power/Resource Imbalances | Difference in capabilities | Does being a smaller/larger organisation affect your perception of the network |
| Network Processes | | |
| Face-to-face communication | Nature of negotiations and deliberation during processes | How do collaborative processes play out? |
| Commitment to process | How well processes are adhered to | How well are processes adhered to? Do all participants commit to processes equally? |

| | | |
|-----------------------|--|---|
| Intermediate Outcomes | Short term objectives during processes | What short-term goals during processes encourage further collaboration? |
| Network Management | | |
| Hands-off strategies | Management strategies that seek to indirectly influence outcomes | Does the DRA promote a specific culture? What goals does the DRA emphasise? |
| Hands-on strategies | Management strategies that seek to directly influence outcomes | What role does the DRAC have in negotiation processes? How does the DRA facilitate cooperation? |
| Network Design | | |
| Degree of control | How many rules are implemented in the network | What interaction rules exist? How does the DRA enforce these rules? |
| Governance structure | How is the network organised, what do arenas of interaction look like | How where processes formulated? How much ownership do organisations have of the process? How has the DRA changed since its inception? |
| Outcome Perceptions | | |
| Content | How aligned are participants perceptions | What are perceptions of the DRA? What are perceptions of other DRA members? |
| Process | How effective are processes, are the costs considered worthwhile, are participants satisfied | Are you satisfied with the DRA? What are strengths? What would you like to see changed? |
| Institutional | How has the network evolved | What processes and rules have become entrenched in the DRA? What relations have developed through the DRA? |

4.4.2. Document Analysis

Document analysis is reviewing or evaluating documents to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge (Bowen, 2009).

Three documents were reviewed:

- Mid-term evaluation of the Dutch Relief Alliance (2016) (Poole and Willitts-King, 2016)
- Evaluation of the Dutch Relief Alliance 2015-2017 (2017) (Pottelbergh and Singh, 2017)
- Dutch Relief Alliance Strategy 2018-2021 (2017) (Dutch Relief Alliance, 2017)

The analysis procedure entails finding, selecting, making sense of and synthesising data contained in documents in the form of code data, excerpts and quotations to be further organised through thematic analysis (Labuschagne, 2003). Thematic analysis is a form of pattern recognition within the data, with emerging themes becoming the categories for analysis (Baralt, 2012; Ryan and Bernard, 2003; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). This is achieved through the coding process outlined in this section.

The documents provide a means of tracking change and development. Where various drafts of a particular document are accessible, the researcher can compare them to identify the changes (Yin, 1994).

4.5. Epistemology

Blatter and Haverland (2012) promote the use of case studies based on developments also observed in governance literature. Citing Hall et al., (2003) they the popularity of case studies to growing academic attention to timing, interaction effects and context. The prevalence of cognitive factors such as a desire to understand perceptions and motivations through an examination of norms, ideas and discourses.

Blatter and Haverland (2012) also make the case of a ‘non-fundamentalist and pluralist’ epistemology, finding the middle ground between positivist, constructivist and pragmatic perspectives. They insist that case studies are well suited to theory-led interpretation, that is ‘intensive reflection on the relationship between empirical evidence and abstract concepts’ (3). By doing this they hope that researchers can reduce the complexity of social reality not by trying to make it fit a predetermined framework but by focusing on the events, structures, actions and mechanisms that are relevant for social practices.

4.6. Case study structure

Blatter and Haverland (2012) cite some of the most influential case studies as single case studies. For the DRA, the uniqueness and scale of the initiative, that is a national level incentive, make finding a comparison case both difficult and of questionable worth. Providing a detailed and hollist case study of this initiative at this stage proves worthwhile.

Yin (2003) suggests six methods for reporting a case study. These include linear, comparative, chronological, theory building, suspense, and un-sequenced. A linear approach is considered for this research due to its simplicity. Most interviewees represent a ‘Joint Response’ which proves useful as a single case to be compared to one another.

4.7. Validity

Structured interviews are considered as the only data source for this research. This implies no data triangulation as a method of improving the validity and reliability of results. Additionally a single case study means no case study comparisons.

Baxter and Jack (2008) provide a basic foundation to achieve some data validity, which will be adhered to in this research;

- (a) First, the case study research question should clearly written and utilise propositions from the literature to substantiate the question;
 - (b) the case study design should appropriate for the research question (single case study);
 - (c) purposeful sampling strategies appropriate for case study must be applied;
 - (d) data should collected and managed systematically;
 - (e) and finally the data should be analysed correctly
- (Russell, Gregory, Ploeg, DiCenso, & Guyatt, 2005; Baxter and Jack, 2008

By triangulating data, the researcher attempts to provide ‘a confluence of evidence that breeds credibility’ (Eisner, 1991, p. 110). By examining information collected through different methods, the researcher can corroborate findings across data sets and thus reduce

the impact of potential biases that can exist in a single study. According to Patton (1990), triangulation helps the researcher guard against the accusation that a study's findings are simply an artefact of a single method, a single source, or a single investigator's bias.

5. Results

The layout of results will be presented in an unorthodox fashion with the intent of not just demonstrating how the Dutch Relief Alliance operates but highlighting the significant of what the Dutch Relief Alliance is achieving. Results are framed to reflect understanding of this complex phenomena as observed by the researcher. First an establishing context is provided through a timeline (Section 5.1) first of the humanitarian sector in general, then of the DRA specifically.

What would be considered the end point of observation, the outcomes of the network are presented next, providing parameters for analysis that prevent obscurity. While outcomes are the endpoint and objective of the network process, they are also the first observations that become apparent to the retroactive observer. The outcomes (Section 5.2) section presents the network level outcomes achieved followed by an evaluation of the ‘successfulness’ of the network in promoting collaboration.

It is through the conduction of qualitative research that the mechanisms and details of this network itself are uncovered, consequentially each independent variable is presented in two parts. First, the characteristics of the variable is explored over time. This is followed by an analysis of how the variable contributes to the outcomes outlines prior. The outcomes section is therefore followed by the context (Section 5.3) that the network is embedded in; the processes (Section 5.4) that characterise collaboration; the structure (Section 5.5) of the network and how the network is managed (Section 5.6). The discussion section will summarise and conclude on the consequences of these results.

5.1. Timeline

5.1.1. The Humanitarian Sector Prior to the Dutch Relief Alliance

Two-hundred-and-one million people needed urgent humanitarian assistance in 2017, the highest number ever recorded (ALNAP, 2018). The century after the First World War has seen humanitarianism expand with the sector becoming increasingly professionalised, organised, resourced and diversified. Now more than ever does the humanitarian sector have the capacity to detect and respond to more crises, with significant reach and ability to save lives in places that could not have been conceived a century ago (Davies, 2012).

Despite this growth the humanitarian sector not keeping up with the growing demands of more frequent, protracted and recurring humanitarian crises (de Castellarnau and Stoianova, 2016). Coverage is getting worse. Increased funding cannot keep up with the increased costs of more people needing assistance in a greater variety of services in more complex crisis conditions (Healy, S. and Tiller, S., 2014; Canyon and Burkle, 2016; ALNAP, 2018).

Contemporary criticism of the humanitarian efforts is persistent and often scathing. Humanitarian Policy Group’s research project on ‘Constructive Deconstruction: Rethinking the Humanitarian Architecture’ commenting that the ‘current ability of the sector to provide assistance in acute emergencies has proven hugely inadequate in the face of escalating needs’ (de Castellarnau and Stoianova, 2016: 3) It is argued that the formal humanitarian system “faces a crisis of legitimacy, capacity and means, blocked by significant and enduring flaws that prevent it from being effective” (Humanitarian Policy Group, 2016). With Spiegel

(2017) criticising the existing humanitarian system as being created for a different time, therefore no longer fitting contemporary demands. Large NGOs themselves demonstrate a self-awareness with MSF criticising that ‘while the humanitarian system was larger and more professionalised, this had not led to “a proportionate improvement in performance during emergencies’ (Healy and Tiller, 2014).

A brief historical examination of humanitarian intervention is needed to contextualise contemporary criticism as to why the current system is out of place. The common narrative relates how ‘humanitarian’ has expanded in scope over the years, from designating emergency relief to include development, human rights, peace-building and advocacy. The original origins of humanitarian aid as ‘relief’ meant a strict non-interventionist routine that attempts to address only the symptoms of any given crisis. The alleviation of suffering absent of ideas of delivering fair outcomes or justice.

This was the approach of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) which held a monopoly on defining ‘humanitarian’ aid as the first and largest INGO, established in 1863. It wasn’t until 1956 that the ICRC officially outlined the seven ‘Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross’: humanity, equality, due proportion, impartiality, neutrality, independence and universality (Leader, 1998). The Fundamental Principles define not only what is to be distributed and why, but also how it is to be distributed; there is an explicit concern for the ‘purity’ of means and ends (Blondel, 1989).

