

From global goals to local development policy

How partnerships as a policy idea changes through policy translation

Hustad, Oda

Published in:
Development Policy Review

DOI:
[10.1111/dpr.12659](https://doi.org/10.1111/dpr.12659)

Publication date:
2022

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Citation for published version (APA):
Hustad, O. (2022). From global goals to local development policy: How partnerships as a policy idea changes through policy translation. *Development Policy Review, Early View*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/dpr.12659>

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain.
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal.

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact rucforsk@kb.dk providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

From global goal to local development policy: How partnerships as a policy idea changes through policy translation

Oda Hustad 

Department of Social Sciences and Business,
Roskilde University, Denmark

Correspondence

Oda Hustad, Department of Social
Sciences and Business, Roskilde University,
Universitetsvej 1, 4000 Roskilde, Denmark.
Email: ohustad@ruc.dk

Summary

Motivation: Partnerships between governments, private companies, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are increasingly popular tools for policy implementation. Much research attention has been paid to the formation and design of partnerships and how they can improve their development impact but there is little on how partnerships translate into local development policies.

Purpose: This article explores how partnerships as a policy idea, embedded in United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 17, changes as it is translated into local development policies. It traces how such translation processes change the problems that development partnerships set out to solve, and how they aim to solve them.

Methods and approach: The article presents a case study of a translation of SDG 17 that took place in interaction between the Danish International Development Agency (Danida) and a policy network. The data set consists of documents and in-depth interviews with policy network actors.

Findings: From the UN's perspective, SDG 17 set out to mobilize private sector resources to achieve the SDGs. However, SDG 17 became a solution to partially global, but mostly local issues when it was translated into a Danish development policy, and consequently, a partnership programme. Some discursive alliances between policy

This is an open access article under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) License, which permits use, distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

© 2022 The Author. *Development Policy Review* published by John Wiley & Sons Ltd on behalf of ODI.

network actors were more effective than others in advancing their discourses in the translation process, which influenced this outcome. These findings contribute to research on development partnerships by showing how partnership as a policy idea, embedded in SDG 17, changes through policy translation.

Policy implications: Findings from the study highlight the importance of discursive alliances in policy networks when policy ideas are localized into development policies. Moreover, the findings imply that when studying the translation of ideas into development policies, it is important to first disentangle the local conditions under which such processes take place to fully understand how they determine the translation outcome.

KEYWORDS

Agenda 2030, discourse, discursive legitimation strategies, partnerships, policy implantation, policy translation, SDG17

1 | INTRODUCTION

Partnerships between organizations from the public, private, and civil society sectors are proliferating as a tool for implementing development policy aims (Brogaard & Petersen, 2017; Pfisterer & van Tulder, 2021). The popularity of partnerships can be attributed to their perceived capability to address problems that governments, companies, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) cannot solve separately (Kolk et al., 2008), including climate change, poverty, and inequalities (Gray & Purdy, 2018). In the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), launched in 2015, partnerships are promoted as an effective means for their implementation until their conclusion in 2030 (UN, 2015). From a United Nations (UN) perspective, SDG 17 partially reflects the need to mobilize more official development assistance (ODA) from high-income countries to low-, lower-middle, and upper-middle income countries (L&MICs), but also the acknowledgement that governments cannot achieve the SDGs alone. Therefore, SDG 17 aims to engage the private sector and its resources in implementing the SDGs through partnerships (Kamau et al., 2018). SDG 17 particularly stresses partnerships as a means to “mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals in all countries, in particular developing countries” (UN, 2015, p. 32). The organizational literature on partnerships equally hails them as this century's new “organizational *zeitgeist* in dealing with societal issues” (Vurro et al., 2010, p. 40). Much research attention has been paid to the formation and design of partnerships (Bryson et al., 2015; Selsky & Parker, 2005) and how they can improve their development impact (Pfisterer & van Tulder, 2021). However, the question of how partnerships as a policy idea, embedded in SDG 17, can change in the process of translation into development policies has been little explored in previous research on partnerships. This question is important as SDG 17, in which the partnership concept is embedded, is increasingly being used in government policies to implement development policy aims (Brogaard & Petersen, 2017; Pfisterer & van Tulder, 2021). When this happens, the very idea of partnership becomes infused with local discourses, and the problems that partnerships set out to solve, and how, inevitably change. Thus, investigating how SDG 17 is adapted and modified according to both global development issues and local political concerns in policy translation processes (Mukhtarov, 2014) produces important knowledge about the policy context in which development partnerships operate.

Recent studies have started to unpack the mechanisms behind how the SDGs are localized in different settings (Belda-Miquel et al., 2019; Bexell & Jönsson, 2019, 2020; Fox & Macleod, 2021; Jönsson & Bexell, 2021). However, few studies have investigated how specific SDGs are localized into development policies, and the microprocesses of how their meaning changes in such processes. Specifically, the localization of SDG 17 remains unexplored. Studying how SDG 17 is translated into government development policies is important, as such translation processes largely form the conditions for development partnerships in the context of the SDGs. This article contributes to the literature on development partnerships by providing a study of the translation of partnerships as a policy idea, embedded in SDG 17, into a Danish government development policy and a government-supported partnership programme following the 2015 launch of the SDGs. The translation process took place in interaction between the Danish International Development Agency (Danida) and a network of NGOs, interest organizations representing the interests of industry or civil society, research institutions, and labour unions. I advance policy translation (Clarke et al., 2015; Johnson & Hagström, 2005; Mukhtarov, 2014) as a useful theoretical lens through which to deconstruct how actors translate global policy ideas, such as SDG 17, according to local discourses and notions of (il)legitimacy. The translation perspective emphasizes how ideas become infused with contextually dependent and shaped interests as they travel into new localities. I approach this translation process by exploring how negotiations between actors in a policy network affected the translation outcome, and how these actors drew on specific discourses and discursive legitimation strategies to advance their respective translations of SDG 17.

Findings from the study show that SDG 17 became a solution to both global and local concerns when it was translated into Danish development policy. In this process, particular discursive alliances between policy network actors were most successful in advancing their discourses into the final translation of SDG 17. The use of moral arguments, such as questioning whether business interests are compatible with development interests, was the most effective discursive strategy for advancing such discourses into the final translation outcome. These findings contribute to the literature on development partnerships by providing a new perspective on how the problems partnerships are set out to solve, and how they aim to do this, change as the partnership idea, embedded in SDG 17, travels into development policies. Partnerships are seen as a core tool to achieve the SDGs, and the 2030 deadline for their achievement is fast approaching. Therefore, these findings are important to provide a better understanding of how partnerships as a policy idea, embedded in SDG 17, can provide solutions to both global and local concerns when translated into local development policies.

The remainder of this article proceeds as follows. Section 2 presents the theoretical framework of the translation. Section 3 presents SDG 17 as a policy idea. Section 4 elaborates on how discourses and discursive legitimation strategies are relevant for analysing policy translation processes. The data-collection and analysis methods are then presented in Section 5, followed by the case analysis in Section 6. The concluding Section 7 offers a discussion that summarizes the findings from the study, their implications for discussions on policy translation and partnerships for development, and implications for further research.

