

CHAPTER 16

# Partnerships for change in local governments

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## ABSTRACT

*This chapter examines the various ways that local governments enter into partnerships in order to advance an organisational change agenda and to create new public value. Local governments have become more inclined to participate in partnerships in recent years. These partnerships could be with other local governments, with partners from regional or central government, and they can also be with organisations from the private sector (companies, associations and NGOs). The drive towards a local government characterized by partnerships makes new demands on how to manage and govern a local government. Local governments need to give up some of their decision-making power in order to enter into partnership arrangements. The chapter provides empirical illustrations of partnerships from a Danish perspective. Finally, the chapter ends by discussing a number of strategies available to local government managers as they contemplate even more partnerships in the future because of the climate crisis and the corona virus crisis.*

*Keywords: local government, partnerships, organisational change, public value, Denmark.*

## INTRODUCTION

Organisations must constantly find ways to adapt to new changes in their environment (Jacobsen, 2018). Partnerships have become a preferred way for many organisations to form if they encounter a challenge that the single organisation cannot solve alone (Bryson et al., 2015; Quélin et al., 2017). Often these problems are thought of as wicked problems, but within research on public organisations, the term wicked problems have been divided into different sub-categories (Alford & Head 2017). Suffice it to say, that partnerships are now attractive as an organisational form for new projects that has to establish a platform where collaboration can occur. Several reasons for entering into partnerships exist: Pragmatic reasons, economic reasons (cost-benefit analysis, and strategic reasons (Forrer, Key & Boyer 2014: 10–11). Pragmatic reasons are when decision-makers may have a connection to the other organisation and may discover that they would like to work together on a particular project. At economic cost-benefit analysis could be undertaken to find out which organisational form provides the optimal cost-benefit ratio. Williamson (1985) is well-known for arguing that it is minimising transaction costs that will decide in which organisational form a task is handled most efficiently. This presupposes that politicians and other decision-makers make rational decisions based on

clear evidence on which organisational form to choose. A strategic approach would focus on what kind of strategic advantage in the medium or long term there would be for an organisation to enter into a partnership. All this is not always how decisions are made. Organisations often follow an organisational fashion or do what is appropriate (Jacobsen & Thorsvik 2018). Managing public sector organisations is often seen as something special as the public dimension can differ from how managers in the private sector think (Jacobsen 2019). A partnership is in the middle of a purely public organisation and a purely private sector company.

This chapter examines three recent examples of how partnerships – once the partnership form is a reality – are organised (Greve, 2019). The cases are taken from the Danish public sector, so the context is the Danish welfare state system, but as we know now, partnerships are found in many countries around the world and are not exclusive to welfare states. The three cases are Copenhagen Street Lab (a smart city initiative), Realdania's (a Danish foundation) Collective Impact-initiative, and the Danish Wholegrain Partnership (a health partnership focusing on changing citizens' eating habits while also supporting the food industry).

The research question is: *How are partnerships organised in order to create public or shared value?* The chapter will primarily examine the organisational aspects of how to create partnerships that produce some kind of value for their stakeholders and the wider society.

The first section briefly reviews the recent discussions in the partnership literature. The section points out that although there are a number of related concepts (networks, partnerships, collaborative governance, hybrid organisations), they all focus on the same basic criteria of two or more organisations working together over time, sharing risks and resources, to achieve a result that they could not have achieved by themselves. The second section presents three cases of partnerships that will be examined more closely. The third section discusses lessons learned across the three cases. The fourth section ends with a short conclusion about organisational principles for partnerships.

## THE ORGANISATIONAL ASPECTS OF PARTNERSHIPS IN THEORY

How are partnerships organised in order to create public value? Within study of public organisations, the focus on partnerships has a long history (Bovaird, 2010). When the dominating trend in public management reform, New Public Management, was challenged it was by another governance paradigm named New Public Governance (Osborne, 2010). Osborne built on earlier work on

network governance, focusing on horizontal governance forms that were at one point known as “governance without government”. Network organisation is of course a well-known organisational form, often characterized as being between hierarchy and markets (Thompson et al., 1991). Looking at it from a governance paradigm view (Torfing et al., 2020), hierarchy was represented by the Traditional Public Administration built on principles from Max Weber, whereas market governance was known as New Public Management. The concept of NPM was coined by British scholar Christopher Hood to show the link between markets and management techniques from the private sector for use in the public sector.