The Red Cross still adheres to these principles and is one of the biggest actors in emergency response. However, by the time these principles were proclaimed, alternative movements and definitions were developed, specifically addressing the reactive nature of Red Cross responses and often the ‘impartial’ and ‘neutral’ principles. Addressing underlying factors of emergencies, not just the effects of them, is a modern phenomenon which finds its basis after the First World War (establishment of Save the Children, 1919) and gathered further momentum after the Second World War (establishment of Oxfam, 1942; Care in 1945; World Vision in 1950) (Barnett, 2011). This came in the form of reconstruction and development of the devastated, mostly European nations. The period of the ‘cold war’ saw a significant shift in the geographical dispersion of this form of humanitarian aid, from the ‘global north’ to the ‘global south’ in the immediate aftermath of decolonisation.

The period after the cold war from the 1990s saw the most radical change. The 1990s saw a dramatic expansion in the scale of humanitarian assistance: while there were only a few aid agencies in Somalia in 1992, roughly 200 went to Rwanda in 1993, 250 were in Kosovo in 1999 and, after the earthquake in Haiti, 900 agencies were registered (Barnett, 2011).

NGOs stressed the importance of protecting human rights for ‘at risk’ groups as well as the provision of assistance, developmental NGOs stress that humanitarian action includes long-term assistance such as capacity-building and empowerment (Chandler, 2001). This vertical and horizontal expansion of ‘humanitarian’ in terms of political engagement and goals and objectives is expressed as a symptom, in part, of a need to manage the so-called ‘new complex emergencies’ ushered in by the end of the Cold War.

The so called ‘complex humanitarian emergencies’ that were unleashed gave rise to new conceptions of international peace-building and security; there was a growing understanding that the state itself was a source of insecurity (Barnett, 2011; Newman, 2004). The central

idea of the complex emergency is that ‘some emergencies have multiple causes, involve multiple local actors, and compel an international response’ (Calhoun, 2004: 384).

The common explanation for this steep increase in NGO and UN presence in these contexts is that, after the end of the Cold War, ‘Third World’ countries that previously relied on the USSR or US to legitimise them were instead exposed to internal collapse (Schindler, 1999 and Barnett, 2011). Conflicts stemming from ethnic, religious or political differences were left unchecked resulting in complex emergencies that eroded the cultural, civil, political and economic integrity of established societies (Davey, Borton and Foley, 2013).

Ban Ki-moon’s flagship report for the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016 represented rationale behind a further expansion by calling for a shift from delivering aid to ‘ending need’, in the process recasting humanitarian aid as a subsidiary of the objective to ‘reduce need and vulnerability’ (Ban Ki-moon, 2016). Humanitarian aid has moved less from delivering relief towards addressing the consequences of failed states, effectively incorporating humanitarian assistance into a broader development agenda. Despite this the structure of NGO’s and the delivery of aid has remained largely unchanged.

Criticism of this failure to adapt has been common, particularly of the UN which in the lead up to the World Humanitarian Summit abdicated control of the delivery of aid in Syria to the Assad government resulting in the prevention of aid to those most in need (TSC, 2016). The World Humanitarian Summit was in a way, recognition that the humanitarian system is dysfunctional. It encouraged the participation of a large number of people to foster open and productive dialogue in a massive information-sharing endeavour (Canyon and Burkle Jr, 2016). However, the summit was criticised for a lack of systemic reform and particularly a lack of attention to international humanitarian law and civilian protection causing Doctors Without Borders (MSF), one of the major global humanitarian actors to pull out (MSF, 2016). Abandoning the prospect of political solutions and serious reform in favour of smaller, more achievable objectives. The outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit manifested in the form of technical commitments, such as the ‘Grand Bargain,’ a series of reforms to humanitarian funding structures that were designed to make humanitarian assistance more ‘effective and efficient’ (Canyon and Burkle Jr, 2016).

It is important to examine the context of humanitarian aid, as it has received significant academic attention and scrutiny over its century’s long history. The Dutch Relief Alliance is embedded in global and national trends that combine large scale reform movements seeking to modernise humanitarian actors.

UN agencies have traditionally focused their attention on governments attempting to influence planning and policy, while NGOs focus on bottom-up development at the micro-level and cooperate with developing country governments only at the regional or provincial level during emergency operations. Under this ‘traditional’ paradigm, UN agencies have been criticised as viewing NGOs as subcontractors in subordinate positions, not as equal partners with unique capacities. This can result in a mutual resentment as UN agencies carry certain expectations on nongovernmental organisations which may not always be fulfilled, and NGOs may be treated as contractors rather than equal partners (Natsios, 1995).

Natsios (1995) observes the greatest single internal weakness of NGOs as their reluctance to risk any managerial or programme autonomy in pursuit of a greater level of strategic coherence. He also recognises that “NGOs have a problem of scale in their field programmes;

they produce patches of green in barren landscapes, patches that are small, fragile and usually unconnected to each other” (Natsios, 1995; p. 414).

5.1.1. Timeline of the Dutch Relief Alliance

The Dutch Relief Alliance was not successfully achieved on its first attempt. Over the previous decade, cooperative arrangements have been formulated by NGOs to gain greater access to state funding.

‘The DRA was not the only time we tried to work together (with the MFA). There was a time before that wasn’t successful... (it was with) a lot of the same people who made the DRA work...’ (Interview with Cordaid personnel, June, 2019)

Prior to 2015 the amount of humanitarian funding afforded directly to Dutch NGOs was a small portion of the MFAs humanitarian budget, with the majority going to both the ICRC and UN programs. A main criticism and reasoning from the MFA were that the Dutch NGOs were too fragmented and ineffective in the field, a criticism echoed by Natsios (1995). This was the motivation to come together.

The first successful appeal was coordinated response to crisis in South Sudan. Lilianne Ploumen, the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation under the MFA, outlined in a letter the need for more effective intervention in South Sudan. This served as an experiment, not one based on blind trust but on years of lobbying and interaction. Simultaneously approved were Joint Responses in Iraq and West Africa, the latter to address the escalating Ebola crisis. It is claimed that these were in some part to prove the concept.

It was at this time, after Joint Responses had been arranged, that the DRA came into formal, legal existence. A committee was established with elected members to facilitate collaboration. Critically, the MFA did not distribute the funding with conditional contracts. The funding asked for was provided, and it was up to the DRA members to decide how to distribute the funding. Collaboration in this network occurs at the ‘HQ’ level, the DRA seeks to get the Dutch-based NGO’s to collaborate with the intention of this collaboration trickling-down into field-based offices. Collaboration in the actual ground-level disaster response can only be encouraged, not forced, with the acknowledgement that the priority is addressing the urgent consequences of a disaster, not collaborating with other organisations. This reality has been acknowledged early in the network process, with an independent mid-term evaluation coming to the conclusion that: “The value of the additional layer of Joint Response coordination is variable depending on the context” (Poole and Willitts-King, 2016).

In the first joint response, South Sudan in 2015, twelve partners participated in a joint response and asked for twelve million euros to achieve this. Twelve million was granted and the money was split evenly. DRA partners knew this was not the most effective way of distributing funding as it did not take into account relative capacity or whether the funds could be adequately utilised. The MFA was also aware of this and raised objections. When the Iraq JR was planned also in early 2015, addressing refugee crises in both the north and south of the country, a different approach was formulated. Objective measures to test whether organisations had present in the country were imposed and subjective measures of peer review were formulated. The result was still a relatively even distribution but this time the results of the criteria would determine a redistribution of funds. Those in the best position to help could receive up to 120% of funds while those in the poorest position to help would

receive 80% of the funds. This was the informal start of the mechanisms that now define the DRA's processes.

From here processes became more defined with precedent, each crisis further establishing mechanisms. This wasn't a case of success to success, as many mechanisms were altered when it became apparent that they were insufficient. The easiest example of this is the establishment and refinement of the 'Acute Crisis' funding mechanisms that addresses the long deliberation time typically associated with setting up a JR in a collaborative manner. Working Groups were created to further review processes.

When the DRA became more established, so too did expectations grow. This is reflected in the creation of a strategic plan and the inclusion of innovation as a key aim. The humanitarian sector struggles to innovate due to funding structures that see donors hesitant to put their money towards anything other than saving lives. This is especially relevant to trying new ways of doing things (innovation) due to risk of failure that sees vital resources 'wasted'. Donors are typically risk adverse while the DRA allows for experimentation and has the knowledge sharing capacities not found elsewhere in the sector.

Two crises are worth highlighting in the timeline of the DRA. First was the rejection of the strategic document mentioned above. When the 4th committee submitted their strategic document for to the MFA for period of 2017 – 2021, a key document that would be used to decide future funding commitment, the MFA initially rejected it. This perceived threat to the network caused the organisations CEOs to step in, displaying their commitment to the project. This was an unprecedented move as the MFA had never rejected any document, let alone such a critical one, and CEOs had not been involved in the DRA up to that point. CEOs had been purposefully omitted due to fears their strategic considerations would hamper collaboration. Involvement has since been scaled back; however, it is higher than before this crisis. The other major crisis involved the delegation of an organisation to hold the block grant for the acute mechanism. Fears of opportunistic behaviour triggered divisions and strategizing that was only solved through persistent efforts and dialogue.

5.2. Outcomes

The aim of this section is to provide evidence of whether or not the DRA was successful. Network level outcomes are evaluated to determine how the network has evolved to overcome the obstacles that the formation of the network set out to achieve. The mid-evaluation report allows an idea of what outcomes the DRA has set out to achieve; increasing the efficiency, timeliness and effectiveness of response through enhanced access to emergency funding; producing a cultural shift from competition to collaboration and generating closer ties to the MFA.