2 | LOCALIZING SDG 17 THROUGH POLICY TRANSLATION

Interest in transnational policy transfer has in recent years gained momentum in research and practice, due to advances in communication technology resulting in policy ideas travelling more quickly from one geographical context to another (Peck & Theodore, 2015). Ideas can be defined as images that become known in the form of pictures or sounds, which actors materialize into objects or actions in localization processes (Czarniawska & Joerges, 1996). Much research has paid attention to understanding how and why policy ideas travel. This issue has predominantly been studied through the concept of diffusion, defined as “the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system” (Rogers, 1962, p. 5). In theorizing how ideas move from one locality to another, the diffusion model originally builds on Shannon and Weaver's (1949) communication model, which focuses on the content that the sender of the idea puts into it and how these intentions may be realized by the idea recipient(s). Problems in the communication process is a suggested explanation for why the recipient of the idea may not decode it in the manner intended by its sender (Shannon & Weaver, 1949). Thus, although recent diffusion studies

increasingly acknowledge the importance of local factors when policy ideas travel (Acharya, 2004; Ansari et al., 2010; Klinger-Vidra, 2018), this perspective largely assumes a rational-linear approach to such travel. The diffusion perspective contrasts with the policy translation perspective, which approaches the travel of policy ideas through a semiotic communication model that understands communication as the production and exchange of meanings and puts the emphasis on the recipient of the idea rather than on the sender's intentions (Johnson & Hagström, 2005). From this perspective, the problems that ideas set out to solve and how they aim to solve them inevitably change when they travel to new places (Clarke et al., 2015). Distinctive branches of translation theory have been developed within actor-network theory, the knowledge-based perspective and Scandinavian institutionalism (Wæraas & Nielsen, 2016). In this study, I draw on the translation theory developed by Scandinavian organizational scholars, who in the early 1990s developed a distinctive Scandinavian branch of institutionalism with a strong constructivist approach (Czarniawska & Joerges, 1996). In observing how organizational ideas that appear to be isomorphic often become heterogeneous when they are implemented in different organizational contexts, they used the concept of translation as a means to understand how this occurs (Boxenbaum & Pedersen, 2009). Translation scholars argue that in order to travel, practices and institutions must be simplified and abstracted into ideas (Czarniawska & Sevón, 2005). Drawing inspiration from the work of Latour (1986) in particular, translation scholars in the Scandinavian institutionalist camp argue that an idea inevitably changes when it travels from one context to another, as the idea is translated by people who modify, deflect, drop, add to, and appropriate according to other elements in the location in which it is translated (Latour, 1986). In the words of Czarniawska & Sevón (2005, p. 8): "to set something in a new place or another point in time is to construct it anew."

In this study, I contribute to the literature on idea localization by highlighting the importance of discursive struggles in translation processes and, relatedly, how discursive divergences and alliances affect such translation processes. To this end, the study demonstrates how the localization of policy ideas, such as SDG 17, can be understood as micro-processes of translation that unfold in policy networks. The policy translation perspective provides a framework for understanding how actors in such networks engage in argumentative struggles in order to shape the meaning of ideas (Johnson & Hagström, 2005), and in this process construct organizational identities (Sahlin-Andersson, 1996) drawing on local discourses and notions of legitimacy (Waldorff, 2013). Such processes, in turn, change SDG 17 as a policy idea as it travels into new localities (Clarke et al., 2015). Thus far, research on policy networks has been overly focused on network consensus, while attention to conflicts and power relations has been almost absent (Koppenjan, 2016). Scholars have consequently called for more research on how discourses are formed in conflicts where network actors advance particular arguments and aim to get acceptance for their arguments from other network actors (Torfing, 2012). This study contributes to these discussions by showing the discursive alliances, convergences, and tensions arising in policy networks during translation processes, and how, ultimately, some discourses become dominant while others are lost in the final translation of the policy idea.

3 | APPROACHING SDG 17 AS A GLOBAL POLICY IDEA

To understand how SDG 17 as a policy idea changes as it travels into new localities, it is relevant to briefly outline the problems SDG 17 set out to solve from a UN perspective. According to participants in the SDG negotiations, SDG 17 reflected both old and new discussions in the UN. The old discussion mainly revolved around the North-South "development partnership" and the extent to which HICs should be held accountable for helping L&MICs by providing ODA, cancelling debt, and promoting inclusive trade. Reportedly, this was a classic UN issue that had been debated for decades. The new discussion recognized that HICs' existing ODA commitments would not be enough to achieve the SDGs, and that financial resources had to be mobilized from other sources, including the private sector. Consequently, this part of the SDG 17 discussion revolved around how to engage the private sector in implementing the SDGs through partnerships (Kamau et al., 2018). This is particularly visible in the goal's targets 17.16 and 17.17:

17.16: Enhance the global partnership for sustainable development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial

resources, to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals in all countries, in particular developing countries.

17.17: Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships (UN, 2015, p. 32).

According to participants in the SDG negotiations, these targets encompass an increasing orientation towards the private sector in the UN, which was contested among member countries. As a former UN official put it in the course of an interview on April 17, 2020:

There was a resistance among member countries to give private companies too much influence and too much power, and to let them come too far into the UN, because they were afraid that the countries would lose their formal influence. But in the UN secretariat, there was a strong understanding that to change the world, you need to have the world's large companies on board, and that required stronger partnerships.

From the UN perspective, then, SDG 17 set out to solve the problem of financing sustainable development by, among other things, encouraging partnerships with the private sector to achieve the SDGs, albeit a contested issue.

4 | TRANSLATING POLICY IDEAS THROUGH DISCOURSES AND LEGITIMATION STRATEGIES

When travelling into a new locality, policy ideas need to gain local legitimacy to be translated (Wedlin & Sahlin, 2017). This entails being perceived as living up to the moral standards of the translating actors (Deephouse et al., 2017). However, as policy translation in networks often occurs as conflicts between competing translations of a policy idea (Johnson & Hagström, 2005), it is to be expected that actors will draw on different constructions of legitimacy and illegitimacy in their translations of the policy idea. Translation processes allow network actors to draw on different discourses in order to legitimize their translation of the idea in question (Waldorff, 2013). Discourses are systems of statements which construct objects (Phillips et al., 2004) and ascribe identities to them (Phillips & Hardy, 2002). In translation processes, discourses can be drawn on to construct practices and identities deemed legitimate or illegitimate (van Leeuwen, 2008). Thus, actors can use discourse as a strategic resource to produce identities and outcomes that are beneficial to them (Hardy et al., 2000; Latour, 1986). In policy translation, it is in the reconstruction of the idea as a legitimate solution to a problem in the locality where it is translated that the idea takes on its new translated form (Czarniawska & Joerges, 1996; Mukhtarov, 2014). Looking at legitimations and delegitimations of an idea in policy translation processes reveals the discourses actors deploy in order to reconstruct the idea as legitimate and/or illegitimate (Mukhtarov, 2014).

In the analysis of this study, I draw on van Leeuwen's (2008) framework of discursive legitimation strategies to analyse the strategies that actors in the policy network used to translate SDG 17 according to particular discourses. Discursive legitimation strategies are more or less conscious ways of deploying discourses or discursive resources to establish (il)legitimacy (Vaara et al., 2006). Analyses of such strategies in translation processes not only pay attention to which discourses actors draw on in translating an idea, but also to the discursive practices by which they legitimize these discourses. Van Leeuwen (2008) presents four categories of discursive legitimation strategies: authorization, rationalization, moral evaluation, and mythopoesis. Authorization is defined as legitimation by reference to authorities. These authorities can be authoritative persons who are perceived as legitimate due to their status as experts or role models, but they can also be impersonal, such as laws, regulations, and conventions. For example, the UN can be perceived as an authority because it is associated with a certain level of legitimacy (Hustad, 2020). Moral evaluation

is defined as legitimation by referring to specific moral values. In some cases, moral evaluation is expressed through adjectives such as “good” and “bad”, but in most cases it is implicitly linked to discourses of moral value. Empirically, moral evaluation can be recognized by its use of adjectives such as “healthy,” “irresponsible,” etc., by linking practices to expressions of what is morally right or desirable, or by using analogies to practices and ideas perceived as legitimate or illegitimate. Rationalization is legitimation by reference to the goals, uses, and effects of specific practices. This strategy of discursive legitimation always has a moral basis, although not necessarily explicitly, and the categories of rationalization and moral evaluation are thus often closely linked. Finally, mythopoesis is legitimation through narrative-type reconstructions; that is, by telling a story that proves evidence of acceptable, appropriate, or preferential behaviour (van Leeuwen, 2008).