Research on networks in the public sector benefitted from work done by the Dutch network school, epitomized by the scholars Erik-Hans Klijn and Joop Koppenjan and their book on *Governance Networks in the Public Sector* (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2015). American scholars used network governance also but started to employ a broader term known as Collaborative Governance which focused on both the act of collaboration, but also the collaborative governance regime, i.e., the wider rules and norms underpinning collaborative action (Donahue & Zeckhauser, 2011). The focus on organisations that work together closely and become intertwined organisationally has led to a recent interest in hybrid governance and hybridity in organisational forms. Although labelled as a recent interest, the focus on hybridity also has a long pedigree in discussions on public organisations (Quélin et al., 2017).

Partnerships are associated with all of these trends, and networks, collaborative governance, hybrid governance, New Public Governance are sometimes used interchangeably. But partnerships seem to be a bit more specific in terms of their organisational components. In this way, partnerships are often portrayed in concrete organisational ways: these are about how to organise and manage collaboration between organisations that aims to create public value (Moore, 1995).

In the literature, there are many ways to describe partnerships (Brinkerhoff & Brinkerhoff, 2011). Partnerships can be infrastructure partnerships (organisations that build large-scale infrastructure projects and depend often on private finance), service partnerships, development partnerships (often found in projects and the developing countries or in city development projects), innovation partnerships (centred around proposing or implementing a new invention) (Brogaard & Petersen, 2014), and finally policy partnerships (focusing on tackling a challenging policy problem). In this chapter, the focus will be on policy partnerships mainly questioning: how do organisations come together in a partnership organisation to address a serious policy challenge?

This is not to say that the other partnership forms are not important, just that that they have been examined many times elsewhere.

Policy partnerships can be understood as partnerships that aim to promote and implement a specific policy. If we follow the model proposed by Bryson and colleagues (2015), we can summarise the elements as: a) challenges, b) structures, c) management and processes, d) context and power relations, e) public value creation and accountability mechanisms, and feedback loops. The Bryson et.al-model was arrived at after Bryson et.al. reviewed several major partnership theoretical frameworks. The first part of the model examines “General antecedent conditions”. These include the institutional environment the partnership is in, and the reasons why a partnership was formed in the first place (see the introduction for references). The second part of the model focuses on “Initial conditions, drivers and linking mechanisms”. This includes any foundational document (like a partnership agreement) that establishes the conditions for working together. The fourth part concerns “the collaborative processes”, which has to do with trust and a shared understanding of the problem. The fourth part concerns “the collaborative structures”. These structures include the formal rules and the informal norms that guide action in the partnership. The fifth part is about leadership roles, but also the governance arrangements that the partnership set up, which may include a board of governance, and the technology used. The sixth element concerns power and the questions of conflicts and tensions with which partnerships have to deal. The seventh element is preoccupied with public value creation and accountability. All of these elements are important in order to understand how partnerships work. Another lesson from the literature is that the partnership form does not always guarantee success. In fact, far from it. Partnerships are filled with expectations and demands that cannot always be met. Partnerships are at risk of failure just as much as success, which Bryson et.al hastened to point out. Organising a partnership is therefore risky business in the sense that the anticipated results may be further away than you think.

The Bryson model stands as one of the most widely used models in the literature on partnerships and collaborative governance. Klijn and Koppenjan’s (2015) network model also attracts attention, but the Bryson model seems to be the one that incorporates most of the key insights from the partnership literature.

### THREE CASES OF PARTNERSHIP ORGANISATIONS

This section introduces three different cases of empirical partnerships in Denmark: Copenhagen Street Lab, Realdania’s Collective Impact and the Danish Wholegrain Partnership (see also descriptions in Danish in Greve 2019).