'It was before my time. None of the organisations communicated in this way. We come together and share information, know each other and the MFA. Who to talk to and (get help) from.' (Interview with Terre Des Hommes personnel, June, 2019)

From interpretation derived from the coding of interviews and reports on the DRA it can be determined that these outcomes are seen as achieved. Coding was conducted with a focus on determining positive and negative associations with processes to determine perspectives on the network. All positive codes were used more with the exception of 'Instances of process alteration' when referring to processes that were different from the ones prior established and 'go-alone strategies' when referring to the conduct of field offices. Codes used the most

where ‘trust’, ‘perception’ and ‘inclusion’, while ‘efficiency’ appears with much more frequency than ‘inefficiency’ especially when referring to the DRA over time.

These results suggest that increasing the efficiency, timeliness and effectiveness of responses has occurred within the Netherlands, with the DRA improving organisations access to humanitarian funding. There has been a shift in the ‘cultural’ attitude from competition to collaboration, particularly in determining how to best share and utilise funds. The reality in the field is an autonomous office with which the funding from the MFA, channelled through the Dutch Relief Alliance is just one source of many. Therefore, the purpose and main outcomes of the DRA up to this point can be derived as how to effectively manage and distribute MFA funding to the field. This section of the results attempts to provide more nuanced and descriptive perspective of how successful the DRA is by utilising Klijn and Koppenjans (2016) classification of ‘network outcomes’ to explain how these outcomes were achieved. The following sections then aim to describe what role each factor of the collaborative process had in promoting a level of success.

| Outcomes – Dependent Variables | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Institutional | Level of Internal and External Support Balance Internal/External Legitimacy The development of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · relationships, · shared perceptions, · institutional rules, · trust Balance of Flexibility/Stability |
| Process | Inclusiveness Efficiency (Quality/Cost) Balance of Inclusiveness/Efficiency |
| Content | Joint Image building Goal Intertwinement |

5.2.1. Institutional Outcomes

The establishment of the Dutch Relief Alliance represented a significant change in the Dutch humanitarian environment, one that had been sought after for a number of years by members of certain bigger NGO’s operating in this environment. Their involvement in the network was a critical factor for achieving early legitimacy internally and externally.

Internally, a large group of participants who had not previously collaborated were now in the same arena for a resource they would have previously competed for. Early Joint Responses emphasised equality in process, with the choice to divide funding evenly between all participating members. This was significant for a number of reasons, chief among them being the knowledge that all members were not equal in their capacity to respond to the particular crisis (South Sudan). Emphasising equality resulted in early trust-building in collaboration that was critical to the development of shared perceptions. What this also did was force the process along by choosing not to get caught on the particulars of resource division, instead the network moved deeper into processes. Indeed, the South Sudan Joint Response had been formulated before the formal establishment of Dutch Relief Alliance, so

the initial process itself was ‘informal’ in that it was not concerned with agreed upon avenues for participation or due deliberation. This remains consistent of Human and Provan’s (2000) sources of legitimacy, with the DRA being accepted as a legitimate form of organising being the top priority. It was only after this, when more deliberate responses were considered that a heavy emphasis was placed on sustaining interaction and deliberation through ‘Working Groups’ (elaborated further in this section). This is an ongoing process but has been significantly aided by the precedent set by the South Sudan response. Through both of these the DRA continues to establish itself as a unique and independent entity.

Externally, the network has had to sustain itself against the expectations of the MFA. This consists of managing expectations with the implicit assumption that ineffective processes and therefore uses of MFA funds could lead to the termination of the network. Despite best efforts of the MFA to be present as more of a ‘partner’ than a ‘donor’ it is an inescapable reality that a power relation of ‘donor-recipient’ exists between the DRA and MFA. This demand for external legitimacy is complicated by an informal relationship, which keeps explicit, formal demands from being kept and is instead replaced by sustained informal interaction. This process appears to be critical to the network process as it allows flexible expectations that are subject to feedback. Without entrenched or targeted goals, both DRA and MFA members are able to inform each other of ideals, coming to a form of negotiated expectation.

The DRA is the focal point with which external relations are managed. It represents all NGO’s participating and benefiting from the process. While internal legitimacy is critical for this representational role to be fulfilled, it is also critical for the network to present itself as legitimate to the one ‘external’ partner that matters; the MFA. This balance of legitimacy is critical as these two factors, internal and external, drive many of the changes and progressions of the network. While they are outcomes in themselves, while they are produced members of the network need to be aware of the dichotomy. Demands of internal members must be accommodated but within the parameters set by the MFA, and vice-versa.

Internally, the participants of the network were given considerable autonomy to choose the nature of interactions within the ‘Alliance’ structure. In the early stages of the DRA there were significant changes established and refined with each new intervention the DRA commissioned. Especially in the first three responses, from South Sudan to Iraq and Ebola, the funding mechanism formed and changed from even distribution to peer-review. The need for greater collaboration and more ‘fair’ funding distributions that considered the ‘capacity’ each organisation had in-country and the ‘saturation’ that could be achieved through the relevant utilisations of funds led to a need for refinement. This occurred through the in-between crisis refinement of processes by working groups, which has strengthened relationships. Partners submit proposals for their strategies to JRs they want to participate in, which are given subjective and objective review to determine eligibility and funding amount. Realising that crises have different characteristics that require different processes, two mechanisms were formulated to enact a JR, depending on the nature of the crisis; the acute and protracted mechanisms.

‘Acute Crises’ are those that are sudden onset and require a quick response. This response mechanism has been developed by the network to shorten the collaboration process through a funding system known as a ‘block grant’ where MFA funds are held by a partner organisation to be distributed to JR leads with a contract held by the DRA. ‘Protracted Crises’ are slower onset and can afford a more deliberative process before action is required. MFA funds

distributed directly to the Lead organisation through a contract. ‘Protracted Crises’ are those that require more persistent presence, with underlying issues that are not set to subside over a short period of time. This response mechanism addresses those emergencies that can be foreseen, such as vulnerable and displaced populations like Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. As a result, more time can be invested in formulation of responses, while a longer field presence allows for more collaboration opportunities (time being one of three major factors) and more opportunities for feedback. The establishment of these mechanisms display an extraordinary level of institutional learning, which was further enhanced with the ‘block grant’ funding mechanism.

JR proposals are arranged by participants peer reviewed and then sent to the MFA for approval. Joint Response ‘Leads’ are commissioned to organise proposals, oversee administration and act as a node for funding distribution. In this procedure, a contract is held between the lead organisation and the MFA. Once this mechanism was applied to emergencies that required quick responses, those deemed ‘acute’, it was realised to be insufficient. While the formulation of a proposal could be achieved in as little as seventy-two hours, MFA approval could vary significantly from days to weeks. This discrepancy led to sustained campaigning to amend acute mechanisms to allow for quicker funding approval, resulting in the approval of ‘Block Grants’. One partner becomes the grant holder, so that when an acute crisis JR is approved the lead organisation receives approval from the DRAC and is able to carry out the response almost immediately. The main funding contract is then held between the DRA and MFA. Block grants take the funding authorisation away from the MFA and gives the DRA that responsibility.

Through these rules the DRA has developed significantly as an institution. Since its inception the DRA has gone from an entirely informal, negotiated governance system to very rapidly adopting and formalising processes and mechanisms. The creation of templates for response, both acute and protracted, give the DRA a more defined presence. As a template of action is applied to each new context, the template is adjusted for any insufficiencies and synthesis occurs to create a new template to be applied.

‘It was never laid out and planned in detail. We just got together and made it work, each time.’ (Interview with Save the Children personnel, May, 2019)

The provision of clearly defined pathways creates patterns of action that stabilise processes and create the unique character of the network. The more these templates are used, the more legitimised and entrenched they become. The early establishment, then entrenchment, of acute and protracted mechanisms are evidence of this. As the network has continued, flexibility has been reduced.

‘Sudden Onset Crises’ are evidence that the mechanisms may be too rigid. A crisis is ‘sudden onset’ when there is an acknowledged dormancy. While effects may occur quickly and subside, the causes are known and apparent in the time before an emergency situation is present. They are usually periodic and take the form of droughts or famines. Responding to them is necessary, yet more can be done to mitigate or prevent the crisis. This leaves much room for coordination, however periods of time where the crisis lies dormant meant neither the criteria of the acute or protracted mechanisms allow for a Joint Response to be established.

In terms of Institutional Outcomes, the DRA has managed to establish itself as an independent organisation with its unique rules and culture that is acknowledged internally and externally. This institutional ‘success’ represents a network level learning that results from establishing trust and legitimacy.

5.2.2. Process Outcomes

As stated in the results on ‘legitimacy’ the current development of the DRA has been done with significant emphasis on internal legitimacy of which inclusion is a significant factor. The ‘Dutch-polder model’ is mentioned by a majority of interviewees as the cultural inspiration for a consensus-based decision-making process that requires at least two-third majority consensus on all decisions. This way, it is the partners who drive changes, based on a consensus that provides internal legitimacy and MFA approval that provides external legitimacy, allowing a high degree of inclusion in theory. In practice however, the degree of inclusion is much more complicated.