5 | DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

This study was designed as an exploratory single-case study (Flyvbjerg, 2006) with the aim of investigating how partnership as a policy idea, embedded in SDG 17, changed as it was translated into a Danish development policy and consequently, a partnership programme. In country performance on the SDGs, Denmark ranked second globally on its general SDG performance in 2022, and scored high on indicators related to SDG 17 (Sachs et al., 2022). Moreover, Denmark has a long history of working with cross-sector partnerships in its development policies (Brogaard & Petersen, 2017), as well as in its corporate social responsibility (CSR) policies (Albareda et al., 2007; Vallentin, 2015). The Danish case is particularly appropriate for studying how the problems partnerships set out to solve, and how they set out to solve them, change when SDG 17 is translated into local development policy. This is because we can assume that the precedence of partnerships in Danish government policies, as well as Denmark's high score on SDG performance, makes Danish authorities particularly likely to translate SDG 17 into their development policy close to the UN's intention. I started the data collection by gathering official documents from Danida documenting the translation of SDG 17, including the draft of the Danish development strategy, the final development strategy, 62 public hearing inputs to the draft strategy from Danish organizations, and documents related to Danida's new partnership programme (Danida, 2016, 2017a, 2017b). From the 62 hearing inputs, 10 did not mention SDG 17 or partnerships, and were therefore excluded from the data set. Identifying key actors in the translation process was important in the early data collection (Mukhtarov, 2014). I identified the first policy network actors from official meeting minutes documenting consultations between Danida and representatives from the Danish private sector, NGOs, labour unions, and research institutions about the development strategy and partnership programme and contacted them for interviews. Some of the interviewees represented organizations that had sent written hearing inputs to the draft development strategy and could thus elaborate on these. Using respondent-driven interview sampling (Heckathorn, 1997) and assuming that influential actors in a given policy field know each other in person or by reputation, I asked each interviewee to name other key actors who had participated in the translation process. This was necessary, as some of these actors were not mentioned in official documents and were thus “hidden” (Heckathorn, 1997).

In the interview sampling, I prioritized contacting actors who had been invited to discuss the development strategy and/or the partnership programme with Danida as key representatives from their sectors (industry, civil society, and research). I also interviewed public servants from Danida, a former minister who had been involved in initiating the partnership programme, and a former UN representative involved in the formulation of the SDGs. In total, I conducted 12 in-depth interviews with former ministers, UN officials, civil servants from Danida and key representatives from different sectors in the policy network about the discussion themes that emerged during the translation of SDG 17. I continued interviewing until the same themes emerged multiple times. All interviewees were anonymized in order not to compromise their professional status. Table 1 provides an overview of the complete data material. Based on the interviews and official Danida statements, I identified three steps in the translation process of SDG 17: the initial translation conducted by Danida in the draft development strategy, the translations in the 52 hearing inputs conducted by the network of Danish organizations, and the final translation conducted by Danida in its new partnership programme. I coded the data documenting these three steps separately. First, statements from

TABLE 1 Overview of complete data material

Interview			
Interview participant	Role in translation process	Duration	Interview date
Industry representative 1	Involved in discussions with Danida about the new development strategy as representatives of key interest organizations for Danish industry, civil society, and research institutions	70 minutes	16.12.2019
NGO representative 1		70 minutes	09.01.2020
Industry representative 2	Participated in UN negotiations on the SDGs	45 minutes	18.03.2020
NGO representative 2		85 minutes	25.03.2020
Research representative	Initiated the DMDP program	45 minutes	19.03.2020
Former UN official		45 minutes	17.04.2020
Former Minister for Development Cooperation	Involved in the formulation of DMDP guidelines and the governance of the DMDP program	40 minutes	17.03.2020
MFA staff member 1		60 minutes	08.01.2020
MFA staff member 2	DMDP consultant 1	120 minutes	08.04.2020
MFA staff member 3		45 minutes	19.06.2020
DMDP consultant 1	DMDP consultant 1	70 minutes	27.02.2020
DMDP consultant 1		60 minutes	27.02.2020
Documents			
Document sender	Document title	Dating from	
Danida	"The World 2030" – development strategy draft	May 2016	
52 organizations (NGOs, companies, interest organizations, labor unions, research institutions)	52 written hearing inputs to the strategy draft	May 2016 – August 2016	
Danida	DMDP programme document	June 2016	
Danida	"The World 2030" – final development strategy	January 2017	

the data were divided into two main categories, namely statements that legitimized SDG 17 and private-sector partnerships, and statements that delegitimized them. I subsequently categorized these statements according to the different legitimization strategies described by van Leeuwen (2008). See Table 2 for empirical examples of the use of discursive strategies. Going through the material, I analysed the problematizations on which actors drew in order to legitimize or delegitimize SDG 17, and inductively extracted the discourses they deployed in this process. The actors thus translated SDG 17 by relating it to specific discourses encompassing notions of identity and (il)legitimacy and legitimized these translations through discursive strategies.

6 | CASE PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

By the time the SDGs were adopted, partnerships with the private sector were already a well-known development tool for Danida. Between 1993 and 2014, Danida launched five different government partnership programmes which aimed at engaging the Danish private sector in development initiatives (Brogaard & Petersen, 2017). The UN's 2015 launch of the SDGs happened shortly after a shift in Danish political rule from a left-wing to a right-wing government. The new foreign minister, Kristian Jensen, rapidly initiated work on a new development strategy using the SDGs as an overall framework (Danish Council for Development Policy, 2016), and the process of translating SDG 17 into Danish development policy thus began. During early 2016, Jensen received inputs for the forthcoming development strategy through a series of formal and informal meetings with Danish citizens, politicians, advisory councils, and major Danish stakeholder organizations. In May 2016, Danida sent a draft of the new strategy to a public hearing where they received written