### COPENHAGEN STREET LAB

The first case concerns Copenhagen Street Lab. This was a smart city initiative launched by the City of Copenhagen (municipality) in order to get ahead in the smart city development sweeping the world. Copenhagen municipality established an organisation called Copenhagen Solutions Lab. This was supposed to be laboratory that experimented with various types of smart city solutions. One of the projects was called Copenhagen Street Lab. The project focused on introducing sensors and other technological solutions into the maintenance and development of the streets in the city of Copenhagen. One initiative was making a competitive tender for changing the street lights in the entire city. The bid was won by a French company, Citelum, which was then starting to be a partner with Copenhagen municipality. Another initiative was a close collaboration with the company Cisco, an American technology company. Copenhagen Street Lab and Cisco worked together on a data exchange, which would facilitate data sharing throughout the municipality on urban development matters. Another initiative was to put sensors in selected places to improve and optimize parking in central Copenhagen. Sensors were also put in dustbins so the dustbin collectors (trash can collectors) could know exactly which dustbins were full and so plan their route around it, making a more optimized trash collection.

The partnership between Copenhagen municipality and Cisco were agreed upon at the highest level. The start of the initiative sprang from a meeting that the mayor of Copenhagen had with a CEO from Cisco. The two organisations began to work together. They had a common challenge: how to develop a workable smart city concept. All over the world, organisations were eager to begin finding smart city solutions. Both organisations had something to bring to the table: Copenhagen brought its reputation as a well-known European capital known for its efforts to seek climate friendly solutions and with a population known for healthy and green living habits. Copenhagen has often been ranked high in statistics on best cities in which to live. But Copenhagen did not necessarily have an updated technological understanding. This is where Cisco had something to offer. As one of the leading tech companies in the world, Cisco was well-known for its technology solutions and its work within the smart city environment.

The two organisations formed “an innovation partnership”, a category within Danish legislation that enables partners from the public sector and the private sector to work together (Brogaard and Petersen 2014). In the typology used in this chapter, the partnership also qualifies as a policy partnership since they were trying to address a mutually wicked problem: how to cope with and develop smart city solutions for future use for citizens. For Copenhagen

municipality the partnership was about improving the life of its citizens and offering better services in the future.

For Cisco, it was also about gaining knowledge and experience with smart cities to use in enlarging Cisco's market share in the market for smart city solutions worldwide.

The partnership got into action-mode soon after the partnership agreement was signed. Copenhagen municipality was represented by Copenhagen Solutions Lab and its project on Copenhagen Street Lab. The two organisations focused on finding technological solutions to parking on the streets. The two organisations also agreed that the area in central Copenhagen around the town-hall square ("Rådhuspladsen") opposite the Tivoli gardens could be used as a space for experimenting with collection of data. Several prototypes of sensors were set to test in this area. Not all of the sensor-solutions worked. The people behind the sensor technology had forgotten to take into account the Danish autumn weather which has leaves falling from the trees and would sometimes cover the sensors so they could not work optimally. The sensors in the dustbins also caused some problems because the new routes the dustmen were assigned because of the input from the sensors did not match the work pace and work schedules that the dustmen were used to, and with which they could work flexibly. If one dustbin was filled on one part of the route, but others were not on the same route, the dustmen could not alter their route and still maintain the efficiency level like before.

The partners had agreed to a structure of the partnership where they would meet in a steering group and deal with the different issues that would arise during the collaboration. Smart city solutions were popping up in many places, and Cisco wanted to use the experience in Copenhagen in their wider marketing effort. This included the mayor for transportation and urban development delivering a statement of support for smart city solutions on Cisco's website. It also meant that civil servants would appear at technology expositions and talk about Copenhagen's experience with working on smart city solutions with Cisco.

The public value created was meant to be better and easier lives for citizens because of the smart city solutions. The smart city concept began to come under scrutiny in many parts of the world, and the main point of discussion was if it was too-technology-focused without considering the wider governance perspective. An American scholar and former city official in Boston wrote a book in 2019 on "the smart-enough city" (Green, 2019) where he argued that, yes cities could be smarter using technology, but that did not mean that cities had to embrace all the latest technological gadgets and inventions that engineers designed. There were limits to the smart city idea in practice.

The partnership with Cisco was not developed further as time went by. Cisco got interested in other cities. The sensor project for parking in central Copenhagen was abandoned again, and the sensors removed. The dustmen did not work from the sensors in the dustbin and returned to the way they worked before. The smart city project did not create the kind of value that was first anticipated. Copenhagen municipality continued to promote itself as a green and sustainable city, though, which culminated in hosting the C40 network of cities in Copenhagen in October 2019.