‘(when participating in the DRA) you get more the more effort is put in. When one organisation (puts in effort) they get a lot, but everyone benefits a bit.’ (Interview with Cordaid personnel, June, 2019)

The degree of inclusion in the process is dependent on the effort individuals are able to put in, which is dependent on their knowledge of the process, satisfaction with the process and organisational capacities.

The method of building DRA processes, inductively through the establishment of precedent, was not conducive to a symmetrical knowledge base. Without established pathways it was unclear how to proceed in early JR’s, and in later JR’s there where a range of pathways for addressing the context of the JR. Transparency was not purposefully withheld; however, it did depend on involvement in the process. Without explicit written record, knowledge then depends primarily on word of mouth, risking inconsistency and incomplete information. Adequate knowledge of the DRA is necessary not just for involvement but also for who drives innovation, with those reporting a lack of knowledge accepting the processes offered to them, while those with knowledge where able to push for change.

Engagement of the process and hence the degree of inclusion is also determined by satisfaction and faith with the process. This typically results in more inclusion as many partners realise the value of MFA funding and the significance of the DRA for achieving this. Additionally, many are encouraged by the successes so far, with each JR representing successful acquisition of field funding goes towards saving lives. Regardless, some members choose not to get involved in working group processes, primarily due to doubt over the time/cost benefit. While collaborating in JR is useful to them, it can be that further collaboration is too time intensive without evident benefit.

This is also true for the capacity of each organisation, as different resource bases allow for different levels of investment into processes. Larger organisations are able to direct more of their individuals and teams time towards the DRA. The strategies utilised for interacting with the DRA by each organisation is different, with some having entire teams that deal partially with various DRA mechanisms and JRs. Some organisations dedicate a few individuals to the DRA. Regardless the larger organisations have greater capacity to invest time and work.

Third party involvement has been enhanced in the early stages of the network with an expansion of members. However, the last NGO to be included was SOS in 2017. Membership growth has slowed down and halted as the network sought to standardise and solidify, with entry barriers being erected. In particular is the need for FPA approval, a comprehensive process that limits the entry of smaller or less organised NGO's. Criteria has been set for entry with the justification that organising the processes of sixteen organisations requires consolidation. However as noted, there is a growing association with the DRA and access to MFA funds:

'Accessing MFA funds means accessing the DRA' (Interview with Cordaid personnel, May, 2019)

Without more information on who currently wants to join it is difficult to determine if this is an act of exclusion. More recently the establishment of an innovation process allows an entry point for more third-party actors, especially private organisations.

The shift from processes being formed by negotiation to being based off precedent marks a deliberate move towards efficiency. The duration and transaction costs of the process also benefit from the entrenchment of processes and mechanism, as established precedent reduces deliberation and effort of reaching consensus. Using 'ex-post satisfaction' (Klijn and Koppenjan, 2016;) it can be determined that there are a variety of views from participants on the substantive process and associated transaction costs. The balance of benefit and costs are constantly brought up in relation to the process of consensus building and the presence of Working groups. While the benefits are thought to exceed the benefits, doubt is displayed. 'Lean and mean' is mentioned abundantly as an aim, with implication that this is not quite achieved. The 'polder-model' is not necessarily conducive to this, however it is the introduction of working groups that can draw out some doubt amongst participants. The view that their activities can be extensive and intrusive to the 'step-by-step' method of developing mechanisms is one that is expressed but primarily as a minor concern.

When considering the breadth and depth of the DRA, Individuals report working on a 'need to know' basis, gathering relevant information for the sake of efficiency. The 'polder-model' of decision making that defines the DRA takes time, effort and trust. Having every decision legitimised by consensus promotes inclusion but reduces efficiency. To promote a balance, decision making mechanisms and processes are defined and refined, allowing procedure that speeds up collaboration. The distinction between 'Acute' and 'Protracted' crisis mechanisms reflect this, as does the creation of working groups to review and refine processes.

'We refer to it as the Dutch Polder Model... (we) try to give everyone an equal say, there's a lot of talking and deliberation. It takes time, sometimes a lot of time.' (Interview with Care Nederland personnel, May, 2019)

Putting up barriers as to where input may be given helps focus the network and frames responsibilities towards collaboration with the established mechanisms. However, not allowing further input also reduces the inclusivity when considering new individuals that join the network. The mechanisms have been established by others under different contexts. This can be a concern due to the high turnover present in the sector. 'Newcomers' to the network, dealing with a large amount of information in the form of precedent, processes, mechanisms and working groups, are much more likely to accept the way things work, especially if they are not aware of their ability to induce change. Inclusiveness of existing partners has been

priority. However, adding new members is now as source of contention as the network aims to consolidate and stabilise its processes and mechanisms.

In terms of Process Outcomes, the DRA has demonstrated significant network level learning, starting from a strong precedent of inclusion and working to refine processes to make them more efficient. The deliberation on processes has been significantly reduced by the established mechanisms listed in the previous section on Institutional Outcomes.

5.2.3. Content Outcomes

The establishment of the Dutch Relief Alliance represented a significant change in the Dutch humanitarian environment, one that had been sought after for a number of years by members of the larger NGO's operating in this environment. For them, the opportunity to gain stable institutional funding was a win-win solution that was achieved after years of relationship building that shared a common goal.

Perspectives have undoubtedly aligned and from early on in the process, the value of a stable source of institutional funding was supplemented from the realised value of collaboration. However, collaboration did not just start; it was built up deliberately. This is a consequence of autonomous and highly independent organisations that have not had to acknowledge interdependencies before. Through the forum of the DRA, partners were conscious not to take unilateral action and antagonise other partners, especially those that were initially hesitant or sceptical about the possibilities of collaborative responses. Trust-building was critical to the realisation of collaboration as an achievable mutual-goal.

While this has been achieved, it is at an incremental pace. Participation in Joint Responses is mutually-beneficial and enrichment is occurring, however it can often resemble coordination rather than collaboration. Initially JR's allowed funding for programmes that were geographically dispersed, so coordination rather than collaboration took the form of information sharing. The realisation of geographic collaboration, providing specialisation in the same areas, has been a significant breakthrough when possible and is more common in recent JR's. This has been a significant breakthrough that took time and effort to foster. Yet information sharing is the primary source of working together, especially in acute crises where time limits collaborative activities. Even in protracted crises, many responses are carried out by the individual NGO's with knowledge of one another.

Despite this apparent 'ceiling' on collaborative activities, the process has been of a high quality as openness and feedback throughout the assemblage allowed blockages to be overcome and solutions enriched by multiple perspectives attained. From the start of the process there has been an avoidance of go-alone strategies that benefit one organisation with clear common ground towards 'saving lives' (Interview with Save the Children personnel, May, 2019; Interview with Cordaid personnel, June, 2019; Interview with ZOA personnel, June, 2019). Perceptions of mutual benefit led to a spirit of compromise.

Goal consensus is still shared widely, especially with short-term goals of commissioning interventions. The DRA provides reliable funding and the potential for collaboration, especially a way of learning from other organisations. This is reflected in interviews;

'We could never go back to the old way of approaching a crisis in isolation' (Interview with Save the Children personnel, May, 2019)

This forms part of a consistent expression over the realised value of cooperation and coordination indicate highly successful institutional learning in the form of enduring relations and joint perceptions on this value. While prior to the DRA partners were aware of one another and maintained informal social relations, the creation of formal working relationship is another indicator of success.

Despite this, deviations are apparent between the longer-term goals of participants exist; the next step for collaboration has less unanimity. A current 'transition phase' heading towards a proposed 'DRA 2.0' is dividing perspectives as some partners see the current 'step-by-step' method of collaboration as ideal. 'Step-by-step' perspectives are informed by 'realities from the field' where collaborations depend on the capacities of field partners and specific nature of emergencies addressed. 'DRA 2.0' perspectives push towards more integration and a higher level of collaboration such as co-production. These perspectives are informed by the current success of the network, the need for humanitarian sector reform (enhances efficiency, ect.) and external pressures to see that reform. This includes an existential threat to the network, 'fearing' external evaluation that may fail to see the value of the network known to participants, resulting in the network losing its support momentum (Interview with Care Nederland personnel, June, 2019; Interview with Cordaid personnel, June, 2019)).

The 'DRA 2.0' model is pushing towards more apparent 'content outcomes' with a push towards encouraging innovation as an outcome. This is being achieved through the 'Innovation Working Group' which is supported by the Dutch Innovation Fund (DIF). Partners submit proposals for innovative trials in JR's which are funded through the DRA. By providing a forum where proposals may be explored and funded, the DRA is supporting enrichment of outcomes and enabling partners to experiment. This is highly significant in a field where innovation is hampered by risk-averse donors. It is encouraged for third-parties to be sought out and innovations are to be shared across the network.

Content Outcomes represent the most complicated of the network level outcomes, as the state of consensus in the network has undoubtedly increased, yet there is contemporary evidence of uncertainty, especially in regard to future developments.

