Self-organization and the role of government: how and why does self-organization evolves in the shadow of hierarchy?

José Nederhand, Victor Bekkers & William Voorberg

Paper to be presented at IRSPM 2014 Conference

Ottawa, 9-11 April 2014

Dept. of Public Administration
P.O. Box 1738
NL 3000 DR Rotterdam
Erasmus University Rotterdam
{Nederhand, Bekkers, Voorberg}@fsw.eur.nl

1 Introduction

The public sector in general and the role of government in particular has recently been subject of a fundamental discussion. Policy makers have embraced the idea that communities are an interesting alternative to take over the services provided by the welfare state. For example, the British prime minister David Cameron suggested that in order to resolve contemporary social issues the activation of the 'Big Society' is needed. To his consideration, local communities need to have more administrative capabilities and people need to be encouraged to play an active role in these communities in order to set up co-operations, charities, and social enterprises, that deal with the local and concrete needs which citizens encounter (The Guardian, 2011). The root idea is that new public services can be realized, if governments try to make use of the self-organizing capacities of citizens and grass-roots organizations. However, our empirical understanding about how self-organization takes place in the public sector is relatively scarce (Boonstra & Boelens, 2011). Inspired by Bušev (1994) and Comfort (1994), self-organization can be defined as a collective process of communication, choice, and mutual adjustment of behavior resulting in the emergence of ordered structures. Some authors argue that characteristic for self-organization is the absence of any governmental involvement in the form of external control (Boonstra & Boelens, 2011; Cilliers, 1998; Goldstein, 1999; Heylighen, 2001). However, the question may be raised considering how realistic the absence of any governmental involvement is, especially when looking at policy sectors in which governmental organizations have traditionally played important roles, such as the welfare sector. We expect that it is unlikely that in processes of self-organization the role of the governmental actors has become obsolete, when we take into account the (legal, budgetary and knowledge) resources that governments possess which still enable them to exercise influence. Hence, we expect that the position and role of governments co-evolve with these self-organizing practices. This implies that governance and self-governance are not exclusive and contrasting developments, but developments that influence each other in a specific local context. As such government is just one of many actors in a self-organizing network of actors (Goldstein, 1999). Given the discussion about the 'hollow state', to which some scholars refer in terms of the emergence of 'networks in the shadow of hierarchies'(e.g. Scharpf, 1994; Milward & Provan, 2000), we are triggered by the question, if and how self-organization takes place in the shadow of hierarch; or, how do self-organization and government interventions co-evolve. Hence, our research question is: *how the interaction between a retreating government and citizens and citizen groups that are involved in a process of self-organization, can be*

understood and how these interactions influence the process and output of self-organization in the welfare sector and why this is the case?

In order to answer this question some steps have to be followed. First, in section two we address the concept of and conditions for self-organization. Furthermore, in section three we address how self-organization affects the role of government and vice versa. In particular we look at the discussion about networks in the shadow of hierarchies as well as meta-governance. Based on these theoretical explorations, we will develop a research strategy in section four that helps us to empirically address our research question. We will conduct a comparative case study (section five) which is focused on the creation of two Dutch community enterprises. These enterprises are based on the idea of self-organization in order to produce welfare services in neighborhoods that replace services that were formally produced by professional welfare organizations and funded by local governments. Based on this comparative case study analysis, some conclusions will be presented in the sixth section.

2 Self-organization: concept and conditions

In this section we will present some theoretical insights that are related to a) the concept of self-organization, b) the conditions that stimulate self-organizations and c) the role of government in self-organizing processes. The synthesis of these insights helps us to formulate a conceptual framework that can be used to empirically answer our research question.

2.1 The concept of self-organization

Self-organization refers to the spontaneous emergence of order in natural and physical systems (Kauffman, 1993; De Wolf & Holvoet, 2005). The concept emerged in the natural sciences, in order to explain the emergence of ordered structures in rather chaotic physical processes, such as the autonomous formation of galaxies and stars (Prigogine & Stengers, 1984; Bušev, 1994). When applied to the social sciences two strands can be distinguished. First, a normative strand which refers to self-organization as normative or ideological concept which embraces the idea that social and economic challenges should be addressed at the level of (local) communities. This is based on the idea that people are inherently communal rather than individualistic (Etzioni, 1995; Pierre & Peters, 2000).

The second, more functional strand looks at self-organization as a governance concept. In the public administration discipline, it broadly refers to the adaption of behavior of non-governmental actors and the emergence of collective action without pressure from the government. This is also known as self-governance (Pierre & Peters, 2000; Fenger & Bekkers, 2007). Boonstra and Boelens (2011) define self-organization in the context of spatial planning as: initiatives that originate in civil society from autonomous community-based networks of citizens, who are part of the urban system but independent of government procedures. Self-organization can be understood as a collective process of communication, choice, and mutual adjustment in behavior, which result in the emergence of ordered structures, based on a shared goal among members of a given system (Comfort, 1994: 397-8; Bušev, 1994). Out of these spontaneous local interactions new governance structures emerge and are maintained, which are not imposed by one single actor (Van Meerkerk et al., 2012). They are shaped by a multitude of complex and non-linear interactions between multiple local actors which can be conceptualized as an emergent and co-evolving pattern (Cilliers, 1998; Goldstein, 1999; Heylighen, 2001; Jantsch, 1980).

2.2   Conditions for self-organization

Several conditions facilitate self-organization. First, self-organization requires an incentive which has a disruptive nature, because it fundamentally puts existing and grown practices under pressure (Bootsma & Lechner, 2002; Van Meerkerk et al, 2012). Such an incentive can also be understood as a triggering or focussing event (Cobb & Elder, 1972; Birkland, 1998) that put self-organization as an appropriate approach for a specific challenge on the political and societal agenda. However, in order to deal with this triggering event in a creative and innovative way, actors have to cooperate with each other which requires an open attitude, based on mutual trust (Van Meerkerk et al. 2012; Ostrom, 1999).

Therefore the second condition refers to the presence or development of trustworthy relationships. The social capital that is present within specific constellation may stimulate cooperation (Pierre & Peters, 2000; Putnam, 2000; Huygen et al. 2012); also because it refers to a sense of belonging (Huygen, et al. , 2012). Social capital can be defined as features of a group or community – networks, norms and trust – that enable participants to act together more effectively (Putnam, 1995). Hence, the local and social fabric of a community can therefore act as an infrastructure for self-organization (Nicholls, 2009; Van der Zwaard & Specht, 2013).

The third condition refers to the necessary exchange and interplay of ideas, information and experiences and the focus that is needed to exchange them. Comfort (1994) showed that actors with

recurrent opportunities for interaction were more likely to adjust their behavior mutually in order to develop a shared goal. However, if the number of actors and the number of interactions among those actors increases too much, then the self-organization process is frustrated, because the chance of ever-poorer resolutions to shared problems is increased (Kauffman, 1993; Uzzi & Spiro, 2005). Hence, a focus on the development of a shared and clear goal that structures the evolving interactions stimulates the quality of the learning process that takes places and as well as the ability to make choices (Bootsma & Lechner, 2002; Comfort, 1994; Ostrom, 1999; Huygen et al., 2012).

The fourth condition refers to the geography of the self-organization process, which is the physical and virtual location of the interaction (the locus). If the information that is available in the community is located at different sites and organizations, there is a danger that it will not be brought together (Comfort, 1994). Comfort (1994) argues that in order to take more informed and comprehensive decisions, it is important that a shared and evolving (digital) knowledge base, open communication channels and clear feedback mechanisms emerge. Especially ICT, the internet and social media networks may help to share the necessary knowledge, information, experience and ideas, given the connective capacities of these technologies which facilitate process of (micro) mobilization, thereby creation a virtual spot of interaction (Bekkers, 2004).

The fifth condition is the importance of boundary spanning activities of key individuals to make connections which requires forms of linking leadership that facilitates and protects the free flows of ideas, people and resources (Van Meerkerk et al, 2012; Bekkers et al, 2011). Boundary spanning activities do not only relate to linking people, ideas and resources. It also refers to activities that help to protect embryonic self-organizing activities in terms of acquiring for instance political and financial support. In doing it is important that self-organizing activities can take place in rather protected 'safe havens' (Van Buuren & Lohrbach, 2009; Bekkers et al, 2011).