### REALDANIA'S COLLECTIVE IMPACT PROJECT

The second case is about Realdania's Collective Impact project. Realdania is a foundation in Denmark which has ample sums to invest in infrastructure and collaborative action. Realdania was originally based on providing mortgages for homeowners but was later turned from an association to a foundation when a change in the Danish housing legislation made that necessary. Today, Realdania is a heavyweight in Denmark regarding investment in social projects and housing projects. Realdania has traditionally supported building of new homes and buildings, but as their fortune grew, Realdania began to look for activities to invest in other than brick-and-mortar buildings. Activities should have a social or public good component if Realdania was to invest in them.

For many years, Realdania would receive applications for specific project ideas and then give money out in response to these individual applications. Like other foundations in recent times, Realdania changed their approach and began to develop their own programs with specific profiles of who they would fund in the future. One such program was called Collective Impact, and as the name implies, this is about supporting larger programs that tackle social and public problems that cannot be solved by organisation alone.

The term "Collective Impact" stems from an approach first proposed and later developed by two American scholars, Kania and Kramer (2011), who worked on partnership and collaboration issues. They first wrote an article in Harvard Business Review where they introduced the concept of "Collective Impact" and then patented it and developed their own company/organisation that promoted the Collective Impact approach.

When Realdania decided to become more professional in their approach to partnerships and collaborative action, they turned to the Collective Impact organisation in the U.S. to buy access to their concept and support structure. The advantages for Realdania were that they would not need to invent a whole new system to carry out their approach to social problem solving on a big scale in Denmark but could benefit from the pre-set concepts and approaches that the



Collective Impact organisation in the U.S. had developed. This was almost like a plug-and-play method ready to be implemented in a Danish social context.

Realdania's Collective Impact effort was used in a small selection of projects. One of the projects was about "the open landscape". An ambitious project of wanting to get farmers, environmentalists, house owners, local governments and companies around the same table to discuss and develop how to best make use of "the open landscape". This was fraught with difficulties as farmers have traditionally guarded their lands and their fields and been less inclined to provide access to other groups, not to mention the general public who like use the great outdoors. Environmentalists, on the other hand, have sought to promote land protection for a long time, and they want to save more of the farming land for other purposes, not least preservation. There is of course also a national and regional planning policy deciding what use should legally be done with the land. So, the approach of "An open landscape" project did not start from scratch, but was embedded in long-term struggles and controversies that are not easily solved overnight.

The approach that Realdania's Collective Impact project used was first and foremost a process perspective. It was about getting all the relevant stakeholders around the same table at first. Then a specially appointed project manager would work with the different stakeholders to shed light on the problems and different interests they brought with them. The whole group of stakeholders then had to select a small number of more specific sub-projects and targets that they wanted to address and on which to work.

The power relations are important to remember in this type of partnership. It was Realdania who provided the bulk of the funding for the project of "the open landscape". Therefore, the Realdania representatives also carried the most weight in the internal discussions among the stakeholders. Realdania funded many other projects too and Realdania is an important player in the social investment context in Denmark. Stakeholders listened carefully when Realdania issued an opinion or suggested a specific way forward.

It has been difficult to establish exactly what kind of public value was produced through this partnership. One reason for this is the time factor. The results of making a more "open landscape" is something that takes time. The process elements of getting the different stakeholders around the same table has taken up most of the time. Realdania has also had to negotiate the acceptance of their leading role without explicitly wanting to assume a too strong leading role in governing and managing the partnership. At the same time, Realdania does fund most of the activities, so this is another challenge when there is a dominating organisation within a partnership that is supposed to consist of different partners with different resources.

### THE DANISH WHOLEGRAIN PARTNERSHIP

The third case is the Danish Wholegrain Partnership. The Wholegrain Partnership began with a challenge; people in Denmark were not eating enough healthy food. This was a concern from the Food Agency within the Ministry of Agriculture and the NGO's of the Danish Cancer Society and the Danish Heart Society. The bread and bakery industry faced a problem at the same time. The sale of bread was declining, especially since new diets focused on other food products than bread, and this put the bread factories and companies, including bakers, in a situation where they had to do something to reverse the trend.

Organisations from three sectors: the public sector, the private sector (companies) and the civil society and NGO-sector came together to confront the problem. Together they came up with the idea of making a campaign for getting people to eat more wholegrain products as part of their daily food consumption. The idea of making wholegrain the centre of the campaign resonated with organisations from all three sectors.