5.2.4. Outcomes and the Success of the Dutch Relief Alliance

The DRA has been notably successful in promoting collaboration between NGO's where it had not existed before. The network established and subsequently evolved significantly in such a short period time, with significant institutional, substantial and content outcomes achieved. Rules and mechanism have been jointly formulated, joint perceptions and mutual benefit were realised at a very early stage and as a result blockages or disagreements are typically resolved quickly. Working relationships have been produced where they were not before, resulting in active networking amongst the individuals of the DRA. Each individuals' perceptions of other organisations activities have developed, which is a practice that has been successfully transferred to field operations as far as anecdotal evidence can prove.

From the coding conducted on interviews and texts, successful collaboration can also be determined on perceptions of trust building throughout processes. A decision to keep the concept of trust implicit in interview questions to determine whether the interviewees would emphasise its importance naturally was met with 'trust building' being the most frequent

code processed in interviews. In all thirteen interviews trust was brought up and its enhancement throughout the processes of the DRA was affirmed.

The current development of the DRA has been done with significant emphasis on balancing internal and external legitimacy. It is the partners who drive changes, based on a consensus that provides internal legitimacy and MFA approval that provides external legitimacy. Balancing these demands, satisfying both partners and the MFA has driven many changes in the network, from early pushes towards more effective fund distribution to clearer DRAC strategic direction. Network progression demonstrates the need to balance these outcomes, as the push towards ‘professionalisation’ under the DRA 2.0 model pushes the outcome of stabilisation that threaten the flexibility of the network to deal with dynamic context.

‘there’s often talk about a DRA 2.0 where we take our progress so far and try to consolidate, try to make it closer.’ (Interview with Care Nederland personnel, May, 2019)

The implication of these outcomes will be discussed in more depth in the ‘Discussion’ section. The remainder of the ‘results’ sections details how context, process, structure and management achieve these outcomes.

5.3. Context

The following sections; Context, Process, Network Structure and Network Management attempt to account for how successful outcomes were obtained. Context examined the factors surrounding the initiation of the network, starting with the actors. The DRA consists of sixteen organisations, partnered with the MFA in an official effort to improve efficacy. These organisations are listed below, with the relevant coding for interview references.

Table 11 - Organisations participating in the DRA network

| Organisation | Description |
|-----------------------|--|
| Care | Netherlands-Based INGO – Humanitarian/relief agency |
| Cordaid | Dutch INGO – Catholic humanitarian/relief agency |
| Dorcas | Dutch INGO – Christian humanitarian/relief agency |
| Kerk in Actie | Dutch INGO – Christian humanitarian/relief agency |
| Oxfam | Netherlands-Based INGO – Humanitarian/relief agency |
| Plan International | Netherlands-Based INGO – Child-focused humanitarian agency |
| Red een Kind | Dutch INGO – Child-focused Christian humanitarian agency |
| Save the Children | Netherlands-Based INGO – Child-focused humanitarian agency |
| SOS Kinderdorpen | Dutch INGO – Child-focused humanitarian agency |
| Stichting Vluchteling | Dutch INGO – Refugee-focused humanitarian agency |
| Terre des Hommes | Netherlands-Based INGO – Child-focused humanitarian agency |
| Tear | Netherlands-Based INGO – Christian Humanitarian/relief agency |
| War child | Netherlands-Based INGO – Child-focused humanitarian agency |
| War Trauma | Dutch INGO - Humanitarian health and psychosocial support agency |
| World Vision | Netherlands-Based INGO – Christian Humanitarian/relief agency |
| ZOA | Dutch INGO – Disaster relief agency |
| MoFA (MFA) | Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands |

The starting conditions of the DRA is born out of the contextual timeline previously mentioned. There are significant imbalances among some of the NGO's, with very few being Dutch-founded and others being International with presence in more than 120 nations. These organisations have a history mostly inclined to competition. While competition existed, the atmosphere of the humanitarian sector is one of facilitation. Of special consideration is the mobility of workers in the sector, often working with multiple 'competing' organisations throughout their career.

When NGO's engage with the Dutch Relief Alliance, they are interacting with each other and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This does not imply that entire organisations are interacting, rather delegations from each of the NGOs meet, discuss and then return to their organisations. These delegations consist primarily of those responsible for coordinating portfolios of funding, usually 'institutional' donors, and programme officers. What the DRA really consists of is just the tip of the iceberg of the humanitarian assemblage, meaning the actions and negotiations taking place in the DRA are heavily influenced a range of political and field conditions. The context of the field is also critical to the DRA as the funding acquired by partners is transferred directly to their field office with a set of conditions formulated in proposals. Yet the 'field office' is its own autonomous organisation working in a very specific context. Whereas every negotiation of the DRA occurs in the Netherlands, each Joint Response occurs in vastly different contexts with field offices of varying capacity, perspective and condition. The particular details of how the Dutch Relief Alliance operates across different 'levels' of processes is outlined further in the process section.

What is relevant for the context is that the participants of the DRA have to constantly be aware of the size and capacity of their operations in other countries. This is where power imbalances are most apparent as some organisations are much larger to the extent where they may have a larger capacity in every country compared to smaller organisations. While this may seem to be a significant barrier to collaboration, it was quickly overcome when the first JR in South Sudan split funds equally, setting a precedent for equality.

'The decision in South Sudan was to give each of the 12 partners in the Joint Response an equal amount. 12 million amongst 12 partners was 1 million each. This didn't reflect presence in the field... it was a proof of concept.' (Interview with Cordaid personnel, May, 2019)

Significant incentives to participate exist, with access to the DRA representing access to MFA funds. The significance of this cannot be understated in a context of funding uncertainty. In fact, the context of the DRA was steeped in a decade of previous attempts to attain MFA funds through collaboration (Interview with Cordaid personnel, May, 2019). This perceived value of participating, spurred by the unrealised potential of previous efforts, seems to have pushed consideration of other partners, the DRA as a whole network and the expectations of the MFA.

Therefore, we see that contextual surrounding the establishment of the DRA were both highly conducive to successful collaboration and at the same time presented significant barriers that are still being overcome today

5.3.1. Context and Outcomes

The establishment of relationships before the process was critical with the participants knowing each other and necessary levels of trust being established. This was not just between the partners themselves, but between the partners and the MFA. Previously failed attempts at the collaboration are seen as necessary demonstrations of commitment and initiative that legitimised the network as an ‘experiment’. This early establishment seems like a large risk; however, interviews indicate that most participants did not view it as such. Funding was promised and the DRA partners decided how it is used. There appeared to be a mutual understanding implied that if funding was not used properly then it would be withdrawn. The MFA believed in the ability and commitment of NGO’s to make collaboration work, perhaps due to the persistence of initiative previously displayed.

‘A lot goes on between (partners in the DRA) and with the (MFA). What we do together now is really a lot, but we did know of each other before. We never did work together so close.’ (Interview with Cordaid personnel, June, 2019)

Just like when the network started, each NGO still exists as a highly independent organisation. As such each organisation has its own goals, values and structures. The strategies of implementation in the field are distinctively ‘go-alone’ strategies precisely because each organisation’s operations are segregated by country. Funds can be collaboratively distributed, and plans can be made for facilitation, yet it is ultimately an autonomous section of the organisation carrying out the response. This is a barrier, but the significance of what the DRA has achieved in the face of this barrier should still not be diminished. Organisations in the Netherlands are collaborating where they have not before. Even if this may only resemble coordination in the field in some cases where conditions are right, this did not exist prior. From the perspective of the DRA partners their collaboration attempts, and successes are increasing in the field.

When talking about successful collaboration in the field, the push towards ‘localisation’ is part of a greater contextual movement that sees field offices receive more autonomy and authority. Localisation is becoming an emphasised priority for the DRA under its new 2018 – 2021 strategy, including a dedicated Working Group to explore new possibilities (Dutch Relief Alliance, 2017). However, at this time the level of collaboration in the field is dependent on the funding provided. When funding is divided and transferred to the field it becomes part of an organisation’s ‘portfolio’ of funding. For larger organisations that receive a large amount of funding from various sources such as different country offices, the amount received from the DRA is relatively small. For smaller and more Dutch-based organisations the opposite is true; the amount received from the DRA is a relatively larger amount of its portfolio, making them more sensitive to the suggestions of the DRA. The result is an observation that larger organisations in the field, whose funding comes from a multitude of sources, may not prioritise collaboration to the same extent as smaller organisations, who have a larger financial incentive from the DRA. In this sense it seems the contextual barriers of organisation’s capacity differences have not yet been overcome.

The importance of funding must be acknowledged, the DRA was able to proceed the way it did precisely because the MFA allowed it to do so. The role of the MFA is significant through their decision to give NGO partners considerable discretion in how funds were initially distributed and utilised. The funding security provided seems to be a critical variable determining the success of collaboration in this context, which may provide some significant implications. This willingness to ‘experiment’ in providing a new way of funding humanitarian intervention is the result of years of relationship building. Without the informal

recognition of discretionary funding decisions, it is unclear if the network would have established the same level of successful collaboration, especially in the same time frame. These findings may seem contradictory. Collaboration increases the efficiency of humanitarian response, which increases the value of that response. At the same time collaboration is not the first priority of these organisations, initiating responses to save lives is. A context of financial security is therefore important to induce successful collaboration.