The sixth condition is the mutual adaptation of actor roles Especially when self-organization takes places in a policy sector, such as welfare, in which government traditionally plaid a dominant role, it requires that existing practices should be altered (Kaufmann, 1993; Comfort, 1994; Johnson, 2001; Van Meerkerk et al, 2012). Hence, it is important that the involved actors have sufficient freedom and flexibility to adjust their behavior in order to deal with the new challenges, positions and playing rules (Comfort, 1994). Moreover, actors should have enough space for autonomous development without external authorities countermanding them (Ostrom, 1999). Furthermore, it also important to see, to what extent the existing legal framework is able to deal with these changing roles or that new legislation is required (Van Meerkerk et al, 2012).

3 Self-organization in the context of meta-governance

During the last decades we observe a shift from government towards governance. More horizontal, network oriented forms of steering have emerged in which governments rely on a plurality of interdependent (non-state) actors in the design and production of services (Newman, 2001; Rhodes, 1997). Service production by self-organizing networks or communities are an example of these new governance arrangements. Although self-organizing networks might imply the absence of governmental involvement, it can be argued that the role of government is not obsolete. Two theoretical positions can be discerned.

The first position links self-organization to *meta-governance* (Kooiman,1999; Sørensen 2006). Meta-governance is 'concerned with how political authorities – as meta governor - are engaged in promoting and guiding the self-organization of governance systems through rules, organizational knowledge, institutional tactics and other political strategies' (Jessop, 1997:574; 1998; Whitehead, 2003:7). Authors differ about how governments arrange meta-governance. Whitehead (2002) distinguished three types of government involvement: 1) to develop strategic frameworks and providing all kinds of guidance notes 2) to monitor and to assess the output and outcomes of the process of self-organization and 3) to discipline the process of self-organizing by trying to 'scare' (in terms of fear) the actors that participate in this process. Sørensen (2006) makes a distinction between two broad categories of meta-governance: hands off and hands on meta-governance. Hands-off meta-governance, implying that the government only indirectly influences the political, financial, and organizational context in which self-governance takes place. To Sørensen (2006) practices of hands-off meta-governance imply primarily practices of framing and storytelling (in terms of 'management by speech') to create a common discursive context. Actors are seduced to refer and adapt this context that helps making sense: it assists to interlock behaviors in such a way that diffuse worries move to more actionable beliefs (Weick, 1969; Hajer & Laws, 2006). Hands-on meta-governance implies direct involvement of governments (Sørensen, 2006). This can involve rather 'neutral' ways in which governments only seek to assist and facilitate self-organization, thereby offering support and assistance, while at the same time they seek to achieve their own objectives. This support can, for instance, imply providing relevant information, providing a meeting place or providing financial support to have a secretariat or setting up a website. In doing so, access to vital resources is being ensured (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). Another form of hands-on meta-governance that Sørensen (2006) distinguishes, is hands-on participation, which implies that the meta-

governor can seek to obtain influence on the outcome of the self-organization process through direct participation.

Besides these previous types, a third type of meta-governance can be distinguished. Meta-governance can also be perceived as a form of institutional design (Goodin, 1998). In this type governmental action is focused on the allocation of the positions of relevant actors, the relations between them (stipulating interdependency) and the formulation of relevant playing rules, thereby creating a level playing field and safeguarding possible 'weak interests' and 'values' to be respected (Fenger & Bekkers, 2007). In doing so the conditions are created which may foster the necessary exchange, negotiation and cooperation between the involved actors in order to develop common policy practices or public services, while at the same government do not intend to directly influence the outcomes of this self-organization process.

The second theoretical position links self-organization – as a form of more horizontal and networked governance – to and the traditional or new (meta-) role that governments have occupied (Jessop, 1998). In this new (meta-) role governmental organizations still use their state power, but in a different way than before. Scharpf (1994) addressed this changed steering role as 'networked governance in the shadow of hierarchy'. The idea is that hierarchical coordination mechanisms are embedded in non-hierarchical structures. Direct state intervention is perceived a 'sword of Damocles' that governments may wield in order to induce self-organization and self-regulation. The threat of hierarchical intervention through imposing binding rules can be seen as way of incentive steering (see also Whiteheads, 2002 notion of the use of fear) to change the cost-benefit calculation of the involved actors in favor of voluntary co-operation between non-state actors in the provision or rules, collective goods and public services (Boons, 2008; Scharpf, 1997; Börzel & Risse, 2010). Milward & Provan (2003) argue that this shadow becomes more threatening if governments, for example, control the external funding of non-state actors. The larger the capacity of governmental organizations for hierarchical policy-making, the stronger the shadow of hierarchy is which makes non-state actors more inclined to co-operate (Börzel & Risse, 2010). A rather low capacity for hierarchical policy making implies that governments have to rely heavier on communicative and cooperative models of governance to govern complex social systems, thereby allowing other actors to articulate their preferences more explicitly in the policy making process (Bang, 2004: Durant & Barber, 2001). However, the sheer lack of the shadow of hierarchy, in terms of the absence of an external authority which might result in 'the risk of anarchy', can also provide an incentive for non-state actors to engage in self-organization (Börzel & Risse,

2010:121). A weak shadow of hierarchy is often the case in policy sectors with a 'limited statehood', in which governments lack the ability to implement and/or to enforce rules and decisions (Börzel & Risse, 2010). Hence, we expect that the degree in which governments are able to create a shadow of hierarchy would also influence the process of self-organizing.

4   Research strategy

In this section we translate our theoretical notions into a number of expectations. These expectations will be empirically researched by conducting a comparative case study. The first set of expectations refers to the nature of self-organization. We expect that self-organization refers to a collective process of communication, choice and mutual adjustment that is based on the exploration of common goal. The development of such a common goal helps that a kind of an structure or order (division of labor, set of roles) emerges that is needed in order to accomplish this goal in terms of concrete results and activities. The second set of expectations refers to a set of factors that can be considered as necessary conditions that stimulate self-organization. We expect that the presence of a triggering event helps to facilitate self-organization, because it creates a common challenge (e.g. preventing anarchy). We also expect that the presence of social capital and trust stimulates self-organization, because it creates a sense of knowing each other and a sense of belonging. Furthermore, we think that self-organization is stimulated if this collective communication and interaction process has a clear focus (like a clear objective or ambition) and also a clear locus (the presence of a physical or virtual location) in order to manage the interactions in a more effective way. Besides, we also expect that the presence of key persons play an important role in linking and protecting people, ideas and resources, in order to stimulate self-organization. Last, we expect that the flexibility that the involved actors have in changing their grown practices also influence the process of self-organization. The third set of expectation refers to the presence of a meta-governor. We expect that meta-governance stimulates self-organization by a) creating a shared framework of reference, b) giving actual support by providing access to relevant means and resources, c) by creating a level playing field and d) by threatening with all kinds of interventions. The fourth set of expectations refers to the outcome of the self-organization process. We expect that the interplay between these conditions and the interventions of government as a meta-governor influences the output of the self-organization process. The output can be understood in terms of the emergence of an order that is needed to achieve specific goals in terms of services to be rendered.

In order to research these expectations we will use an analytical model, which is displayed in table 1.

Relevant factors	Indicators
The output of self-organization	Has an order been established in terms of the creation of an organization which has a legal status, which has budget, which has staff? What kind of services are provided?
Presence of a triggering event	Has a disruptive event taken place that challenged grown practices? Did this stimulate or frustrate self-organization and why?
Presence of trust and social capital	Are the involved actors relating to each other on a basis of reciprocity? Is a shared sense of belonging developed as the result of recurring interactions? Did this stimulate or frustrate self-organization and why?
The ability to focus the exchange of and interplay of ideas information, knowledge and experience	Have actors been able to define a shared and clear goal that focusses and structures the interactions between them? Did this stimulate or frustrate self-organization and why?
The presence of a physical and/or virtual locus of interaction	Have actors been able to define the physical or virtual location where the recurrent interactions between them can take place? Is information and know-how brought together?
The presence of boundary spanning activities	Have key individuals been present in the process of self-organization that were able to link people, ideas and resources and that were able to protect the interaction between the involved actors? Did this stimulate or frustrate self-organization and why?
The flexibility of the involved actors to adapt existing roles and other practices, including relevant legal frameworks	Have the involved actors been willing and able to change their existing, roles, positions, relevant legal frameworks and other playing rules as well their mutual relationships? Did this stimulate or frustrate self-organization and why?
The presence of meta-governance	Is a meta-governor present and which kind of governance strategies or tactics have been deployed:
A. Presence of framing and storytelling activities (management by speech)	- Did the meta-governor used strategic frameworks and guidance notes to frame the necessity of self-organization in order to provide a common frame of reference? Did this stimulate or frustrate self-organization and why?
B. Presence of supportive actions	- Did the meta-governor supported and facilitated the process of self-organizations by providing and guaranteeing vital means and resources, like information, knowledge, finance, buildings and contacts ? Did this stimulate or frustrate self-organization and why?
C. Presence of the activities to create a level playing field	- Did the meta-governor tries to structure the positions and relations between the involved actors as well as to formulate playing rules, in order to guide the interactions? What are weak interests and values to be protected? Did this stimulate or frustrate self-organization and why?
D. Presence of the fear based incentives that are based on the threat to exercise hierarchical power	- Did the meta-governor threatened to impose top down regulations or other top down interventions to stimulate co-operation among the involved actors? Did this stimulate or frustrate self-organization and why?