The Food Agency within the Ministry of Agriculture was looking for new ways to make public awareness campaigns for a healthier diet. The private sector companies, especially the large bread companies, were eager to innovate and develop new products so they could please consumers again and at the same time helping them to have a healthier diet. The NGOs of the Danish Cancer Society and the Danish Heart Society were also eager to try out new ways of campaigning to get their health messages across in a new way.

Together, these particular organisations plus a few more, including the large retailers with supermarkets, created a new partnership – The Wholegrain Partnership. The idea was to promote the inclusion of wholegrain in various products. A number of consequences followed from this decision.

The first action was to establish a scientific knowledge base for how wholegrain improved a healthy living lifestyle. A report was commissioned from the Technical University of Denmark. This report provided the benchmark from which the partnership later worked. It was established that a daily intake of 75g of wholegrain was recommended. People in Denmark did not eat sufficient amounts of wholegrain per day so there was a challenge to be met. The second action was to establish a common label that would visually convey the message that was a product endorsed by the Wholegrain Partnership. The partnership came up with an orange logo that was put on products to demonstrate that the products had enough wholegrain in them. The third action was to make wholegrain an integrated part of the official Danish diet recommendations. The Food Agency was in charge of the official recommendations, and wholegrain was put on that list with a recommendation of 75g per day.

There were 31 organisations joining the partnership. These organisations ranged from very large, international bread and food companies like Nestlé and Schulstad to ordinary baker associations and smaller food companies. The big NGOs were present as mentioned – The Danish Cancer Society and the Danish Heart Association. The Danish Cancer Society hosted the secretariat of the partnership in the beginning, but the secretariat later moved on to Danish Industry, the large association organising most of Denmark’s larger companies.

The question was how to organise this new partnership? It was agreed to make a formal organisation with a board consisting of organisations from all three sectors. The board presented a strategy from which the secretariat would work. The strategy was conceived as a three-year strategy which would be up for renewal when the current one expired. The organisations in the partnership also agreed to pay a membership fee based on the size of the individual organisations. The partnership did not hire a CEO as such but employed a Head of Secretariat.

The secretariat was rather small with only a few employees. The secretariat relied a lot on goodwill and in-kind appearances from people in campaigns. For example, several well-known sport stars agreed to appear in advertising as an in-kind gesture.

The way the partnership worked was to promote many activities to get the message across to people as customers and citizens that wholegrain should be an integrated part of their daily diet. The partnership also used the media a lot and arranged an annual “wholegrain day” with activities such as distributing breakfast to train travellers. The partnership also encouraged companies to innovate and to come up with new types of products that included wholegrain. This challenge was accepted by some of the major companies, also international companies, who saw it as an opportunity to test new products on a stable market like the Danish market. More products came into the retail shops, so consumers had more wholegrain products to choose from.

The Wholegrain Partnership also kept track of awareness of the wholegrain logo. This figure has risen steadily throughout the years. The wholegrain logo is now recognized by 71% of Danish citizens in 2021. There are 1097 products in the marketplace carrying the logo.

Making a public or shared value contribution has been the aim of the Wholegrain Partnership, and to some degree the Wholegrain Partnership has succeeded in doing that. There are now many more wholegrain products in the retail supermarkets than when the Wholegrain Partnership began in 2008. More Danes than ever recognize the wholegrain logo. The consumption of wholegrain products has gone up so Danes now eat 82g of wholegrain per day. The coalition in the partnership has been maintained and there are still around 30 stakeholders in the partnership, including many well-known organisations

and companies. The experience of the Wholegrain Partnership demonstrates what coming together on a single idea (promoting wholegrain intake) can do for a partnership's value creation success.