5.4. Processes of the Dutch Relief Alliance

The following section provides overviews of DRA processes including features and thick descriptions. While the DR's processes are limited to activities in the Netherlands, as was the boundaries of this study defined by the network activities defined by the work that occurs at the 'headquarter' or 'office' level, it quickly becomes apparent that the DRA assemblage extends internationally. This assemblage is important to the form of network processes.

To give an overview of the assemblage it is simplest to start with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The MFA uses the development of Dutch NGO's as part of its three-pillar policy on humanitarian funding, with funding towards the ICRC and UN humanitarian programs constituting the other two pillars. The funding provided is tax-revenue, giving it a dual responsibility as both a political tool but also money to be accounted for. The MFA interacts primarily with the Dutch Relief Alliance Committee (DRAC), but still maintains relations with the individual NGOs.

The MFA gives feedback and is able to influence the decisions of the DRA through the inherent power relations of being the 'Donor' but is also receptive to feedback from DRA members on its expectations and priorities. Through the DRAC, the MFA provides funds through contracts which the DRAC then disperses amongst its members. However, there is an emphasis on this being 'more' than just the typical 'Donor-Recipient' relationship, with both DRA members and MFA personnel labelling the relationship a partnership. This first set of interactions represent the high-level coordination primarily between the DRAC and the MFA. The DRAC and the MFA maintain a close relationship, one characterised by much informal communication. Regular face-to-face meetings have been critical to establishing a set of expectations and perceptions on the activities of the DRA (Interview with Ministry of Foreign Affairs personnel, June, 2019).

Next, the participants of the network interact within the 'Alliance' structure. With the funding designated by the MFA, DRA partners engage in negotiations to determine (1) the nature of the humanitarian crisis and viability of a coordinated response, (2) who participates in a Joint Response (JR) to a humanitarian crisis and (3) what the funding provided will be used for.

Mechanisms have been established to address all three steps in a collaborative manner. Partners influence and make changes to mechanisms of the network through participation in working groups, where decision-making follows a 'Dutch-polder' model where decisions can only be approved through consensus. Who participates in a JR is also subject to a number of rules and processes, with restrictions based on objective criteria, subjective peer review and limitations on the number of JR's in which a single organisation can participate. All of these have been established through practice, then refined through relevant working groups

Each organisation's institutional structure and strategic aims are fundamental to how the DRA is approached. This gets more complicated by the fact that most partners are INGO's

with the Netherlands representing a national office of a larger organisation. The DRA was not established with CEOs directly involved, rather programme officers represent their organisation in the field to lead coordination efforts. This means they have to account for the strategic considerations of the DRA and their own organisation. The MFA is also in this category, with changes in ministerial positions having a large effect on the approach and expectations the ministry has to the network. Face-to-face meetings also characterise these processes. Working groups, Joint Response formulations, peer-reviews, committee meetings and every other decision-making process in the DRA is maintained through in-person negotiation, even as processes have become more refined and efficient.

The final set of interactions, what the funding provided will be used for, are not critically examined in this research as they fall out of the scope of the DRA yet are still extremely relevant. These interactions range from those in the organisations themselves and those that occur in the field where coordination is aimed to occur.

‘The job of people in the Netherlands is to set a framework of what they need to meet funding requirements’ (Interview with ZOA personnel, June, 2019)

A commitment to process has been consistent throughout the evolution of the network, potentially reflecting the nature of the humanitarian work conducted that demands consistency and reflexivity to changing circumstances. Processes are initiated by the demand of a joint response. Originally a proposal would be raised by any member and with enough momentum or consideration it could be put up for a vote that would initiate further processes. This process was refined with pre-set criteria that a crisis would be examined against to determine if an acute or protracted JR would be viable. If a crisis matches criteria, based on the impact of the disaster and organisations capacity to respond, then the JR would be put up to a vote with all members. If two-third majority is achieved then any organisation that wants to lead comes forward and is elected, then any organisation that wants to be involved joins in a process of proposal formulation. Organisations can only participate in a maximum of three JR’s at a time, a rule established to enhance consideration of an organisation’s capacities (Interview with Care Nederland personnel, May, 2019; Interview with Cordaid personnel, May, 2019). During the proposal process each NGO puts forward how they would respond to the crisis in a proposal. These are then judged by objective criteria, that judges the quality of the proposal in terms of impact and possibility, and then by subjective criteria, which is a peer-review system. The ‘rating’ of a proposal through this process then determines who ultimately participates and what proportion of the budget they receive, with the highest rated receiving the largest share and the lowest rated being removed from the JR or receiving the lowest share. During the JR there are regular ‘update’ meetings that check progress and share information, along with organising field visits. Most functions of the JR are left for the field however, leaving the boundaries of the DRA process. Instead DRA members can commit themselves to working groups, refining processes. This keeps the network active, as every year sees the commission and maintenance of JR’s and the continuation of working groups for enough individuals. Commissioning of Working Groups has seen the time and effort required of individuals in the DRAC and of the partner NGOs increase, becoming more of an obligation particularly to those of whom the DRA only constitutes a part of their responsibilities. (Interview with Save the Children personnel, May, 2019)

The creation of Working Groups, detailed in table 12 below, and in particular recent moves to create an ‘Innovation Working Group’, have shifted most of the DRA’s focus towards how collaboration can be enhanced in the field. This reflects a deepening commitment to

collaboration at a network level. Earlier stages of the process focused on setting up mechanisms and processes to effectively distribute funding. These processes were critical to the creation of the structure of the DRA and set up the nature of network management attempts. Having processes established has allowed for much more effective decision-making mechanisms which are now being refined incrementally rather than formulated outright. This is detailed more in the next results section on structure.

Table 12 - Working groups in the DRA

| Working Groups | Purpose |
|---|--|
| MEAV (Monitoring, Evaluation & Added Value) | Evaluation of Joint Responses |
| Localisation | Explore opportunities to empower field offices |
| Innovation | Oversees DRA Innovation Fund (DIF), commissions innovation proposals |
| Criteria | Evaluates mechanisms for funding distribution |
| Early Warning | Tracks new crises for potential Joint Responses |
| Lobby and Advocacy | Visibility towards external partners (MFA) |
| Finance | Evaluates DRA's financial structure |
| Legal | Evaluates DRA's legal structure |
| Communications | Evaluates DRA's communications strategies |

5.4.1. Contribution of Process to Outcomes

The DRA was initially an agreement for mutually beneficial gain for the partners, however it was the realisation of collaboration's benefits that deepened trust. The achievement of intermediate and short-term goals promoted further investment, not just from partners but from the MFA itself. Regular face-to-face meetings since the DRA's establishment also works to build this trust. The refinement of processes through working groups keeps this face-to-face dialogue consistent between joint responses. By collaborating on the network structure, the DRA gives partners an avenue to stay active and engaged (Interview with SOS Kinderdopen personnel, July, 2019).

The Processes of the DRA seem to contribute significantly to the success of the network. Characterised by a recognition of interdependence, an allowance for time to construct processes and plenty of opportunities for face-to-face dialogue, organisations have been able to construct their own solutions. The emphasis on face-to-face negotiations greatly facilitated process that led to win-win solutions and trust building. There was an obvious early benefit for every participant in a JR, while the distribution of that benefit is achieved through commitment towards consensus-based negotiations.

5.5. Network Structure

It was in the specific context detailed above that the DRA processes were established and sustained. The lack of prior collaborative governance networks led to no firm commitment on how processes would be carried out. The need for collaboration to attain MFA funding was critical in establishing early relationship building and processes, while achieving better field collaboration has defined later process development, such as the establishment of Working Groups. While interdependencies existed, organisations were independent enough that none had the authority to make decisions that would bind the others. As a result, consensus driven negotiations guided initial processes and further processes were guided by precedent. This resulted in a structure formed inductively through processes.

The contemporary DRA exhibits all the traits of a Network Administered Organisation as a distinct committee that facilitates interaction across the network. Made up of members elected from participating organisations, the committee oversees meetings, working groups and the drafting of collaborative strategic documents. Critically, the DRAC does not make substantial decisions, with partner consensus being the legitimising force.

‘The DRAC, it organises in a way. It keeps everything going and follows what partners want and what the (MFA) wants’ (Interview with Save the Children personnel, May, 2019)

It must be noted here that this was not a structure that was built from scratch, it was precedent that established ways of doing while incremental changes were implemented by the DRAC through its working groups. Informality and therefore flexibility, dominated the first JRs and was a key feature in the first years of operating, even after the DRA was established as a legal entity.

The NAO structure has become apparent, however in the DRA’s very initial stages a strong argument can be made that it was established as a Shared governance network with partners on equal authority negotiating with the MFA. A smaller group of the ‘main’ organisations were pushing towards collaborative action and joint contracts with the DRA. Within this group Goals were shallower, with the acquisition of funding and the initiation of a collaborative process leading to a very high goal consensus, ie. ‘just wanting to make the DRA work’ (Interview with ZOA personnel, June, 2019; Interview with Oxfam Novib personnel, May, 2019; Interview with Cordaid personnel, June, 2019). This structure undoubtedly evolved into a NAO configuration very quickly when the DRA was legally established. This structure allowed for more effective management of a larger number of participants, clearer framing of goals and a better allocation of network competencies. This can be seen in the difference between the first twelve member JR in South Sudan and any other later JR. Having the DRAC organise and formalise establish processes made for much more effective JR’s that gave all actors a chance to participate, then took into consideration competencies while still allowing measures of equality by setting rules that limited the number of JR’s organisations could participate in.