Table 1. Analytical model

Community enterprises have been established in several cities in the last years, given the fact that government has retreated from the welfare sector. This created a gap in which in many cases citizens

took the initiative to create their own neighborhood welfare services. In doing so processes of self-organizations occurred. The two cases we are studying are located within the Dutch cities of Amsterdam and Amersfoort. We have selected these two municipalities because they both have been quite successful in setting up a community enterprise. However, the context in which these processes originated in Amsterdam and Amersfoort differs which make it interesting study cases. The municipality of Amsterdam has a long tradition in stimulating citizens initiatives as the result of former policies that favored horizontal ways of working: ''*With this [policy] we are trying to strengthen the self-organizing capacity of neighborhoods* (..)'' (Municipality of Amsterdam, 2012b) In Amersfoort the municipality did not have such a tradition. With the use of a top down, 'cold-turkey' approach, closing down the community centres, the municipality tried to force that self-organizing initiatives from inhabitants will be lifted up (LPB, 2013; Municipality of Amersfoort, 2013).

Because the involvement of the two municipalities differ in terms of their meta-governing role, we opt for a most dissimilar case study design. By selecting two contrasting case studies we aim to get a better analytical understanding regarding the interplay between the conditions that stimulate self-organization one the one hand and the role of government as a meta-governor one the other hand. Hence, our research aims to provide 'analytical generalizations' instead of 'statistical generalizations'. Based on an in-depth analysis of relevant actors, their motives and interests, their resources, their actions as well as relevant outputs we can look for striking resemblances and differences, that may help us develop some conclusions that are plausible (Yin, 2003).

Per municipality, one community enterprise is selected. We chose to focus on community enterprises that were firmly established and show strong outputs so that can be examined what the results are of the self-organization process within specific services. For Amsterdam, we chose to focus on the Meevaart, in the eastern district of Amsterdam. The Meevaart is a place where active inhabitants come together to think about the future and current state of their neighbourhood. The enterprise is fully managed and exploited by inhabitants of the Indian neighbourhood (De Meevaart, 2013). For Amersfoort 'Het Klokhuis' was selected. 'Het Klokhuis' was the first enterprise to be successfully established in September 2012 and sublets the free rooms of the building to (commercial) social organizations who organizes activities in order to strengthen the social cohesion within the neighbourhood (Het Klokhuis, 2012).

In order to improve the internal validity of our findings we combine several research methods which is called triangulation (Yin, 2003). We have conducted twelve interviews with involved key persons that represent different stakeholders. Subsequently we conducted a document analysis of the

relevant policy documents and also analysed media contributions and relevant documents of the community enterprises. In order to ensure that the case findings are described analysed and compared in a structured and similar way we used the analytical framework that is presented in table 1.

5 Results

5.1 Amersfoort

In line with our analytical model, the empirical material regarding the community enterprise in Amersfoort will be presented.

Output of self-organization

'Het Klokhuis' is known as thé success story of self-organization in Amersfoort, given the results that can be examined (De Weekkrant, 2012; Volkskrant, 2013). In April 2012 the process of self-organization led to the official (legal) foundation of the community enterprise 'Het Klokhuis'. 'Het Klokhuis' is an foundation of approximately 300 inhabitants (Municipality of Amersfoort, 2012b). The building is rented from the a third party (SRO) to which the municipality has outsourced the exploitation and maintenance of their buildings (Het Klokhuis, 2012). Normally 40-50 volunteers run the enterprise (between 08:30 and 22:30) for 7 days a week (Dichtbij, 2013; Het Klokhuis, 2012). The enterprise aims to have a balanced exploitation by renting spaces to all kinds of commercial and societal parties, like child care. The idea is that these commercial activities will financially compensate for the social activities that are carried out (Gemeente Amersfoort, 2012b). Furthermore, 'Het Klokhuis' provides internships in cooperation with the UWV (governmental party for employee insurances), working spots with Wi-Fi, a small library, sports and hobby lessons, buddy projects for migrants and a neutral place to facilitate meetings between different parties like the police, parents and neighbors (Het Klokhuis, 2012). The activities are aimed to foster the social cohesion in the neighborhood of Randenbroek and Schuilenburg and to create a neighborhood in which every inhabitant feels at home (Het Klokhuis, 2012). Between the start in September 2012 and 2013, the number of daily visitors grew from 150 to 300-400 citizens (Dichtbij, 2013; LPB, 2013). Hence, it can be argued that the process of self-organization that took place did lead to a well-established organization which clear outputs. But how did these outputs come to being?

(1) Triggering event

The closing down of the community center in Amersfoort has challenged the existing practice in which the municipality ran the center. Inhabitants were afraid that the municipality would inhabit an addiction care center within the building. ''*We undertook a lot of actions, visited all the public hearing sessions in order to prevent that an addiction care center would be located in the previous center*.'' The initiators - a small number of active inhabitants - indicated that the political decision to close the centers fostered the mobilization of a larger group of citizens, which resulted in the organization of all kinds of protests and political lobbying as the top-down decision initially did not make it possible to look for alternatives, e.g. a public tender for the use of the community center buildings. ''*We forced the alderman to talk to us about us taking over the center, if it had proven to be necessary we even would have occupied the building*.'' The increased political pressure convinced the town council to adopt a resolution which forced the responsible alderman to organize a public tender.

(2) Trust and social capital

Trust and social capital plays a role in two ways. First, among the inhabitants in the neighbourhood and secondly, in the relations with the municipality. The initiators that were aiming to take over 'Het Klokhuis' were already familiar with each other, because as volunteers they were active, even before the closing down of the center, in the neighborhood and in the community center. They worked together with the neighborhood manager. This is a civil servant who has the responsibility to address and help to deal with all kinds of issues that influence the quality of the neighborhood; this in close interaction with citizens. She acted as an interface between the local community and the municipality.

The presence of key persons who knew each other and who met regularly contributed to the development process. The recurring interactions with the neighbourhood manager and the alderman, who were willing to help the initiators, helped to build a climate of trust and reciprocity. The openness and frequency of the meetings in order to explore possibilities, made the involved citizens feel recognized. The involved alderman argued that: ''*Contacts were frequently and also cordially. When the initiators asked for time and attention from me, they always got it*.''

At the same time, the citizens indicated that there also is another side to the communication: ''*We really had to build up the level of trust within the municipality itself*.'' The development of trust was perceived by them as a subtle process which has to deal with opposing forces. One the one hand the municipality was rather critical regarding the feasibility of the plans of initiators, which also stimulated them to become even more convinced of their own plans. This kept them sharp and motivated: ''*Our*

self-confidence has grown instead of declined as the result of the critical attitude of the municipality.'' It was perilous until the very last moment: ''*The day before we were planning to open the community enterprise the municipality sent someone from the Chamber of Commerce to check whether everything was in order, otherwise we would immediately hand in our keys*.'' This tension proved especially fruitful because it strengthened the support that initiators received from other inhabitants, because ''*these inhabitants are thrilled with what we do.*'' The support they received motivated them, because they felt themselves recognized, while doing useful work. On the other hand, after a while, also the involved civil servants became triggered by the idea that this could really work: ''*also the municipality wanted it to become a success*'', which can also be derived from the official statement that was given by the Board of Alderman, when they approved that citizens would take over the former community centre: ''*We hope at a fertile cooperation and that in September 2012 the first community enterprise will be a fact* '' (Municipality of Amersfoort, 2012a).