TABLE 2 Empirical examples of discursive legitimation strategies

Legitimation strategy	Empirical example	Discourse
Authorization	"With SDG 17, there has come a needed focus on including new actors in development aid as an absolute necessity to achieve the SDGs" (BØRNEfonden, personal communication, 2020).	"Shared responsibility" discourse
Rationalization	"If the full potential of the private sector's engagement in developing countries is to be realized, (...) it will demand more risk-willingness, flexibility and responsiveness at the embassies and in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs" (Confederation of Danish Industry, personal communication, 2020).	"Business climate" discourse
Moral evaluation	"We have some really good, competent companies in Denmark, who know everything about work environment and environmental impact and how to treat your employees right" (Industry representative 1).	"Shared responsibility" discourse
Mythopoesis	"We have valuable experiences from Africa's horn, where we in collaboration with Danish shipping companies have secured vocational education for more than 12,000 young people" (Save the Children, personal communication, 2020).	"Shared responsibility" discourse
Delegitimation strategy	Empirical example	Discourse
Authorization	"It should be made clear that compliance with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights is not a wish, but a demand" (Globalt Fokus, personal communication, 2020).	"Accountability" discourse
Rationalization	"It is important that the strategy focuses not only on the possibilities of private sector collaboration, but also prioritizes (...) that companies actually act sustainably" (92-gruppen, personal communication, 2020).	"Accountability" discourse
Moral evaluation	"It should be written more clearly that development aid is given because it is beneficial for the poorest countries, and that the safeguarding of Danish commercial and security political interests will happen through the achievement of this primary goal" (DanChurchAid, personal communication, 2020).	"Purpose" discourse
Mythopoesis	"The private sector's business interests have not in themselves secured that development aid funds were used effectively" (3F, personal communication, 2020).	"Accountability" discourse

inputs from 62 Danish organizations, including NGOs, companies, research institutions, labour unions, and interest organizations. The final strategy, "The World 2030: Denmark's Strategy for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Action," was passed in the Danish Parliament in January 2017 (Danida, 2017a). By then, Danida had already developed the successor of its previous partnership programmes, namely the Danida Market Development Partnerships (DMDP) programme. Its first guidelines and application round were launched in mid-2016 and were further developed in subsequent years. The following case analysis covers three steps in the translation process of SDG 17: the initial translation conducted by Danida in the draft development strategy, the translations in the hearing inputs from the network of Danish stakeholder organizations, and the final translation conducted by Danida in the DMDP programme.

6.1 | Reintroducing the private sector as a development partner

The development strategy draft, which was sent to a public hearing in May 2016, built heavily on the SDG framework and stated that particularly SDG 16 concerning peace, justice, and strong institutions and SDG 17 about partnerships would be a connecting thread in the overall Danish development engagement (Danida, 2016). I find that in the strategy draft, Danida drew on two main discourses in its translation of SDG 17, namely a "shared responsibility" discourse and

a “purpose” discourse. The “shared responsibility” discourse emphasized one of the problems that SDG 17 originally set out to solve from the UN perspective: that ODA from HICs would not be sufficient for achieving the SDGs before 2030. Danida primarily translated this discourse drawing on authorization as a discursive strategy by referring to the authority of the UN, including UN statements and initiatives. The main problematization in the “shared responsibility” discourse was the UN’s statement that reaching the SDGs by 2030 would require increased global investments of between USD 1.9 and USD 3.1 billion per year. As a solution to this problem, Danida stated that Denmark would “proactively respond to international opportunities and establish new types of partnerships as contemplated by the new global agreements: The Addis Ababa Agreement on Financing for Development, which is linked to Agenda 2030, and especially Sustainable Development Goal No. 17” (Danida, 2016, p. 9). Referring to the call in these UN agendas for initiating partnerships in order to “create results in the right scope,” Danida stated that Denmark’s development co-operation would build on a “whole-of-society” approach including Danish actors from all sectors (Danida, 2016). Thus, Danida legitimized the “shared responsibility” discourse through authorization by referring to the authority of the UN (van Leeuwen, 2008), and the problems and proposed solutions that the UN had formulated in the SDGs. By stating that “Denmark assumes joint global responsibility through its development policy” (Danida, 2016, p. 1), Denmark’s identity as a development actor responding to these global issues as framed by the UN was constructed.

The problems that partnerships and SDG 17 set out to solve from the UN perspective changed in the “purpose” discourse, which was concerned with the purpose of Danish development policy and Danida-facilitated partnerships. This discourse translated SDG 17 as being about contributing to national interests and issues, as Danida stated that “Denmark sees existing and new partnerships as a way of promoting Danish interests in our international agreements” (Danida, 2016, p. 9). The “purpose” discourse was legitimized through the discursive strategy of rationalization, referring to the goals, uses, and effects of partnerships as both an idea and as practice (van Leeuwen, 2008). The draft strategy outlined three interrelated problems relevant for Danida’s collaboration with the private sector through partnerships: a lack of jobs for young citizens in L&MICs, economic migration from these countries to Denmark resulting from unemployment, and export barriers preventing the Danish private sector from investing in these countries. Danida stated that they would “address the root causes of migration” (Danida, 2016, p. 19) by creating growth and new job opportunities in L&MICs, which further would “open up new market and investment opportunities for Danish businesses and Danish investors” (Danida, 2016, p. 20). Danida rationalized that partnerships would be a means to these ends (Danida, 2016), arguing that the Danish private sector would be an increasingly relevant partner for contributing with its expertise and resources to create growth and sustainable development. To this end, Danida argued that its co-operation with the private sector would enable a gearing up of development aid funds and create additional value beyond what Danida could create alone (Danida, 2016). In contrast to the “shared responsibility” discourse, which translated SDG 17 according to global issues stated by the UN, the “purpose” discourse translated SDG 17 according to Danish self-interest, including Danish trade opportunities and the prevention of migration to Denmark. These contrasting discourses indicate that in its translation of SDG 17, Danida aimed to legitimize its development initiatives in two different arenas: the global arena represented by the UN, and the national arena represented by Danish political interests, which at the time were strongly focused on migration (Jensen, 2016). Partnerships, in which the Danish private sector was expected to play an important part, were thus translated as a means to achieve both global interests stated in the SDGs and Danish interests.

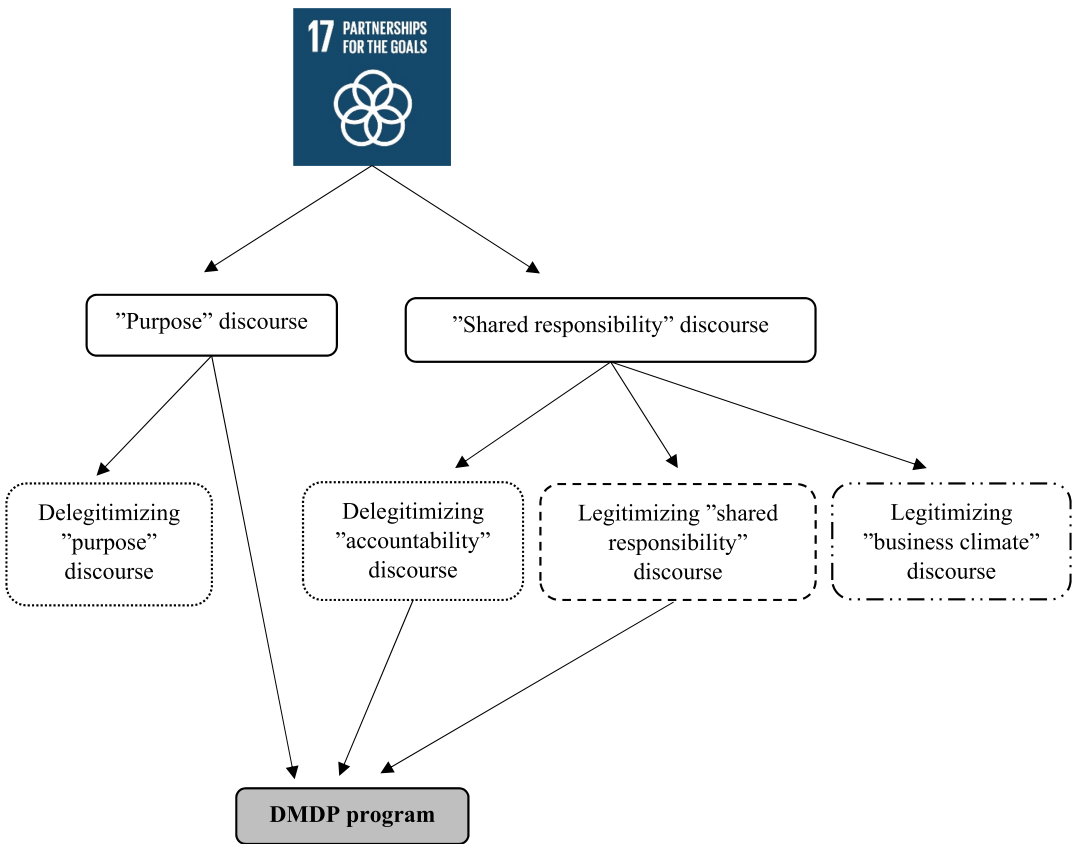
6.2 | Translating SDG 17 between policy network actors