**TABLE 16.1:** Comparison of three Danish partnerships

	<b>Copenhagen Street Lab</b>	<b>Realdania's Collective Impact</b>	<b>The Wholegrain Partnership</b>
<b>Type of partnership</b>	Innovation partnership	Policy partnership	Policy partnership
<b>Members</b>	Copenhagen Municipality plus private companies, including Cisco	Partnership between Realdania as a foundation and funder and local organisations	30+ organisations from the public, private and non-profit sector
<b>Purpose</b>	Implementing "smart city" solutions in Copenhagen	Using the "collective impact" approach on wicked problems in Denmark, including sharing the "open landscape" between farmers and outdoor enthusiasts	Making citizens consume food with wholegrain to be healthier and boost sales of wholegrain products
<b>Development</b>	Street Lab solutions did not live up to expectations and the partnership with Cisco stopped	Some progress, but also difficult to estimate public value created before a lengthy time has passed	Meeting key objective on getting citizens to adopt a healthier diet while developing new products for the market

## LESSONS ACROSS THE PARTNERSHIPS

What lessons can be drawn on how partnerships are organised based on the three empirical cases of partnerships in Denmark? This is the focus of this section. Theoretically, this section will make use of the model that John Bryson and colleagues have been working on and have presented in various publications.

First, a clear challenge is needed for the partnership to get going. In the Copenhagen municipality it was the pressure to come up with smart city solutions. In Realdania's collective impact was the need for the foundation to make social investments in new areas rather than brick-and-mortar buildings. In the Wholegrain Partnership it was to improve the national health diet of the citizens and respond to a downturn in the market for bread products seen from the private sector side. It could be discussed how pressing these challenges are, but they were all challenges that several organisations felt the need to take up and to form a partnership around. There is an institutionalized pressure to

come up with some kind of action, and each of the organisations involved felt that they couldn't manage the challenge all by themselves.

Second, an active management strategy is essential to keep the stakeholders in the partnerships engaged. Stakeholder organisations join partnerships because they want to see them move forward and to create results and public and shared value. Therefore, the partnership managers, often the head of secretariat, need to come up with activities that stakeholders can unify around, and which can help push the whole partnership forward.

In the cases above, the heads of secretariats did not have much formal power as such, since that formal power rested with the boards, but they could take initiatives, like proposing to use sensors in new smart city solutions for parking spaces, organising "the whole grain annual day", and congregate stakeholders for meetings on "the open landscape". The heads of secretariat have to be innovative and keep the stakeholders focussed on the course of action all the time.

Third, although the concept of partnership may convey a more informal type of organisation, all of the three cases were actually formalised partnerships with a relatively clear organisational structure. Copenhagen Street Lab was part of Copenhagen Solutions Lab, a laboratory for social innovation within Copenhagen municipality. It was organised as an innovation partnership according to Danish legislation. The contact group between the municipality and the private sector companies consisted of the mayor's office and the higher echelons of a private sector tech company. The board set out strategies to follow. Most compellingly, this was seen in the Wholegrain Partnership case, where there was a three-year rolling strategy. The strategy was open to renewal at the end of the period, but there was also the possibility that the partnership would be dissolved if the public value had been achieved (although this has not happened yet). All of the partnerships had introduced a relatively clear governance structure which suggests a link between the board, the management (the heads of secretariats), and the people working on the actual mutual partnership activities on the ground. The partnerships were also data-driven to a certain extent. Copenhagen Street Lab started out by focusing on data in the street lightning public tender and later on in the project introducing sensors in smart city solutions. Unfortunately, the sensors did not work as planned, and the data were not collected using a sufficiently high standard in order to be able to solve the parking problems in central Copenhagen. Both Realdania's Collective Impact and the Wholegrain Partnerships worked strategically and consistently with collecting data about their performance. Realdania wanted to use the data to monitor progress in their projects along with the recommendations from the Collective Impact concept and toolbox from the U.S. organisation where they were a member. The Wholegrain Partnership used data systematically to track

how many people recognized the orange wholegrain logo, how many wholegrain products were sold, and how much of wholegrain products people consumed.

Fourth, the power relations need to be taken seriously in the partnerships. Even though the term partnership might envisage an organisation where stakeholders share resources and risks, it is crucial to acknowledge that the different stakeholders enter with very different levels of resources. In the Copenhagen Street Lab case, both the key actors had some leverage they bring to the table. Copenhagen municipality is a comparatively large municipality in the capital of Denmark, and the city itself has gained a reputation for being eager to try out new sustainable solutions and promote green growth. These are qualities that attracted companies like Cisco. But the city lacked the latest technological knowledge to build smart cities, which is what Citelum and Cisco could offer. Their power base was their technical know-how, and the experience and access to markets for smart city solutions around the globe. So, both the public sector organisation and the private sector organisation had a power base to bring to the partnership. In Realdania's case, Realdania was the biggest partner in the project on "the open landscape". It was Realdania that had initiated the partnership, and it was Realdania that funded the partnership and made sure that the infrastructure was working. Realdania's infrastructure was based on the American organisation that patented the concept of Collective Impact, and Realdania had paid a fee to be able to draw upon the Collective Impact experience from the U.S. In the case of the Wholegrain Partnership, the bigger organisations probably had the most impact judging by their place on the board. But it was not only one sector that was the most powerful. Representative organisations from all three sectors were thought to be equally powerful.