(3) Focus in exchange and interplay

Looking at the interactions between the initiators and the civil servants of the municipality, we notice that they were structured according a set of clear time, legal and financial guidelines that were formulated by the municipality (Municipality of Amersfoort, 2013). This created a specific focus, although the initiators were not always amused with these guidelines and the fixation of focus which was not theirs : ''*Every time we received a list of ten points, for example that we had to have enough tenants, which we should meet. When we completed eight points, the municipality had already made the next list. We were not happy with the imposed rules*'' and ''*Initially, our hands and feet were tied.*'' However, during the development process it became clear that these guidelines would not always work, so that they needed to be adapted to specific circumstances. Typical for this exchange and learning process is the following quote of one civil servant: ''*We [as municipality] dared to adjust the guidelines when they proved to be not useful*.''

(4) Locus of interaction

The former community centre which is located in the middle of the neighbourhood formed the physical locus of the interactions. Inhabitants gathered there to discuss and support the plans of the initiators to establish the community enterprises. The importance of such a physical locus of interaction is illustrated by the following quote: ''*When all activities are organized in different parts of the neighborhood, you don't speak each other anymore (..).''* (Mediagroep EVA, 2012) The limited number of involved initiators

made it possible to convene rather easy, while it also made possible to have the negotiations with the municipality at the town hall, or sometimes at other places in the neighbourhood. A virtual locus of interaction was also present. Since February 2012 the initiators of 'Het Klokhuis' established a Twitter account (https://twitter.com/KlokhuisAfrt) with which they communicated with inhabitants, civil servants and the alderman. They used it to mobilize citizens, they tweeted for example*: "This is also a part of it, quarreling about the business plan. It gets even funnier. And it is even realistic"* (pic.twitter.com/JIr4n4TL retrieved 24 april, 2012).

(5) Boundary spanning activities

As mentioned before, the initiators were able to connect to other key persons, the neighbourhood manager and the responsible aldermen, given the fact that they were active in the neighbourhood. Both the manager and the alderman who was responsible for welfare policy conducted several important boundary spanning activities. The alderman provided the self-organization process with political support which made it more easy for the neighborhood manager to overcome internal organizational resistance within the municipality. One of the initiators indicated: ''*The role of the community manager was a tough one, since she experienced a lot of resistance*.'' Together with the neighborhood manager the alderman influenced other civil servants who were skeptical, for example by supporting mediation conversations. The alderman's support was aimed at creating a safe environment to protect the work of the community manager and the initiators, when elaborating their plan. The alderman said: ''*I think that my close involvement was one of the key factors for success*.'', In relation to the boundary spanning role of the neighborhood manager, the initiators said: ''*Several times the neighbourhood manager has helped us with selecting the right person to attend to or made sure that we were given the right information at the right time*.'' These boundary spanning activities also helped in dealing with the scepticism within the municipality as the neighbourhood manager puts forward in the following quote: *'The municipality is a seven headed monster, some heads trust the initiators, other heads do not."*

(6) Adaption existing roles and practices

During the start of the initiative the initiators encountered some resistance, especially with the involved civil servants as come forward by several of the quotes that have been used. The initiators were confronted with a lot of issues for which they had to develop a plan because now they were accountable themselves, while at the same time they had to develop a financially sound plan. At the beginning this constrained their room for manoeuvre. As mentioned before, due to the boundary spanning activities of

the alderman and the neighborhood manager, civil servant became more willing and able to change their existing roles and relevant legal frameworks in order to stimulate the process of self-organization. Also the previous used quote, which refers to the willingness of civil servants to adapt several guidelines shows that: ''*The conditions that restricted us were loosened by the municipality so that we could acted more business-like*.'' Hence, we see that the municipality in the end, was willing to change their existing practices, when the trust in the inhabitants grew.

(7) Meta-governance

Next step is to see, if the specific interventions that were done by the municipality stimulated or frustrated the development of the community enterprise. First, we notice that the municipality of Amersfoort explicitly chose to abstain from stimulating citizens to establish community enterprises. The community manager indicated: ''*When there are citizens who want to take over the buildings that is fine, but we are not going to stimulate that. We didn't put instruments on it like: thou shall adopt these buildings*.'' This top-down decision to close the community center triggered not only protest but also triggered the process of self-organization. Later on, the municipality argued, as an ex post rationalization, that this 'cold-turkey' approach the municipality attempted to stimulate a bottom-up development (LPB, 2013). This is in contrast with the words of the neighbourhood manager who said: *"There was no plan in the beginning. I think it is good that such a plan did not existed"*. What we notice is that after the shutdown, the interventions of the municipality developed themselves in response to the actions taken by the inhabitants.

When it became clear that the citizens really wanted to take over the community centre, some interventions of the municipality were directed at helping the initiators. They appointed several independent experts which the citizens could consult in order to get support and advise in the setting up of their exploitation plans. Also the neighbourhood manager, paid by the municipality, dedicated much of her time to discuss the pros and cons with the citizens and provided them with lots of useful information and contacts that enhanced the development process (see also the previous quote). Furthermore, the municipality also tried to structure the positions and relations in the welfare field in favor of the citizens group that were trying to establish community enterprises. First, the municipality created the possibility that citizens could also take over the buildings – which were public property - instead of immediately offering them on the real estate market. Secondly, the town council strengthened the position of citizen groups by giving them priority to take over the buildings of the former community centers for low renting prizes. 'Het Klokhuis' was given a privileged position at the

cost of the third party (SRO) from which they rented the building which caused friction. One initiator indicated: ''*The SRO took us less seriously, they said that we pay so little that they weren't planning on maintaining the building or any other supportive actions*.''

Although the municipality became more and more convinced of the plans that were developed by the initiators, there was always a threat that the municipality, when the plan was not solid enough, would put the building for sale on the property market. The initiators indicated that this motivated them to keep going: ''*It was just going to happen either via a good or bad way*.''

The distant approach which the municipality followed in the beginning evolved into a more direct approach, which was perceived by the initiators as rather hierarchical demands which also undermined the trust they had in the municipality. ''*When we were finished with one list of demands, another was already waiting for us*'' and ''*We really had to build up our level of trust in the municipality*.'' As a result the initiators had little room for maneuver which also hampered them to be taken seriously by parties on which they were financially dependent. ''*Because of the financial requirements we were dependent on certain parties that rented rooms in our building, that gave them a lot of freedom and power to enforce certain things.*'' Later on, when the municipality was more and more convinced, the alderman further structured and adjusted the development process which created a clear focus in the self-organization process, although this focus was not emerging but externally imposed. For example, the exact dates by which some plans should be handed over and to whom in order. Also, the initiators were obliged to organize themselves in a legal form, so that relevant tasks and responsibilities were clearly defined and structured, also in relation to the tasks and responsibilities of other parties. These were clearly spelled out by the municipality. Furthermore, the municipality defined key parameters regarding the social nature of activities that should be offered in the building. A vital parameter that they had to respect the formal and legal destination that was allocated in the urban plan by the municipality to this type of building, which was to offer primarily services that are social by nature. Pure commercial activities, also to be provided by the market, should not be developed. Hence, the municipality influenced the kind of public services that the community enterprise should deliver. Furthermore, they also set a number of playing rules that structured the interaction with the municipality. For instance, ''*Create a financial risk analysis for the exploitation of Het Klokhuis. Make sure there is a strict separation of functions between the community budget and the board of the association. Prepare a lease contract with SRO [a municipal party]. Review the business case with an independent third party*.'' (Municipality of Amersfoort, 2012a).

Hence, on the one hand the municipality of Amersfoort took up a meta-governing role, but on the other hand the municipality directly intervenes in the development process and in the formulation of the desired output of the community enterprise, by defining and imposing specific key parameters and playing rules which had to be complied to.

5.2 Amsterdam

Output of self-organization process

In February 2012 the new community center the Meevaart opened its doors. In august 2010 a group of inhabitants, coming from the so-called 'Indische Buurt', developed a plan to take over the community center. A year later, the Meevaart is completely run and exploited by inhabitants of the eastern district of Amsterdam. More than 20 volunteers allow the Meevaart to be open 7 days a week, from 09:00-22:30 (De Meevaart, 2012a; De Meevaart, 2013). A foundation, called 'Meevaart Ontwikkel Groep' is the owner of the community enterprise. This foundation also receives financial support (more than €300.000) from the municipality of Amsterdam (Municipality of Amsterdam – District East, 2012). The Meevaart is an organization that - in terms of output - offers a place to all kinds of local groups and grass roots initiatives so that they can meet and develop activities in and outside the Meevaart. However, the Meevaart is more than a building that offers space. By creating this overarching meeting place, it wants to help to improve the social cohesion in the neighborhood (in terms of outcomes), by bringing people together, for instance by creating a cooking and gardening community. Many parties call it a success because of the energy and dynamics that the process has unleashed among inhabitants (Municipality of Amsterdam, 2012a; Municipality of Amsterdam, 2012b; De Meevaart, 2012b). ''*What happens in [De Meevaart] is so innovative that visitors from Amstelveen up to France and China are visiting the Indian neighborhood.*''(Het Parool, 2012). At the same time the Meevaart has privileged position, because in order to generate relevant experiences and knowledge regarding the development of community enterprises, the municipality of Amsterdam was asked by the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations to set up a experimentation zone, free off kinds of legal, financial and other restricting rules (Municipality of Amsterdam, 2012b).