Danida’s initial translation of SDG 17 sparked both positive and critical reactions in the hearing inputs and reactions from the policy network. However, there was a broad consensus that the private sector had a role to play in Danish development aid, as a research representative explained on March 19, 2020:

Nobody was critical in the sense that they said, “we should not do that” [work with the private sector]. (...) What I asked about was “what about the experiences from former private sector programs, and all the mistakes that were made with them?” (...) And others asked, “how do we avoid that this does

not just become an export instrument for Danish companies, but also that it actually becomes poverty alleviation in L&MICs?"

There was a lively discussion in the policy network about how partnerships with the private sector should take place. In the reactions to Danida's translation of SDG 17, I found that network actors drew on four discourses, namely a "purpose," an "accountability," a "shared responsibility," and a "business climate" discourse. The "purpose" discourse embodied critical reactions to Danida's "purpose" discourse and delegitimized Danida's construction of the purpose of Danish development aid. The "shared responsibility," "accountability," and "business climate" discourse embodied both positive and critical reactions to Danida's initial "shared responsibility" discourse. I analyse these discursive reactions, which are also illustrated in Figure 1, in the following paragraphs.



- Translated by Danida
- Translated by NGOs and civil society interest organizations
- Translated by large NGOs and industrial organizations
- Translated by industrial organizations, a small NGO and a civil society interest organization

FIGURE 1 Illustration of the discourses that made it through to the final translation of SDG 17 and the ones that did not, and the actors carrying them. Source: author.

6.2.1 | The contested purpose of Danish development aid

Danida's "purpose" discourse, which translated SDG 17 according to Danish interests, sparked a more critical "purpose" discourse in the policy network that delegitimized Danida's initial translation. This discourse was particularly promoted by large and small NGOs.¹ Through the hearing inputs, they most commonly translated the "purpose" discourse drawing on moral evaluation as a discursive strategy by implicitly referencing specific moral values (van Leeuwen, 2008). The NGOs took the moral position that Danish interests should not play a big role in Danish development aid, but that aid should rather be focused on "helping the world's poorest and most marginalized people by fulfilling their rights" (AXIS, personal communication, 2020). Large NGOs especially criticized Danida for approaching poverty reduction merely as a derived effect of economic growth and job creation in lower-middle and upper-middle income countries. They argued that development aid should first and foremost be poverty oriented, and that the primary purpose of including the private sector and safeguarding of Danish commercial interests should be to contribute to this purpose, rather than the other way around (CARE Denmark, personal communication, 2020; DanChurchAid, personal communication, 2020; Globalt Fokus, personal communication, 2020; Plan Denmark, personal communication, 2020). Although the "purpose" discourse mainly dealt with the objective of Danish development aid, this discourse was highly related to the concept of partnerships, as Danida had argued that partnerships would be a means to realize Danish self-interests (Danida, 2016). In the translations of the "purpose" discourse, some large NGOs simultaneously drew on the discursive strategies of authorization and moral evaluation in arguing that the coupling of development aid and Danish trade interests could be interpreted as going against the Paris Agreement: "the Paris declaration [...] emphasizes that development aid should be given because it benefits the poorest countries (because they have rights), and not because it benefits Denmark" (DanChurchAid, personal communication, 2020). The "purpose" discourse was also translated through a combination of the discursive strategies of rationalization and moral evaluation, referring to the use of ideas and practices to achieve ends perceived as morally legitimate (van Leeuwen, 2008). For instance, an interest organization representing the interests of environmental NGOs rationalized that the private sector would not necessarily benefit the poorest and most vulnerable people in L&MICs, and emphasized that "it should not be made optional whether the strategy's strong focus on creating private sector growth actually delivers the social and environmental improvements that development aid is about" (92-gruppen, personal communication, 2020). Finally, small NGOs and interest organizations representing civil society in particular translated the "purpose" discourse, drawing on mythopoesis as a discursive strategy by providing examples that depicted private-sector involvement in development initiatives as illegitimate (van Leeuwen, 2008). They argued that "neoliberal free trade initiatives" had "worked as a battering ram for European and Danish transnational corporations' plundering of people and environment" (Afrika Kontakt, personal communication, 2020) and referred to well-known examples of corporate scandals such as the Rana Plaza accident in Bangladesh, soy expansion in South America, and oil sand extraction in Canada and Venezuela (92-gruppen, personal communication, 2020).

These reactions to Danida's "purpose" discourse demonstrate that in the critical "purpose" discourse, there was a discursive alliance between small and large NGOs. The "purpose" discourse introduced by Danida, which partially emphasized Danish self-interest, contrasted with the "purpose" discourse carried by these NGOs, which emphasized poverty orientation as the purpose of Danish development aid. This illustrates how the problems that partnerships were set out to solve became contested in the translations of SDG 17, which was manifested in Danida's and the NGOs' contrasting notions of the purpose of Danish development co-operation. Thus, different notions of (il)legitimacy led to different translations of the purpose of SDG 17.

¹Large" NGOs are here defined as NGOs with a turnover of 50 million Danish krone (DKK) or more in 2015 (see Frandsen & Løppenthin, 2017). "Small" NGOs are defined as NGOs with a turnover of less than DKK 50 million in 2015, again following Frandsen and Løppenthin (2017).

6.2.2 | Emphasizing the responsibility of Danish companies

While the policy network mostly reacted critically to Danida's "purpose" discourse, the reactions to Danida's "shared responsibility" discourse were mixed. Interest organizations representing industry interests and some large NGOs agreed with Danida's "shared responsibility" discourse. They drew on Danida's initial discursive legitimations that Danish development policy should build on a whole-of-society approach, and that Danish companies had a role as positive change agents in this approach. This discourse was legitimized through authorization as a discursive strategy, referring to the SDGs' focus on shared responsibility between actors from different sectors (UN, 2015), as well as through the discursive strategies of rationalization, moral evaluation, and mythopoesis. For instance, a large NGO moralized that the Danish private sector "should play a more active role in ensuring sustainable and socially responsible growth" (CARE Denmark, personal communication, 2020). A group of large NGOs and interest organizations representing industry rationalized that partnerships were an important driver for benefitting from the expertise of Danish companies in order to create positive change (ActionAid Denmark, personal communication, 2020; Confederation of Danish Industry, personal communication, 2020; Danish Agriculture & Food Council, personal communication, 2020). One representative from an interest organization representing industry emphasized Danish companies as particularly decent and responsible compared to companies based in L&MICs. They legitimized this view drawing on mythopoesis as a discursive strategy by referring to their own experiences of Danish companies as possessing particularly high moral standards in relation to working conditions (Industry representative 1). Another industry representative (Industry representative 2) saw the private sector as a particularly relevant partner for NGOs in Danish development initiatives, as they perceived Danish NGOs and companies as exceptionally partnership oriented, as they commented when interviewed in March, 2020:

If I am in Paris or Brussels for a dialogue about development aid, we [the industry and NGOs] are seated at opposite sides of the table, and the battle lines are clearly drawn. When we are in Denmark, we have a lot of cooperation, both politically, but also in concrete projects with a range of NGOs. All of the Danish NGOs, roughly speaking, would like to collaborate with us, and they have also hired staff that are exclusively trying to create collaborations with the private sector.