The Food Agency within the Ministry of Agriculture had the authority of the state behind it and was the one organisation who issued the official health recommendations. One of these recommendations involved the intake of wholegrain, so in that respect all the organisations were dependent on the authority of the Food Agency. The big bread companies and the big retail chains, like COOP, were also represented on the board. These represented "big business" and had the power resources of both producing and distributing the products of wholegrain to the customers. Without them, customers could not access products containing wholegrain. The NGO's represented many of the people who believed in healthy living, both from a nutrition point of view, but also from a personal health point of view. Two of the most powerful NGOs were the Danish Cancer Society and the Danish Heart Society who loaned their resources and credibility to the partnership.

Fifth, many of partnership cases were able to exhibit results that could lead to public or shared value creation. Copenhagen Street Lab demonstrated that it

wanted to pursue smart city solutions. It succeeded with better street lighting by entering into a partnership with the French firm Citelum, but it did not bring any lasting smart city changes through the Cisco-partnership since the sensors project failed to deliver the expected results. Finding a parking space in central Copenhagen is still as difficult as before the smart city project was started. Probably the case where the most public and shared value was created was the Wholegrain Partnership, which aimed for healthier eating habits and which succeeded to a certain extent in making Danes eat more wholegrain products and recognise the wholegrain logo to use in their shopping routines.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter has examined the organisational phenomenon of policy partnerships. Policy partnerships have sprung up in recent years as governments continue to tackle more or less wicked problems that they cannot solve alone. Partnerships do not necessarily replace traditional hierarchal organisations, but they may supplement them. Therefore, it is important to know how partnerships function and what stakeholders can do to make them work.

Three recent empirical cases of partnerships from Denmark have been examined. The cases were: Copenhagen Street Lab within Copenhagen municipality, Realdania's Collective Impact project and its partnership for creating "an open landscape" with many different stakeholders, and finally, the Danish Wholegrain Partnership, a partnership suited to foster a healthier diet among Danes while also securing new business opportunities and making new information channels available to NGOS like the Danish Cancer Society and the Danish Heart Society.

All of these partnerships required hard work to make them function, and stakeholders needed to be aligned and to recognize that they each come to the table with different resources, some more than others. Power-relations are important to recognize in a partnership, but this is often overlooked in some of the literature that is more focused on the benefits of partnerships.

Perhaps the most important lesson is that organisations know how to reach out to other organisations when they face a challenge they cannot manage on their own. As the wicked problems seem to be more urgent now with the climate crisis, the corona virus crisis and the shadow of an impending economic crisis, more organisations are prone to enter into partnerships. Learning from previous partnerships can be a help here.

What is the outlook for future research in this field? As Jacobsen (2019) has shown, there is a fascination with what is public and what is private, and any organisational form is that is a kind of hybrid like a partnership is bound

to attract attention in today's turbulent world. One of the key challenges is that the development of partnerships is often portrayed in case studies (like the ones above), but without any shared theoretical perspective. Therefore, if more researchers were to draw inspiration from some of the same models, like the Bryson et al. model described above, building up a shared knowledge base would be beneficial to the research community. Furthermore, research in partnerships is being applied to topical themes like digital transformation and climate change, which will provide a fertile ground for many types of empirical studies in the future. Finally, as the world gets more complex and collaboration becomes the norm, the partnership form may become the default organisational model in many turbulent policy areas and may therefore not be seen only as an alternative to the market and the bureaucracy but may be recognized fully on its own terms.

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### EMPIRICAL CASES

Copenhagen Solutions Lab: [www.cphsolutionslab.dk](http://www.cphsolutionslab.dk)

Realdania's Collective Impact project: [www.collectiveimpact.dk](http://www.collectiveimpact.dk)

The Danish Wholegrain Partnerships: [www.fuldkorn.dk](http://www.fuldkorn.dk)