(1) Triggering event

The self-organization process started already in 2004 with some inhabitants that were unhappy with the bad state of their neighbourhood. ''*The societal debate following the murder of Theo van Gogh, committed in Amsterdam East, formed the catalyst for several people that wanted to fight against the societal fragmentation.*'' (Groot Oost TV, 2013). Two inhabitants, Firouz Azarhoosh and Mellouki Cadat,

also in line with existing policies, started to stimulate the social cohesion in the district by establishing a neighbourhood community. When the municipality, after the renovation of a former community building, wanted to offer the building on the property market, inhabitants approached the eastern district branche of the municipality with a plan to take over the building as they were looking for a location to conduct their activities (De Meevaart, 2012a; Groot Oost TV, 2012). Furthermore, the establishment of an experimentation zone was also a trigger to experiment with this community enterprise, which boosted these grown practices of citizen participation.

(2) Trust and social capital

The establishment of the community enterprise cannot be seen as an isolated occurrence. It is embedded in an environment, consisting of various policy efforts set up by the municipality, to develop and strengthen the community networks within the eastern district (Municipality of Amsterdam, 2012b). A civil servant indicated for example: ''*We established a network of participation broker civil servants in the neighbourhoods who connect the administration, citizens and all sorts of citizen initiatives*.'' As a result of a previous experience with participative policies, the initiators of the Meevaart already were familiar with the district and municipality before they started the co-operate with one another in order to acquire the building. Given the fact that they have known each other for years and work together on a reciprocal base, they trusted each other. As one of the involved participation brokers put forward: ''*The positive attitudes of the municipality certainly have a positive effect on the initiators*.'' However, according to the initiators it is important to note that the municipality is an internally divided organization, which implicated as one initiator indicated, that not all civil servants were engaged in constructive communications that were based on trust. ''*Some traditionally minded civil servants think that they know better and lock out citizens: they look like if they are from the 'participation police' and are telling us whether we do it rightly*.''

(3) Focus in exchange and interplay

Many ideas, information, knowledge and experiences were exchanged by all sorts of actors which led to numerous ideas and partnerships for filling in the community enterprise. The bringing together of knowledge and experiences was also an explicit goal of the municipality: ''*We want to make things possible and build on partnerships: we try to connect many parties in order to facilitate mutual learning*.'' As a result the initiators and inhabitants who participated in the Meevaart are still working on a shared vision on how to elaborate the mission of the Meevaart which is hard to define since there are

so many interests to be met. ''*Our targets are not set. Along the way we are exploring what is the right way to go. Tensions are bringing people closer together*'' (Municipality of Amsterdam, 2012a). The initiators wanted to keep the process of self-organization as open as possible, thereby trying to avoid fixed and rigid regulations (De Meevaart, 2012a). Hence, the Meevaart operates as a rather loosely coupled collaboration structure, which has the advantage as one of the responds puts forward, that the community is able to change easily to changing circumstances, while at the same time the initiators are challenged to keep on thinking critically about their own preferred goals.

(4) Locus of interaction

If we look at the locus of the interaction, we see that especially the in-house debating centre 'Pakhuis de Zwijger' serves as an important platform where debates between many actors – sometime even 300 inhabitants are present as well as politicians and aldermen as representatives of the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations - take place about relevant issues that are related to the development of the community enterprise, for instance what rules and regulations hamper the development of the enterprise and how does the free regulation zone helps to deal with possible barriers. Secondly, the initiators also meet other initiators of community enterprises in Amsterdam in a community of practice, so that they can exchange and explore ideas as well as can learn from each other. While this community does not really add substantial value for developing the Meevaart, it is predominantly present in policy documents. According to one of the more involved citizens, the use of Twitter and Facebook should be put into perspective. It did play a role in providing information and promoting activities, but it did not play a significant role in the self-organization process itself.

(5) Boundary spanning activities

Several key individuals have been present in the process of self-organization that conducted boundary spanning activities. First, the two initiators Firouz Azarhoosh and Mellouki Cadat played an important role, after the murder on Theo van Gogh, in mobilizing inhabitants to help overcoming social fragmentation and polarization. They created a climate which helps to foster the development of the community enterprise, some years later. As such these events and the reaction by the two inhabitants created a frame to which the development of the community center was linked to.

Secondly, the participation brokers at district level played an important role in bringing people together in the community enterprises. Subsequently, the program manager and one of her policy officials at the central municipality level were very actively linking people, ideas and resources. Both

within and outside the administrative organization. A civil servant said: ''*When I know that a district is struggling with a topic, I make sure that they contact a district who is very developed in that area so they can help each other.*'' This goal was also laid down in the main policy document: ''*In the following two years we will stimulate districts to outsource several services towards the civil society as pilots*.'' (Municipality of Amsterdam, 2012b) Furthermore, the municipality organized several meetings to strengthen the network of the enterprises and was also actively facilitating contacts with relevant parties for alternative ways of financing. '*We are going to look at the possibilities for EU financing*.'' (Municipality of Amsterdam, 2012b).

Thirdly, also the role of the responsible aldermen should be mentioned. Although they did not play an active role in bringing people together, they regularly met with the initiators. During these meetings they showed their support, which according one of the participation brokers helped the involved people to feel recognized. They also protected the initiative because they were willing to adapt existing norms.

(6) Adaption of existing practices

The existing roles, positions and rules have been changed during the development of the Meevaart. ''*Looking back at the conversations between the district and us, they are particularly characterized by the searching process for the right role and position. Is the district a principal or partner, are they close by or rather more distant?*'' (De Meevaart, 2012). Given the fact that the Meevaart was located in a an experimentation zone enabled the municipality to act more flexible than was otherwise possible. A civil servant said: ''*You try to make things possible, after that you look at the rules. That is one of our commitments in this experiment to facilitate them [the community enterprises] with their work*.'' Furthermore we noticed that also other parts of the municipality and other involved partners were willing and able to help the start of community enterprises in Amsterdam. With regards to the adaption of relevant legal frameworks, the municipality and the Ministry of Interior and Kingdom Relations helped by exploring how legal frameworks which can hamper the development of the community enterprises could be reformed. ''*The upcoming period will be used to transform and apply rules to ease the start of community enterprises*.'' (Municipality of Amsterdam, 2012b) For example, options were explored for the compensation of volunteers, alternative ways of financing and the applicability of English community laws. However, the initiators indicated that the self-organizing process was hampered by the overall sluggish and internal directed way of working of the municipality of Amsterdam. One of the citizens that worked in the enterprise said: ''*What I have noticed is that when*

you want to do something you hear at many administrative windows what is not possible instead of what is.'' (De Meevaart, 2012b) Because the initiators were depending on the internal planning and control cycles of the municipality, the sluggish and bureaucratic way of working sometimes frustrated the communication process. One initiator indicated: *''If we wanted to do something in Spring, we had to wait for nine months before the money is available.''* and *''If the municipality would be more flexible that would have been helpful.''*

(8) Meta-governance

As mentioned before, the development of the Meevaart as a community enterprise was the result of a close co-operation between self-organizing inhabitants that took over the existing community centre and the municipality. How did the municipality intervened? First, we saw that the mission of the municipality of Amsterdam was to set processes of self-organization into motion, thereby stimulated by the Ministry of the Interior. Civil servants travelled to London to visit several community enterprises for inspiration (Municipality of Amsterdam, 2012b). Especially in the beginning of the process the municipality used storytelling activities to trigger and challenge societal entrepreneurs and citizens to become active. One of the considerations to establish an experimentation zone was to generate positive attention for possible stakeholders to become active in this zone. *''It all started with incentives: you try to make things attractive by using subsidies and inspiring stories.''* Furthermore, they set up platforms for civil servants and members of community enterprises to share their experiences. Besides, civil servants of the central part of the municipal organization indicated that they also conducted activities of naming and framing to stimulate positive and cooperative attitudes within the municipal organization itself. *''If the communication leads to bottlenecks, or if I know that one district has very good ideas and the other district is still searching, I ensure that they know it from each other.''*