According to an NGO representative (NGO representative 2), however, this picture was more nuanced, as some Danish NGOs remained critical towards the private sector:

I would say that they are divided into two groups; those who really see the private sector as an ally and potential change agents that you can collaborate and create impact with (...), and those who see it as a more ideological battle, where the NGOs say "now it is not just states that we should scold for not living up to this and that, now it is also the companies, so we should be watchdogs towards them."

Overall, the "shared responsibility" discourse promoted in the policy network demonstrates a discursive alliance between large NGOs and industry representatives that together promoted the positive role and responsibility of the Danish private sector in development initiatives.

6.2.3 | Questioning the accountability of Danish companies

While the above reactions contributed to legitimizing Danida's initial "shared responsibility" discourse, this discourse also evoked more critical reactions. In particular, critics reacted with an "accountability" discourse that questioned whether Danish companies could live up to Danida's expectations of them. This discourse was particularly promoted by NGOs, labour unions, and interest organizations representing civil society, which drew on moral evaluation as

a discursive strategy to question whether the morality of Danish companies was compatible with that of Danish development aid. For instance, one small NGO was concerned that companies would not always be able to “unite their (legitimate) need to maximize income and minimize risks with the short-term and long-term interests of development cooperation” (Forests of the World, personal communication, 2020). The “accountability” discourse was also translated through the discursive strategy of authorization by reference to international guidelines and standards for responsible business conduct, such as the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGP), the UN Global Compact, the ILO Decent Work Agenda and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. For instance, one interest organization representing civil society made the criticism that the strategy draft focused too much on how Danida-supported companies could comply voluntarily with the UNGP, and argued that “compliance with the UNGP should not be a request, but a requirement” (Globalt Fokus, personal communication, 2020). The “accountability” discourse was further translated through the discursive strategy of mythopoesis, particularly by reference to evaluations of former Danida partnership programmes which had showed limited effects on development and job creation (CARE Denmark, personal communication, 2020). A labour union argued that “the private sector’s business interests have not in itself secured that aid funding has been used effectively” (3F, personal communication, 2020). Consequently, a labour union and an interest organization representing civil society drew on rationalization in suggesting that Danida should introduce sharpened requirements for companies to document results on poverty reduction and added value when receiving development funds from Danida (3F, personal communication, 2020; Globalt Fokus, personal communication, 2020).

According to an NGO representative (NGO representative 1), the above arguments were typical for the general discussions in the NGO environment about the role of the private sector:

The discussion was a lot about “how can we make demands on the private sector so that they conduct proper development aid? (...) Why should they not be measured on gender and democracy and environment and human rights when we are? When they are receiving development funds, they should be measured on the same terms.”

Interestingly, some of the NGOs that engaged in the “shared responsibility” discourse also drew on the “accountability” discourse. For instance, one large NGO that had been positive about the private sector also stated that “we recommend that it is added that Denmark will work to secure responsible business conduct through legislation and not through voluntariness, as this will benefit the many companies who determinedly work with responsible business conduct” (ActionAid Denmark, personal communication, 2020). This reflects the broad agreement in the policy network that the private sector had a role to play in Danish development aid, but that there were conflicting views on how.

In the “accountability” discourse, several NGOs in the network worried that Danida’s increased focus on the private sector would compromise their own role in Danish development co-operation. They argued that if Danida wanted to support Danish business initiatives in L&MICs, they should equally support the activities of NGOs, which would secure accountability in such business activities (Afrika Kontakt, personal communication, 2020; DanChurchAid, personal communication, 2020). One large NGO called for “more reflections about the coherence between the work of Danish NGOs in stabilizing, securing rights...on the one hand and the added value of NGOs as partners for the private sector on the other hand” (DanChurchAid, personal communication, 2020). An interest organization representing civil society argued that the private sector could never take over the role of NGOs, and that “the development work of the Danish government needs to be grounded in Danish civil society,...not in private sector organizations that deliver an efficient but hollowed out version of development at a time when sustainability and inclusivity is key” (CIVICUS, personal communication, 2020). According to another NGO representative (NGO representative 2), this reflected a growing concern in the Danish NGO sector that Danish businesses would take over their agendas:

I think that on an identity level, it challenges the NGOs incredibly that suddenly, the CEO of Grundfos [a large Danish pump manufacturing company] can take a position in the societal debate across from ministries as maybe a more important change agent than DanChurchAid [a large Danish NGO].

The “accountability” discourse thus reflected two important concerns in the Danish NGO sector, namely concerns about the accountability of the Danish private sector and the concern that Danish companies might partially take over the roles of NGOs in the long run. Consequently, NGOs problematized the accountability of Danish companies and promoted themselves as providers of accountability and responsibility in Danish development initiatives.

6.2.4 | Creating the right business climate

A final discourse in the policy network that responded to Danida's “shared responsibility” discourse was that of a “business climate”, which discussed the framework conditions needed for Danish companies to be able to make an impact in development initiatives. This discourse was primarily legitimized by drawing on rationalization as a discursive strategy and was especially promoted by an interest organization representing industry, an interest organization representing civil society, and a small NGO. The main argument in this discourse was that social preconditions such as corruption, poor legal frameworks, lack of infrastructure, and bureaucracy had often slowed down Danish private-sector initiatives in L&MICs (Confederation of Danish Industry, personal communication, 2020). The interest organization representing civil society argued that NGOs should be included as partners in Danida's partnership programmes to “secure justice by building transparent and responsible societal institutions characterized by a low degree of corruption and a high degree of efficiency” (CISU, personal communication, 2020), while the NGO stressed Danida's role in adjusting and mitigating risks for investors in order to secure more private investments in L&MICs (Børnefonden, personal communication, 2020). The interest organization representing industry called for a greater appetite for risk in Danida's collaboration with the private sector:

If the full potential of the private sector's engagement in L&MICs are to be realized, it requires a change in the way Danish development aid is carried out today. This entails a greater demand for risk-willingness, flexibility and responsiveness at the embassies and in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
(Confederation of Danish Industry, personal communication, 2020)

The “business climate” discourse thus encouraged Danida to provide more flexible guidelines in their partnership programmes, as some actors perceived the guidelines of earlier programmes as too rigid and bureaucratic.