As the DRAC was established the DRA evolved into a NAO structure that incrementally centralised as processes and mechanisms became more established and required more oversight. These changes have seen an increasing centralisation of power, as the roles and functions of the DRAC have expanded from a mediator with the MFA to more active facilitation in decision making. These changes have incrementally impeded the flexibility of mechanisms and the ability for individual participants to change mechanisms with ‘precedent’, making the mechanisms more deliberate and therefore in the consideration of relevant working groups and the committee. This isn’t necessarily controversial as there is a widely held belief that the committee holds the authority to set the agenda of the DRA and frame its goals. It should be noted that this centralisation has been further enabled by authorisation from the MFA to have administrative fees, a leeway in its budget that go towards organising working groups, innovation proposals and other administrative expenses.

Therefore, the visible shift to a NAO structure can be explained as the need to coordinate more members and network level competencies as collaboration demands grew and subsequently, the need to manage more decentralised goal consensus. What is interesting about this evolution is that trust was enhanced through the transition from Shared governance to NAO governance configurations, with goal consensus clearly being the most critical factor

holding the network together. This unique way of structuring, through the processes of the network, can be seen as another critical factor to the success of the DRA network.

5.5.1. Contribution of Structure to Outcomes

Reflecting on the structure of the Dutch Relief Alliance it is undoubtable that the network is complex. It is easy to characterise it as a Complex Adaptive System as Cilliers (2001), Gerrits (2012) and Clarke (2013) would characterise, as it consists of very porous boundaries and multiple feedback loops with the external environment. Actors have self-organised to arrange their competencies and perceptions, initiating a structure which entrenches itself in practice.

It is because of these characteristics that a successful process of structuring based on self-organisation has been implemented, labelled by DRA partners as a ‘step-by-step’ approach (Interview with Cordaid personnel, May, 2019). The network governance characterised by ‘step-by-step’ decisions can be generalised as ‘inductive network governance’. This refers to primarily inductive methods of providing structure to the DRA that did not involve explicit attempts to structure interactions or commit partners to specific courses of action. This early establishment can be critical to explaining the character of the network, as a ‘step-by-step’ approach implies that contemporary processes and mechanisms weren’t planned or guaranteed.

This method of governing was initiated by the foundation of the DRA (before the legal creation of the DRA) as a Shared governance structure and its subsequent joint commissioning into a NAO governed structure that was essentially a ‘blank slate’. This has allowed the network to be void of overarching strategic opportunism and was therefore vital to the building of trust. It should be noted that this ‘step-by-step’ method by no means implies a lack of effort, in fact interviews point towards the opposite. This was largely due to feelings of ownership that led to meticulous commitment to facilitation efforts, outlined in the previous section on process.

While desires have been expressed for the DRA to have taken a more authoritative role, especially on minor decisions which are extended due to the consensus decision making process, this does not seem to have serious consideration within the network. Instead the emphasis is on the inclusion of voices to legitimise processes. Within such a flexible arrangement, there is a direct link between the level of inclusion and accessibility. This is outlined in greater detail within the ‘Process Outcomes’ section above, however it is mentioned here as a potential drawback of a structure which is otherwise conducive to successful collaboration. Accessibility here refers not just to the avenues for participation, but also transparency in regard to the knowledge of the processes, individuals and efforts associated with the network. This information is critical for an individual’s engagement with the network and the range of possibilities associated with their actions. Individuals associated with the network from its initiation are more aware of how flexible mechanisms can still be, knowing the set of actors to talk to if they want to try a new way of doing things. Individuals newer to the network are more likely to accept the mechanism as they are. This implies that this method of inductively governing may naturally stabilise over time unless persistent effort is invested in keeping it flexible and transparent.

5.6. Network Management

Results from this research confirm the significance of management while supporting more complex theories of facilitative leadership. Also observed is the importance of network structure in promoting these kinds of leadership.

Management and structure are intrinsically linked, just as structure and process are. At each stage of the DRA's evolving structure, management efforts have been adapted to facilitate and maintain processes, connecting the necessary actors for decision-making and providing forums for negotiation. Management efforts have been remarkably flexible, adapting to the needs of the network as it has become more established. Consensus-based decision making allows for organisations to make and carry out decisions leaving the DRAC, as the Network Administrative Organisation, to focus on facilitation (Interview with Save the Children personnel, May, 2019).

What can be seen from observations so far is the importance of individual initiative. As already stated, the DRA wasn't explicitly planned, rather it was the result of persistent effort of many individuals over time. This was the result of initiatives from several NGO members, not CEOs but programme and institutional funding officers.

'I'd worked and lived in Afghanistan... I knew who was there and who was here, there was a possibility through the DRA to pursue a joint response with the people we have... I approached the committee and we got it pushed through. JR's need people who are to see it through.' (Interview with Cordaid personnel, May, 2019)

The management of diverse actors is still achieved, through network management by the DRAC in the form of 'hands-on' meta-governance, providing facilitation. The DRAC puts much of its emphasis on providing participants opportunities through managerial strategies that arrange, connect and explore content. Processes aren't initiated by network managers; they're brought up by individuals in Working Groups, for example Joint Responses are initiated in the 'Early Warning' Working Group. Even initially JRs where the result of individuals initiatives. Once a JR is established, autonomy is granted to field offices and leadership is actively encouraged. One interviewee talked about her role as JR lead as providing a 'framework' negotiated in the DRA from which field officers could take their own initiative (Interview with Cordaid personnel, May, 2019).

As part of this facilitation process individuals are regularly connected at various stages of the JR at various levels of organisational authority. The DRAC does not just organise committee working group and MFA meetings, but also meetings between partner organisation CEOs. The arrangement of these meeting emphasises face-to-face meetings, with Den Haag set at the centre piece for a large majority of these meetings. This is due to most (but not all) NGO headquarters and the MFA being based in den Haag.

As an established way of processes became apparent, the DRAC adapted and formed working groups to make process refinement more explicit. Working groups as a management strategy maintains the consensus decision making process, however it gives the DRAC some implicit authority to frame the DRA's priorities and set agendas. This gives the DRAC does some discretionary power to set the direction and frame the progression of the DRA. This is primarily done through a display of intent in face-to-face meetings and the management of

the MFA-DRA relationship. Due to this it is reported that the composition of the DRAC has an impact on the network as a whole, with each committee having a distinct impact on how processes progressed (Interview with Ministry of Foreign Affairs personnel, June, 2019). Members of the committee have their own perspectives which results in a unique set of expectations at a network level with every new committee. Individual members take cues from the DRAC, realising the boundaries of their actions in the network. The DRAC is still an elected body however, and its authority is limited to what network partners expect and will accept.

The DRAC has formalised the process agreements established through consensus-based decision making. Additionally, entry rules have been formulated as have conditions for the initiation of a JR including who may join. However, it was not the DRAC that formulated these rules, rather relevant working groups negotiated and approved these rules. Rules for mediating conflicts have not been established as there has been no established precedent from which to establish a best practice. When conflicts have arrived, it is through the initiatives of individuals, who are part of the committee or not, that conflict resolution has been attained. Similarly, communication rules are based on the initiative and preference of individual partners. Of the rules that have been established, many are based on patterns of behaviour that were negotiated mutually between some or all members of the network.

5.6.1. Contribution of Management to Outcomes

This form of complex, emergent leadership can be emphasised as critical to the success of the DRA so far. Adaptive leadership resulting from individual members is coordinated by administrative leadership implemented in the working groups. The committees act as an arena for a large number of individuals to take initiative at redefining certain processes and criteria. At the same time, changes in the Working Groups tend to be incremental as most of the primary processes and mechanisms (acute, protracted) are well established (Interview with SOS Kinderdopen personnel, July, 2019). By providing working groups the DRAC is facilitating the exploration of content on a variety of topics while also arranging. Diverse actors are managed through facilitation, which entails less process involvement from managers and more responsibility from participants.

Leadership in the DRA occurs at multiple levels, shifting over time. Individual initiative and adaptive leadership were critical to the early success of the network, primarily due to a high goal consensus. As the network expanded and became more complex, administrative leadership was applied with the creation of working groups which framed processes and promoted action on certain areas. This resembles the enabling leadership proposed by Uhl-Bien, Marion and McKelvey (2007) which in practice resembles the concept of process catalysation (Mandell and Keast, 2009). The DRAC seeks to connect participants and frame their discussions in face-to-face dialogues. There is then room for initiative within working groups for relations to be formed and adaptations to processes to be made. The main drawback is the sprawl associated with so many working groups, it can be hard to maintain information symmetry in regard to progress and proposals. This follows from the discussion about inclusion and accessibility from the 'structure' and 'process outcomes' section of this discussion. Despite this an active DRAC promoting facilitation and initiative has promoted successful collaboration.

6. Discussion and Conclusion

The results gathered from this research have offered a description of what the Dutch Relief Alliance is. The structuralist approach taken defines the network through a combination of perspectives on different aspects that offer a comparative description based on the literatures of Collaborative Networks and Collaborative Emergency Management. The central focus of the research is the following question:

How is the DRA structured and managed and how does this influence collaboration and its outcomes in instances of decision making in emergencies over time?