Secondly, the municipality of Amsterdam supported and facilitated together with other organizations the process of self-organization by providing and guaranteeing vital means and resources to the community enterprises. As a result of the experimentation zone the parties provided the starting community enterprises with financial opportunities. *''We got an extra subsidy for furnishing the building, and after that a second amount to make sure that the main floor looks good at the opening of the building.''* (De Meevaart, 2013). The municipality also states that: *''We also wanted to stimulate alternative ways of financing, such as adoption projects of (commercial) enterprises and/or crowd-funding (..)''* (Municipality of Amsterdam, 2012b). Moreover, the district branch of the municipality also helps inhabitants groups to acquire additional funding by helping them to apply for subsidies, like EU subsidies. Not only by acquiring financial means but also with the provision of the necessary contacts

the municipality facilitates the development process. One goals was to: ''o*rganize meetings to strengthen and broaden the network of community enterprises in order to exchange knowledge and experiences*.'' (Municipality of Amsterdam, 2012b). This was also necessary because the development of a community enterprise generates the involvement of multiple administrative layers within the municipality. For instance when the interaction process got stuck at district level, the civil servants at the central level intervened by appointing mediators, providing the community enterprise with extra financial support or linking civil servants of districts that could learn from each other. This has certainly stimulated self-organization and prevented dead-locks in the internal and external communication. Next, the municipality helped the community enterprise to acquire the accommodation by paying a relatively low rent. One initiator indicated that: ''w*ithout the help and goodwill of the municipality we would probably not have acquired a building.*'' Help and support was also offered by the municipality by making knowledge accessible. The municipality stated: ''*We want to make knowledge available to community enterprises on the areas of business plans and models, marketing and finance''* (Municipality of Amsterdam, 2012b). They hired external advisors to help the initiators with the exploration of options about the development of their enterprises. In case of the Meevaart several times per month meetings were held between initiators and civil servants of the district to discuss the progress and bottlenecks of the community enterprise. Hence, the active support by the municipality stimulated the process of self-organization in helping to acquire vital resources to lift of the community enterprise.

The active role of the municipality of Amsterdam can also be demonstrated by looking at the experimentation zone which influenced the position of involved actors in favor of the community enterprises. The creation of the zone, that can be considered as institutional design that acts as game changer, generated a lot of freedom for the involved actors. In collaboration with the Ministry of Interior and Kingdom Relations the creation of 'flexible regulation free zones' gave the initiators a stronger position (Municipality of Amsterdam, 2012b). Also the initiators of the Meervaart were asked to participate in drafting of the policy documents in which playing rules were formulated that would be applied when citizens were asked to participate in the further development of district urban policies**.** Last, the community enterprise was also given a stronger position in relation to the existing professional welfare organizations, when working at the district level, thereby stressing the importance of self-organizing initiatives: ''*the usage of professional welfare is shifted towards the civil society*.'' (Municipality of Amsterdam – District East, 2011). As a result from these new rules, a substantial part of subsidies shifted from professional welfare to these grass roots initiatives. The municipality also changed the existing rules, by keeping the renting prizes for citizens groups very low. The citizens

groups have been given priority over other more resourceful parties that also would have been interested. A civil servants indicated: ''*We are operating on the edges of the law*, *for example do we have to give other parties in the district also the opportunity to take over the building, while at the same time these low renting prizes can perhaps be seen as state support?*''

In the next subsection we will make a more found analysis of the results, not only by comparing them but also by bringing linking them to the expectations that we formulated earlier.

5.3 Case comparison and analysis

In table 2 we have summarized the main findings of our two case studies, given the analytical framework that have been used to describe and analyse the two community enterprises.

Relevant factors	Amersfoort	Amsterdam
Output of self-organization	Establishment of a firm organization with a legal status, staff and a budget that sets up activities to promote social cohesion.	The establishment of a loosely coupled, flexible but still goal searching structure that functions as platform and umbrella for the meeting of local groups , which helps to support social cohesion.
Triggering event	Top down organized shut down of the existing community center (cold turkey decision) by the municipality and the threat of an addiction center, stimulated citizens to organize them in order to put forward the possibility to take over the community center.	Not a clear triggering event, but linked to longer tradition to promote self-organization by the municipality of Amsterdam. Establishment as the merger of two developments: a longer tradition as well as the creation of an experimentation zone.
Trust and social capital	Initiators and community centre manager did know each other from strong involvement in earlier community activities. The plan to take over the community centre and the development of the enterprise brought inhabitants but also civil servants of the municipality together which created a sense of belonging. In the beginning there was scepticism anda lack of trust among civil servants. Later on more trust evolved, because interaction increased.	Initiators and involved civil servants did know each other well, given the well- established and grown collaboration and participation practices.
Focus in exchange of and interplay	In Amersfoort interactions were strongly focused as a result of many guidelines of the municipality, which one the hand were forced upon the initiators while on the other hand it helped to focus and set priorities. Also adaption of these guidelines by the municipality when they did not work.	Is still wrestling with the focus of the self-organization process, given the interests and wishes that have to be met, although the initiators see this a strength in terms of flexibility.
Locus of interaction	Small number of involved initiators that regularly met at a limited number of places, mostly the center and small and recurrent interactions with civil servants at the town	Pakhuis de Zwijger, the inward discussion platform functions as important locus of interaction. Social media primarily acts as information provision and not

	hall. Primarily use of Twitter to share ideas with inhabitants as well mobilize them.	as mobilizer.
Boundary spanning activities	Important boundary spanning roles in terms of linking people and ideas by the community managers, also in linking the initiators with civil servants in the municipality. Important role by the alderman, not only in linking but also in protecting the initiative and creating a safe haven.	The responsible program manager and the participant brokers actively linked people, ideas and resources, which supported the process of self-organization by overcoming and preventing deadlocks, especially within the municipality.
Adaption of grown practices	Adaption of guidelines that were originally given by the municipality when it was clear that they did not work. Took some time for some civil servants to adapt their working to the new situations, as well as the building maintenance organization.	Involved actors were more flexible as a result of the construction of the experimentation zone. Options for experimenting with adjustments of the legal frameworks. Initiators still wrestling with internal support and routines within the municipality: overall sluggish and inside oriented way of working.
Framing and storytelling	Framing of the close down as a cold turkey approach but not dominant.	Self-organization was embraced as a relevant frame. Storytelling about experiences elsewhere.
Supportive actions	The supportive actions by providing expert knowledge, helpful information, the lease of the building and contacts.	Supportive actions by providing funding, knowledge, subsidies, the lease of the building and contacts.
Level playing field	Change of playing rules by creating a tendering procedure that give the opportunity for citizens to take over the center, later given them the most privileged position. Imposing specific playing rules in terms of guidelines, deadlines and specifications which has to be accomplished by the initiators, which is based on the dominant position of the municipality which also structured the interactions.	Creation of an experimentation zone created new playing rules by providing more freedom to act. Change of playing rules which favor grass roots initiatives and community enterprises above professional welfare organizations
Fear based incentives/ threat to exercise hierarchical power	The municipality threatened to impose top-down intervention by selling the accommodation on the property market when the plan of citizen group would not be strong enough. This threat kept the initiators sharp and convinced of their own abilities and created a sense of urgency. The threat also played a role in maintaining the image of the municipality as opposed party, that motivated the initiators to keep going.	No direct top-down threat of intervention

If we want to explain why in Amersfoort a well-defined order emerged from the self-organization process in which originally a small number of initiators was involved, we can argue that especially the top-down closing of the community centre by the municipality and the threat of an alternative addiction centre (as triggering event) played an important role, which not only resulted in protests but also in a further mobilization of inhabitants. Furthermore, the fact that the initiators know each other (in terms of social capital) as well as the neighbourhood manager set the wheel in motion, given the mutual past of community serving (in terms of trust). The fact that the neighbourhood manager also knew relevant

civil servants helped to open doors in the municipality which facilitated the further development of trust between the initiators and the responsible civil servants. Especially the boundary spanning activities performed by the manager helped to link people and ideas which helped to improve the trust between both parties which also resulted in the willingness and ability to change the guidelines (in terms of exchange of knowledge and learning) that were imposed by the municipality. Furthermore the development of trust between the parties involved was also fostered by the boundary spanning role, especially in terms of protection and creating a safe environment in which ideas and wishes could be explored and tested, that was taken up by the responsible alderman. A recurring element in this case is the role of the guidelines, which on the one hand could be regarded as the impression of scepticism, or even distrust, which generated several effects that contributed to the success of the self-organization process:

The first effect is, that it contributed to a strengthening of the cohesion (sense of belonging) amongst the involved citizens, motivating them to go on. Secondly, it helped to structure and thus focus the deliberations among the inhabitants as well the negotiations with the municipality. Thirdly, to some extent these guidelines could also be understood as a way of creating a new policy arrangement with new rules of engagement. One the one hand these new rules enable citizens to take over community centres (public tendering), on the other hand they also influence the self-organization process in very detailed way by imposing all kinds of norms, deadlines etc. In doing so the municipality is very present in the shaping of the community enterprise, thereby influencing the output of the self-organizing process. This presence is also strengthened by threat that the municipality could always put the community centre building on the property market, which also helped to influence the negotiations in a specific direction. What we see in the Amersfoort case is that self-organization can be understood in terms of an order that is been developed in the shadow of the municipal hierarchy which is clearly present.