6.3 | How some discourses were translated while others were lost in translation

After having received the hearing inputs from the policy network, it was up to Danida to formulate the final development strategy. Comparing the strategy draft, which had formed the basis for discussion in the public hearing, and the final strategy, showed only minor changes between the two (Danida, 2016, 2017a). However, as the development strategy primarily constituted a political negotiation document, its policy aims needed to be further translated into concrete partnership initiatives. In mid-2016, Danida launched its new partnership programme, the DMDP programme, which set out to implement the aims from the development strategy and to contribute to the global achievement of the SDGs through the use of partnerships, as promoted in SDG 17 (Danida, 2017b). The DMDP programme gives the grant to an “administrative partner” who is required to team up with a private-sector partner. In practice, large NGOs constituted the administrative partners in the five projects receiving grants in DMDP's first application round (Danida, 2018). Danida stated that the overall purpose of the programme was to contribute to market-driven sustainable economic growth and job creation in L&MICs within the framework of the SDGs, and to “engage private businesses in addressing key development challenges” (Danida, 2017b, p. 5). SDG 8, which promotes decent work and economic growth (UN, 2015), and SDG 17 were emphasized as the two main SDGs to be addressed through the DMDP programme (UN, 2015). Here, Danida picked up on its initial “purpose” discourse

from the development strategy, overlooking the delegitimations of the “purpose” discourse in the policy network, as poverty orientation is not mentioned in the DMDP programme document. The “shared responsibility” discourse also emerged from the DMDP programme, which referred to partnerships as “fostering ‘shared value’—a business model that emphasizes the role of private business in reaching societal goals through partnerships” (Danida, 2017b, p. 2). Finally, in the DMDP programme, Danida picked up on the “accountability” discourse that initially delegitimized SDG 17 by setting high requirements for responsible business conduct for the private-sector partner in DMDP projects (Danida, 2017b). According to interviews with civil servants who worked with developing the programme, DMDP actively tries to push Danish companies in a more responsible direction. To this end, the application process for the DMDP programme was designed as a long co-creation process where Danida could provide inputs to the applicants’ development of a project design with the “right” balance between a business case and a development case (as commented by MFA staff member 2, DMDP consultant 1, DMDP consultant 2).

7 | CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

This study set out to investigate how partnerships as a policy idea, embedded in SDG 17, changes as it is translated from the global SDG framework into national development policies. It draws on policy translation as a theoretical perspective and the framework of discursive legitimation strategies to analyse how actors in a policy network translated SDG 17 according to discourses that embodied both global and local concerns. While, from the UN perspective, SDG 17 set out to solve the global problem of mobilizing resources from the private sector to achieve the SDGs, it became a solution to more local issues when it was translated into Danish development policy and, consequently, the government-supported partnership programme. These issues were expressed in two contesting “purpose” discourses discussing the rationale for Danish development aid; a “shared responsibility” discourse promoting the responsibility of Danish companies to contribute to development initiatives, an “accountability” discourse questioning the accountability of the Danish private sector, and a “business climate” discourse emphasizing the importance of creating the right framework conditions for Danish companies in development initiatives. The findings show that the “purpose,” “shared responsibility,” and “accountability” discourses made it through to the translation outcome. Discursive alliances between large NGOs and interest organizations representing industry were particularly successful in advancing their discourses into the final translation, while discursive alliances between large and small NGOs were somewhat successful in doing this. Moral evaluation proved to be the most effective discursive strategy to advance discourses into Danida’s final translation of SDG 17.

In this article, I have advanced the related concepts of policy translation and policy networks as a useful lens for looking at how ideas and tools used in development policies, such as SDG 17, are shaped by their local policy contexts. The policy translation lens permits us to study a perspective on development partnerships that has been little considered in previous studies: how the problems partnerships are set out to solve, and how they aim to solve them, change as partnerships as a policy idea travels into local development policies. Using a translation theoretical lens combined with the analysis of discourses and discursive strategies, as I have done here, helps deconstruct which global and local concerns go into processes of translating such policy ideas. The Danish case demonstrates the importance of disentangling the context of translation as a starting point when studying the travel of policy ideas. For instance, focusing on the Danish government as the only unit of analysis in this study would in this case have given limited insights into which actors, discourses and discursive strategies formed the translation outcome. By disentangling the policy network in which the translation took place, the study shows a more precise and nuanced picture of the discursive battles, alliances and divergences that emerged in the translation process at a micro level. However, it would necessarily be wrong to focus on governments as the unit of analysis, as governments might be the only relevant actors in policy translation processes in other settings. The point here is that, in contrast to the more prevalent diffusion perspective, the concept of policy translation does not take the unit of analysis for granted, as it encourages us to uncover the unit(s) of analysis by tracing the central actors, activities, and settings that make up the

translation process. This permits us to explore the microprocesses of idea localization and deepen our knowledge of the complex interactions in such processes.

The findings from this study open up some interesting questions for further research on both policy translation processes and development partnerships. In research on policy translation, there is a need for greater knowledge about how local translations of global policy ideas unfold in different localities and how local structures shape the dynamics of such processes. This study has examined the translation process that unfolded in a policy network in Denmark, but policy translation will probably unfold differently in other places where the rules and norms for policy processes differ from the Danish setting. Moreover, further research on the localization of partnerships as a policy idea could benefit from studies of how policies that have translated SDG 17 are materialized from policy to practice. While translation processes at a policy level constitute relevant empirical settings for investigating the policy conditions under which development partnerships operate, the translation of SDG 17-related policies into practice constitute relevant settings for investigating how and to what extent such policies are materialized. This is a particularly relevant question at a time when all countries are urged to take action to contribute to the global achievement of the SDGs before 2030, and many governments aim to implement the SDGs by using partnerships in their development policies.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author thanks John Scheuer, Jacob Rendtorff, Sameer Azizi, and Kerstin Sahlin for giving constructive comments to earlier versions of this article.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Research data are not shared.

ORCID

Oda Hustad  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3206-6886>

REFERENCES

- Acharya, A. (2004). How ideas spread: Whose norms matter? Norm localization and institutional change in Asian regionalism. *International Organization*, 58(2), 239–275. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818304582024>
- Albareda, L., Lozano, J. M., & Ysa, T. (2007). Public policies on corporate social responsibility: The role of governments in Europe. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 74(4), 391–407. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-007-9514-1>
- Ansari, S. M., Fiss, P. C., & Zajac, Z. J. (2010). Made to fit: How practices vary as they diffuse. *Academy of Management Review*, 35(1), 67–92. <https://doi.org/10.5465/AMR.2010.45577876>
- Belda-Miquel, S., Boni, A., & Calabuig, C. (2019). SDG Localisation and decentralised development aid: Exploring opposing discourses and practices in Valencia's aid sector. *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities*, 20(4), 386–402. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19452829.2019.1624512>
- Bexell, M., & Jönsson, K. (2019). Country reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals: The politics of performance review at the global-national nexus. *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities*, 20(4), 403–417. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19452829.2018.1544544>
- Bexell, M., & Jönsson, K. (2020). Realizing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – engaging national parliaments? *Policy Studies*, 43(4), 621–639. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01442872.2020.1803255>
- Boxenbaum, E., & Pedersen, J. S. (2009). Scandinavian institutionalism: A case of institutional work. In T. B. Lawrence, R. Suddaby, & B. Leca (Eds.), *Institutional work: Actors and agency in institutional studies of organizations* (pp. 178–204). Cambridge University Press.
- Brogaard, L., & Petersen, O. H. (2017). Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in development policy: Exploring the concept and practice. *Development Policy Review*, 36, 729–747. <https://doi.org/10.1111/dpr.12277>
- Bryson, J. M., Crosby, B. C., & Stone, M. M. (2015). Designing and implementing cross-sector collaborations: Needed and challenging. *Public Administration Review*, 75(5), 647–663. <https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.12432.Designing>
- Clarke, J., Bainton, D., Lendvai, N., & Stubbs, P. (2015). *Making policy move: Towards a politics of translation and assemblage*. Policy Press. <https://doi.org/10.51952/9781447313380>
- Czarniawska, B., & Joerges, B. (1996). Travels of ideas. In B. Czarniawska & G. Sevón (Eds.), *Translating organizational change* (pp. 13–48). Walter de Gruyter. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110879735.13>