This research sought to answer the above questions through the creation of a ‘moving picture’ that explores the development of the network through structural and managerial decisions. A method of governance composed of context, process, structure and management is then demonstrated to correlate with positive network outcomes. The primary characteristics can be described as a shared contextual demand, financial-incentive, consensus-based decision making, inductive governance and facilitative management.

Context is critical to understanding the formation and structures of any institution, especially one embedded in such a distinct landscape. The past three decades especially have seen International NGO’s going through significant changes. It was under this context that NGOs are seeking to find more effective ways of delivering aid, and national governments are seeking to enable this. With the traditional routes of donating to the Red Cross or UN not promising any change, there is recognition to be gained for national governments that can incubate humanitarian systems. With such independent and autonomous organisations, interdependencies are built around not just the desire to see better results in the field but the need to work together to gain MFA funding. Processes are self-organised with an emphasis on face-to-face negotiations and consensus-based decision making that allows actors to share information and perspectives. A culture of compromise was assisted by the appeal of achieving MFA funding, but over time the results from collaboration provided appeal in itself. Allowing these self-organised processes to determine the structure of the DRA allowed for a flexible and process-focused network that stayed committed to purposes at hand. Management of the network was also focused on promoting processes as they evolved, facilitating interactions to ensure consensus was reached.

It was through the combination of all variables that successful collaboration was achieved. These results have implications for the replicability of the network in other contexts, especially when considering how much each variable seems to rely on the other.

6.1. Relationships between the variables

The context was critical for the formulation of the first Joint Response. However, it was in the context of this first JR that the others commissioned after were formulated. Here a ‘round’ of network process can be determined as the initiation of a Joint Response, and the following decision-making processes of that JR. It was initially the case that each process round created a precedent that influenced future rounds of process. The available knowledge and the very relations in the network were changed, which points to a feedback between the context and the outcomes. As more JR’s were commissioned, the processes became ‘sticky’ or more resilient, being less changed and instead more established by each subsequent round of process. With the context of more JR’s the process is becoming more entrenched, making changes incremental.

The relationship between the independent variables is also complex and characterised by feedback. As stated before, process has established structure and in turn influences process. Likewise, as network's structure has changed, and network management has had an active role in facilitating this change. The networks structure also influences the way network management can be achieved.

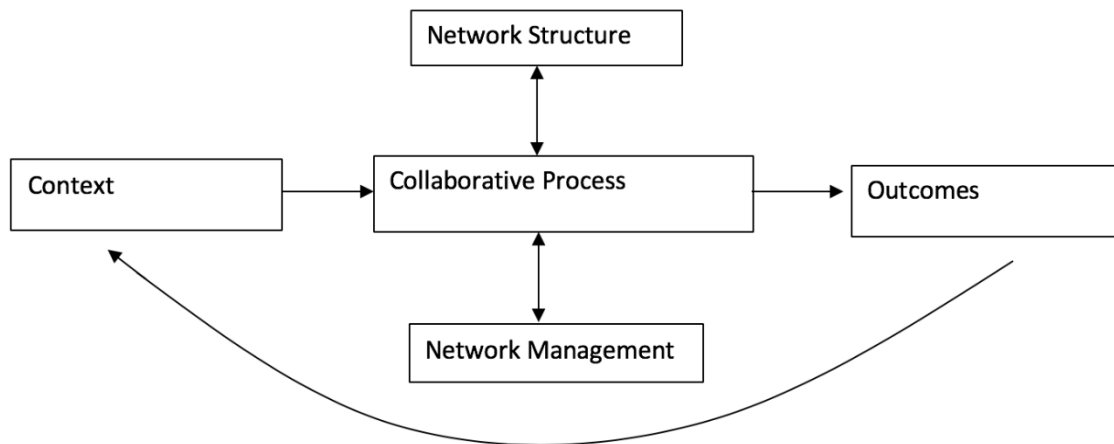


Figure 3 - Updated conceptualisation of DRA process

This finding is not ground-breaking or new, rather it builds upon strong consensus found in the literature, seen through Emerson, et al., (2010) in figure three. What this observation does confirm is the importance of taking context into consideration and allowing a network to 'build' itself step-by-step taking each input into account relative to every other input. This was how the Dutch Relief Alliances produced its outcomes, the overlap and feedback of these variables are all critical to the success of unique case study.

The results indicate that the synthesis maintained in the literature review between Klijn and Koppenjan (2015) and Provan and Kenis (2008) is validated; it is not just the outcomes that matter but how these outcomes are balanced. Outcomes are produced, but managers and networks as-a-whole can be aware of their production and their subsequent consequences. This rejects a linear progression of process and outcomes, rather outcomes are occurring simultaneously with processes.

6.2. Implications for Emergency Management Networks

The unique approach of the DRA complicates its suitability for replication. The inductive governance approach implies that the context in which a network is established is critical to the process and mechanisms which characterise it. If national governments are attempting to replicate the DRA, taking the established network ignores what made it successful. Instead the approach should be replicated, possibly establishing a network different from the DRA.

This approach involves providing an incentive for humanitarian organisations to initiate their own networks, most likely based on consensus decision making. Each organisation works in some degree in emergency response, implying that they are capable of achieving this task independently. A recognition of interdependence in emergency response does not come from a need to collaborate to achieve emergency response, but a desire. Therefore presenting a need to recognise of interdependency to achieve funding allows significant progress towards collaboration.

This finding is significant but may seem cynical; the initiation of collaboration in the humanitarian sector requires financial incentive. This, however, has benefits in promoting collaboration. This is especially true in early stages of the network where much of the relationship-building was centred around the management of funding distribution. The implications even extend into how this network could be researched as much of the collaboration resembles the common-pool resource management of Ostrom.

Strategies that plan the network too far in advance should also be avoided, instead focusing on negotiation processes that work. The success of this network has meant embracing a spirit of collaboration that is supported by shared authority, attitudes of compromise and clear win-win solutions.

While these perspectives may be used to enrich future research, the approach of this research has been exploratory, establishing observations of a phenomena not adequately documented in a booming literature. Comparative research would be a valuable step forward, however these networks are rare and only recently established.

6.2.1. The Future of the DRA, an End to ‘Inductive Network Governance’?

These events, and the DRA as it exists today imply significant network outcomes, however there is acknowledgement that the DRA is now in a ‘transition period’. The network has now established a specific set of processes which satisfy a certain level of outputs. These processes are remarkable for how quickly they were established, although this does not necessarily mean they are the best possible processes that could be established.

Multiple pathways, expectations and perceptions exist about the evolution of these outputs. Some suggest its current mode of operation is sufficient, others hope to see even greater integration. One movement which has got momentum is the push towards ‘professionalisation’ which aims to see the quality of the Joint Responses improve. Partners refer to this ideal of greater integration as ‘DRA 2.0’. At this current stage proposals are developed individually but with an awareness of one another, leaving room for initiative. It is largely left to the field offices to make collaboration work in their specific context. This new ‘DRA 2.0’ approach would see joint planning in responses that sees integration of efforts take a greater priority. Neither of these directions call back to the flexibility that previously defined the network. What could be risked here is innovation in network processes. It is already evident in the network that innovation is being directed towards the field, with Working Groups currently focusing on promoting innovation in JRs.

However, the findings of this research suggest that entrenchment of processes is occurring regardless, that this may be an inevitable side effect of the ‘inductive governance’ approach as flexibility and inclusion shifts towards more stability and efficiency due to the precedent effect that reiterates outcomes into context. This leaves questions about whether the DRAs structure is still flexible, if it has a capability to adapt to sudden change if necessary. Are the processes observed in this research the best available, or just those that have been settled on?

Within the current scope of the DRA it is not possible to answer these questions adequately. What can be observed is the network has developed remarkably so far and encouraged successful collaboration in its own unique way.

6.3. Limitations

Within this research must be the acknowledgement of the limitations from a single case study. However, this does not necessarily diminish the value of the research conducted. As a relatively new phenomena, network collaboration in the international emergency management field both under-established and quickly growing.

Without comparative studies on similar arrangements it is very dubious to make sound claims, or test the observations made in this research such as ‘inductive governance’. There were also limitations of scope and range, as one researcher could only get so much insight on an under-documented phenomenon that spans a large time frame, many different actors and different organisational and national boundaries.

6.4. Conclusion

The Dutch Relief Alliance provides a fascinating case study of a sector in transition. Attitudes and knowledge preceded action in regard to an established collaborative network, however it wasn't until the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs was convinced of supporting such a project that it became possible. The propositions offered from the literature have proved that the academic consensus has much to offer sector practice, although the success of one case study does not endorse jumps to proliferate this attempt. The DRA was established carefully, with individual effort and input in a specific context. While its successes are promising for the field of Emergency Management, the results of this research suggest it is not immediately replicable. Instead this research suggests that consideration of context is critical, as is the feedback between this context and the network itself. The result may seem counter-intuitive, as attempts to replicate the DRA may result in networks that only resemble it in intention. Regardless, the DRA has proven that sector collaboration is possible under the right conditions. While this has been beneficial in the Netherlands, more study would need to be conducted to evaluate the effect of the DRA on organisations in the field.

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