Also in the Amsterdam case there is a constant shadow of the municipality hanging over the self-organization process. However, the difference with Amersfoort is that the district and central branche of the municipality especially tried to support and facilitate the process by providing all kinds of resources, instead of influencing them in a rather direct manner by imposing all kinds of norms, guidelines. This supporting process has also been made possible, because in the case of Amsterdam a new policy arrangement was created through the establishment of an experimentation zone. The interesting difference with Amersfoort is, however, that the output of the self-organization process, in terms of the structure of community enterprise, is less defined. This can be explained by the fact that the development of the community enterprise was a more open and flexible process, while in the

Amersfoort case the municipality used the earlier mentioned guidelines to impose a specific focus. This lack of focus in the Amsterdam case can also be explained by the large variety of actors that is involved, also in combination with the platform or umbrella function of the community enterprise. In the Amersfoort case the limited number of involved people also helped to focus the development. Another interesting difference between Amsterdam and Amersfoort is that in the Amersfoort case trust had to be earned, while in the Amsterdam case the long tradition and experience that the inhabitants and the municipality had, created an infrastructure of trust, fruitful exchange and mutual learning, which compensated for the lack of a real triggering event to set in motion the self-organization process. Interesting is to see that in both cases boundary activities play an important role, especially in relation to link civil servants who work in the several back offices of the municipality to these new developments.

Not linking them may create all kinds of deadlocks. Most resistance can be expected, if civil servants who work in the front line of welfare service are more eager to get involved in these self-organizing processes. A such it can be argued that especially the multi-headed, multi-level nature of the municipal organization (in terms of fragmentation) also can be seen as an additional barrier that has to be taken.

Furthermore in both cases it is shown that the political involvement of alderman is also an important driver. This role can be very active (helping to overcome barriers, linking people, bringing in ideas and resources, for instance in Amersfoort) but it can also be picked up in a more distant way, in terms only being present. It is this sheer presence which helps to protect the development process, because outsiders see that it is been viewed as being politically important (as is illustrated by Amsterdam).

6 Conclusion

Our research goal was to understand how the interaction between a retreating government and citizens and citizen groups that are involved in a process of self-organization, influence the process and output of self-organization in the welfare sector and why this is the case. Our research, based on a comparison of two distinctive cases, concludes that the development of community enterprise as the subject of self-organizations is closely linked to the involvement of government. What we see is that self-organization is not a process on itself, but when it is embedded in a policy sector (like welfare) in which governments have traditionally played important roles, it is also shaped by a number of specific government inventions that co-evolves with this self-organizing process. Furthermore, looking at the output of this

process, in terms of the kind of order that is achieved and which is visible as well as the activities that are carried out by this order, we can conclude that this was a successful process.

Moreover, it can be concluded that especially two government interventions seems to be very important. The first one is that governments are able and willing to change the rules of the game, thereby creating a level playing field, which can foster self-organization process. The second one is that they can deploy all kinds of supporting activities which are directed at providing initiating citizens with access to necessary resources (finance, knowledge, contacts) that are important in setting the wheel in motion.

At the same time we conclude that especially the quality of the interplay that takes places is also dependent on the trust and the social capital that is present in the relationship between the initiators and the municipality – and not only between the inhabitants themselves. In the creation of trust both cases show that boundary spanners and boundary spanning activities seems very important. In both case we see that especially civil servants that act as front line worker (participation broker of neighborhood managers) play an important role in linking people, ideas and resources to each other, while also acting as an ambassador, thereby overcoming skepticism within the municipality.

We can also conclude that political involvement and support is important, especially when looking at the role of the aldermen. They played an important role, because they supported the initiators by giving them access to resources and by protecting the initiative. Furthermore, these boundary activities can only be picked up and fulfilled, if citizens (or inhabitants) are also really willing and able to get involved. A triggering event helps to set the wheel in motion one the one hand, while on the other hand a tradition of civil participation and engagement also helps to set the wheel in motion. At the same time it is important to conclude that a focus on what to achieve, does not only helps the process of self-organization but also helps to focus the interaction between the inhabitants themselves and with representatives of the municipality, although governments can play important role in helping (or even imposing) to develop this focus.

One triggering point for our research was the question whether self-organization evolves in the shadow of hierarchy? The answer is ambiguous and needs further research. One the hand it can be argued that the close interplay of both self-organization initiatives shows that there is a shadow of government present, but that this is not a predominant fear-based shadow. It is more the shadow of a government that tries to support by given access to resources or by creating a level playing field. One the other hand

there is a shadow that really relates to the hierarchical position of government. In the case of Amersfoort inhabitants always were afraid that the government would withdraw itself from the initiative, but perhaps the most interesting thing is that in both cases the creation of a level playing field that fostered both community enterprises, could only be created by making use of the hierarchical position of government, in terms of formally changing the position of both enterprises as well as imposing playing rules to be followed by all the parties involved.

At the same time it is important to put these findings and conclusions into perspective. On the one hand we have been able to get a better understanding how self-organization processes are being shaped – given the scarcity of existing empirical research - while on the other hand our knowledge is based on only two case studies. Given the importance that nowadays is granted to self-organization to compensate for a withdrawal of government, it is important that more empirical research will be conducted.

References

Bang, H.P. (2004). Culture governance: Governing self-reflexive modernity. Public Administration, 82(1), 157-190.

Birkland, T. (1998) Focusing Events, Mobilization, and Agenda Setting. *Journal of Public Policy* 18:1 pp 53-74.

Bekkers, V.J.J.M. (2004), Virtual policy communities and responsive governance: redesigning on-line debates, in: *Information Polity*, vol. 9., nr. 3/4, pp. 193-204**.**

Bekkers, V, J. Edelenbos & B. Steijn (2011), An innovative public sector? Embarking on the innovation journey, in*:* Bekkers, V., J. Edelenbos & B. Steijn (eds.) (2011)*, Innovation in the public sector. Linking capacity and leadership.* London: Palgrave McMillan, pp. 197-222.

Boonstra, B., & Boelens, L. (2011). Self-organisation in urban development: towards a new perspective on spatial planning. *Urban Research & Practice*, *4*(2), 99-122. .

Börsel, T. & T. Risse (2010), Governance without a State: Can It Work? In: Regulation and Governance, vol. 4, pp. 113–134

Boons (2008). Self-organization and sustainability: the emergence of a regional industrial ecology. *Emergence: Complexity and Organization*, 10(2): 41-8.

Bootsma, P. & Lechner, J. (2002). Complexiteit: werkwijzen bij verandering. In: F. van Eijnatten, M. Kuijs & Haffmans (red.), *Verdieping van chaosdenken. Theorie en Praktijk*. Assen, Van Gorcum.

Bušev, M. (1994). *Synergetics: Chaos, order, self-organisation*. World Scientific

Buuren, Van, A. & D. Loorbach (2009), Policy innovation in isolation, in: *Public Management Review*, vol. 11, nr. 3, pp. 375-392

Cilliers, P. (1998). Complexity and Postmodernism: Understanding Complex Systems. London: Routledge.

Cobb, R. and C. Elder (1972) *Participation in American Politics: The Dynamics of Agenda-Building*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.

Comfort, L.K. (1994). Self-organization in complex systems. *J-PART*, 4(3): 393-410.

Durant, R.F. & Warber, A.L. (2001). Networking in the shadow of hierarchy: Public policy, the administrative presidency, and the neo-administrative state. Pinhabitantial Studies Quarterly, 31(2): 221-244.

Etzioni, A. (ed.) (1995), New Communautarian Thinking: Persons, Virtues, Institutions and Communities, Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia.

Fenger, M. & V. Bekkers (2007), The governance concept in public administration, in: V. Bekkers, G.

Dijkstra, A. Edwards & M. Fenger (Eds.), *Governance and the democratic deficit: Assessing the democratic legitimacy of governance practices* (pp. 35-60). Aldershot: Ashgate, pp. 13-35.

Guardian, the (2011). David *Cameron: Have no doubt, the big society is on its way*. Retrieved from: http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2011/feb/12/david-cameron-big-society-good

Goldstein, (1999), Emergence as a construct: History and Issues, in: *Emergence*, vol.1, nr. 1, pp. 49-72.

Goodin, R. (1998), *The theory of institutional design*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hajer, M.A. & D. Laws (2006), Ordering through discourse, in: Goodin, R., M. Rein & M. Moran (eds.), *Handbook of Public Policy.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 250-268.

Heylighen, F. (2001). The science of self-organization and adaptivity. In: L.D. Kiel (Ed.) *Knowledge Management, Organizational Intelligence and Learning, and Complexity*. The Encyclopedia of Life Support Systems. Oxford: EOLSS Publishers.

Huygen, A., Van Marissing, E. & Boutellier, J.C.J. (2012). *Condities voor zelforganisatie*. Utrecht: Verwey-Jonker Instituut.

Jantsch, E. (1980). The Self-organizing Universe: Scientific and Human Implications of the Emerging Paradigm of Evolution. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Jessop, B (1997) Capitalism and its future: remarks on regulation, government and governance, In: *Review of International Political Economy,* vol. 4, pp 561-81

Jessop, B. (1998). The rise of governance and the risks of failure: the case of economic development. *International Social Science Journal*, 50(155): 29-45.

Johnson, S. (2001). *Emergence*. London, Pearson.

Kauffmann, S.A. (1993). *The origins of order: Self-organization and selection in evolution*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Kooiman, J. (1993), Governance and governability: suing complexity, dynamics and diversity;, in. Kooiman, J. (eds.), *Modern governance*, London: Sage, pp. 9-20.

Luhmann, N. (1995). *Social systems*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Meerkerk, I., van, Boonstra, B. & Edelenbos, J. (2012). Self-organization in Urban Regeneration: A Two-Case Comparative Research. *European Planning Studies*, 1: 1-23.

Milward, H.B & K. Provan (2000) Governing the Hollow State. In: *Journal of Public Administration Theory and Practice*, vol, 10, nr. 2, pp. :359-379

Milward , H.B. & K. Provan (2003), *Managing networks effectively*. Paper presented at the National Management Research Conference, Georgetown University Washington, October 9-11.

Newman, J. (2001). Modernizing governance: New labour, policy and society. Sage Publications.

Nicholls, W. (2009). Place, networks, space: theorizing the geographies of social movements.

>*Transactions of the British Institute of Geographers*, 34(1): 78-93.

Ostrom, E. (1999). *Self-governance and Forest Resources*. *Occasional Paper No: 20*. Jakarta: Center for
>International Forestry Research.

Pfeffer, J. & G. Salancik (1978), *The external control of organizations*. New York: Harper

Pierre, J. & B. Peters (2000), Governance , politics and the state. Houndsmills: Palgrave.

Prigogine, I. & Stengers, I. (1984). *Order out of chaos: man's new dialogue with nature*. New York: NY,
>Bantam Books.

Putnam, R. (1995), *Bowling alone.* New York: Simon & Schuster

Rhodes, W. (1997), Understanding governance. Buckingham: Open University Press

Scharpf, F.W. (1994). Games real actors could play positive and negative coordination in embedded
>negotiations. *Journal of Theoretical Politics, 6*(1): 27-53.

Sørensen, E. (2006). Metagovernance the changing role of politicians in processes of democratic
>governance. The American Review of Public Administration, 36 (1), 98-114.

Uzzi, B. & Spiro, J. (2005). Collaboration and Creativity: The Small World Problem. *American Journal of
>Sociology*, 111, 447-504.

Wolf, T. de, & Holvoet, T. (2005). Emergence versus self-organisation: Different concepts but promising

when combined. In: *Engineering self-organising systems* (pp. 1-15). Springer Berlin Heidelberg.

Weick, K. (1969), *The Social Psychology of Organizing*. Reading Mass: Addison-Wesley

Whitehead, M. (2003). 'In the shadow of hierarchy': Meta-governance, policy reform and urban
>regeneration in the west midlands. *Area*, 35(1): 6-14.

Zwaard, J. van der & Specht, M. (2013). *Betrokken bewoners, betrouwbare overheid. Condities en
>competenties voor burgerkracht in de buurt*. Rotterdam, Kenniswerkplaats Leefbare Wijken EUR.

Yin, K. (2003, 3rd ed.), Casy study research. Thousand Oaks: Sage

Consulted documents

Amersfoort

Organization	Document
Municipality of Amersfoort	Municipality of Amersfoort (2013). Maatschappelijke overname wijkcentra. Retrieved from: http://www.amersfoort.nl/4/ontmoetingindewijk/Maatschappelijke-overname-wijkcentra.html
	Municipality of Amersfoort (2012a). Brief van College van Burgemeester en Wethouders. Maatschappelijke overname wijkcentrum het Klokhuis. MO/VW/4140528. 26 June 2012.
	Municipality of Amersfoort (2012b). Collegebesluit. MO/VW/4141616. 27 June 2012.
Het Klokhuis	Klokhuis, het (2012). Wijkvereniging Het Klokhuis. Bedrijfsplan. 2012.
Media documents	Dichtbij (2013). Het geheim van het Klokhuis. Retrieved from: http://www.dichtbij.nl/eemland/ondernemersnieuws/artikel/2837754/het-geheim-van-t-klokhuis.aspx
	LPB (2013). 14-2 wijkondernemerschap en krachtige bewonersproducties. Retreived from: http://www.lpb.nl/expert-sessies/expert-sessies-2013/14-2-wijkondernemerschap-en-krachtige-bewonersproducties/
	Mediagroep EVA (2012). Wijkvereniging wil exploitatie Het Klokhuis overnemen. Retrieved from: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ESXbmlOUvRY
	Twitter (2014). Klokhuis Amersfoort. Retrieved from: https://twitter.com/KlokhuisAfrt
	Volkskrant (2013). Buurt moet het voortaan zelf doen. Retrieved from: http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/2844/Archief/archief/article/detail/3397384/2013/02/21/Buurt-moet-het-voortaan-zelf-doen.dhtml
	Weekkrant Amersfoort Nu (2012). Zelfstandig beheer Het Klokhuis lijkt te lukken. Retrieved from: http://www.deweekkrant.nl/artikel/2012/november/20/a_zelfstandig_beheer_het_klokhuis_lijkt_te_lukken

Amsterdam

Organization	Document
Municipality of Amsterdam	Municipality of Amsterdam (2012a). Bewonersinitiatief. De Meevaart in handen van bewoners: een wijkonderneming in ontwikkeling.
	Municipality of Amsterdam (2012b). Actieplan: Vertrouwen in de stad. Doorontwikkeling bewonersgestuurde wijkontwikkelingen en wijkondernemingen.
	Municipality of Amsterdam – District East (2011). Kadernota versterking sociaal domein.
	Municipality of Amsterdam – District East (2012). Jaarsubsidie 2013.
De Meevaart	Meevaart, de (2012a). Meevaart of tegenstroom.
	Meevaart, de (2012b). De Meevaart: op weg naar een wijkonderneming. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6zDPapxaXqE

Media documents	Meevaart, de (2013). Meevaart Ontwikkel Groep, wat is dat? Retrieved from: http://meevaart.nl/
	Groot Oost TV (2012). De Meevaart is open! Retrieved from: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BWY4Dgno8go
	Groot Oost TV (2013). De oogst van de Indische Buurt. Retrieved from: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5PS9uipSy-k
	Parool, het (2012). In de Meevaart spelt niemand de baas. 22 June 2012. Saskia Naafs.
	Twitter (2013). De Meevaart. Retrieved from: https://twitter.com/Meevaart