- Czarniawska, B., & Sevón, G. (2005). Translation is a vehicle, imitation its motor, and fashion sits at the wheel. In B. Czarniawska & G. Sevón (Eds.), *Global ideas: How Ideas, objects and practices travel in the global economy* (pp. 7–14). Liber & Copenhagen Business School Press.
- Danida. (2016, June). *Verden 2030. #vovesDKaid: Udkast Danmarks udviklingspolitiske og humanitære strategi*. Danida. <https://legacy.altinet.dk/misc/Udkast%20til%20udviklingspolitisk%20og%20humanitr%20strategi%20-%20med%20forside.pdf>
- Danida. (2017a, January). *The World 2030: Denmark's strategy for development cooperation and humanitarian action*. Danida. <https://uganda.um.dk/en/-/media/country-sites/uganda-en/front-page/the-world-2030-denmarks-strategy-for-development-cooperation-and-humanitarian-action.ashx>
- Danida. (2017b). *Danida Market Development Partnerships: Programme Document 2017–2020* (p. 27). Danida. <https://dmdp.dk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Programme-document-2017-incl-annex.pdf>
- Danida. (2018). *DMDP Portfolio Overview*. Danida. https://um.dk/~media/um/danish-site/documents/danida/dmdpportfolio_nov2018.pdf?la=en
- Danish Council for Development Policy. (2016). Minutes (May 27, 2016). <https://um.dk/en/danida-en/about-danida/Danida-transparency/Danida-documents/Council-for-development-policy/upcoming-council-meetings/270516>
- Deephouse, D. L., Bundy, J., Plunkett Tost, L., & Suchman, M. C. (2017). Organizational legitimacy: Six key questions. In R. Greenwood, C. Oliver, T. B. Lawrence, & R. E. Meyer (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of organizational institutionalism* (2nd ed., pp. 27–52). SAGE Publications Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446280669.n2>
- Flyvbjerg, B. (2006). Five misunderstandings about case-study research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 12(2), 219–245. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800405284363>
- Fox, S., & Macleod, A. (2021). Localizing the SDGs in cities: Reflections from an action research project in Bristol, UK. *Urban Geography*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02723638.2021.1953286>
- Frandsen, K., & Løppenthin, R. D. (2017, April 4). *I tal: Ngo'ernes vækst og omsætning [In numbers: NGOs' growth and turnover]*. Altinget. <https://www.alinget.dk/civilsamfundetsvidenscenter/artikel/i-tal-ngoernes-vaekst-og-omsaetning>
- Gray, B., & Purdy, J. (2018). *Collaborating for our future: Multistakeholder partnerships for solving complex problems*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198782841.001.0001>
- Hardy, C., Palmer, I., & Phillips, N. (2000). Discourse as a strategic resource. *Human Relations*, 53(9), 1227–1248. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726700539006>
- Heckathorn, D. D. (1997). Respondent-driven sampling: A new approach to the study of hidden populations. *Social Problems*, 44(2), 174–199. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3096941>
- Hustad, O. (2020). Cross-sector partnerships as a source of business legitimacy in the SDG era. In J. D. Rendtorff (Ed.), *Handbook of business legitimacy: Responsibility, ethics and society* (pp. 1671–1688). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-14622-1_65
- Jensen, K. (2016). The international situation and Danish foreign policy in 2015. In N. Hvidt & H. Mouritzen (Eds.), *Danish foreign policy yearbook 2016* (pp. 11–22). Danish Institute for International Studies.
- Johnson, B., & Hagström, B. (2005). The translation perspective as an alternative to the policy diffusion paradigm: The case of the Swedish Methadone maintenance treatment. *Journal of Social Policy*, 34(3), 365–388. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047279405008822>
- Jönsson, K., & Bexell, M. (2021). Localizing the Sustainable Development Goals: The case of Tanzania. *Development Policy Review*, 39(2), 181–196. <https://doi.org/10.1111/dpr.12497>
- Kamau, M., Chasek, P., & O'Connor, D. (2018). *Transforming multilateral diplomacy: The inside story of the Sustainable Development Goals*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429491276>
- Klinger-Vidra, R. (2018). *The venture capital state: The Silicon Valley model in East Asia*. Cornell University Press. <https://doi.org/10.7591/cornell/9781501723377.003.0001>
- Kolk, A., van Tulder, R., & Kostwinder, E. (2008). Business and partnerships for development. *European Management Journal*, 26(4), 262–273. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emj.2008.01.007>
- Koppenjan, J. F. M. (2016). Consensus and conflict in policy networks: Too much or too little? In E. Sørensen & J. Torfing (Eds.), *Theories of democratic networkgovernance* (pp. 133–152). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230625006_8
- Latour, B. (1986). The powers of association. *The Sociological Review*, 32(Suppl. 1), 264–280. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-954X.1984.tb00115.x>
- Mukhtarov, F. (2014). Rethinking the travel of ideas: Policy translation in the water sector. *Policy and Politics*, 42(1), 71–88. <https://doi.org/10.1332/030557312X655459>
- Peck, J., & Theodore, N. (2015). *Fast policy: Experimental statecraft at the thresholds of neoliberalism*. University of Minnesota Press. <https://doi.org/10.5749/minnesota/9780816677306.001.0001>
- Pfisterer, S., & van Tulder, R. (2021). Navigating governance tensions to enhance the impact of partnerships with the private sector for the SDGs. *Sustainability*, 13(1), 111–127. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13010111>
- Phillips, N., & Hardy, C. (2002). *Discourse analysis: Investigating processes of social construction*. SAGE.

- Phillips, N., Lawrence, T. B., & Hardy, C. (2004). Discourse and institutions. *Academy of Management Review*, 29(4), 635–652. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2004.14497617>
- Rogers, E. (1962). *Diffusion of innovations*. Free Press.
- Sachs, J. D., Lafortune, G., Kroll, C., Fuller, G., & Woelm, F. (2022). From crisis to sustainable development: The SDGs as a roadmap to 2030 and beyond. Sustainable development report, 2022. <https://www.sustainabledevelopmentreport/reports/sustainable-development-report-2022/>
- Sahlin-Andersson, K. (1996). Imitating by editing success: The construction of organizational fields. In B. Czarniawska & G. Sevón (Eds.), *Translating organizational change* (pp. 69–92). Walter de Gruyter. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110879735.69>
- Selsky, J. W., & Parker, B. (2005). Cross-sector partnerships to address social issues: Challenges to theory and practice. *Journal of Management*, 31(6), 849–873. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206305279601>
- Shannon, C. E., & Weaver, W. (1949). *The mathematical theory of communication*. University of Illinois Press.
- Torring, J. (2012). Governance networks. In D. Levi-Faur (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of governance* (pp. 99–112). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199560530.013.0007>
- UN. (2015). Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld/publication>
- Vaara, E., Tienari, J., & Laurila, J. (2006). Pulp and paper fiction: On the discursive legitimation of global industrial restructuring. *Organization Studies*, 27(6), 789–813. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840606061071>
- Vallentin, S. (2015). Governmentalities of CSR: Danish government policy as a reflection of political difference. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 127(1), 33–47. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-013-1703-5>
- van Leeuwen, T. (2008). *Discourse and practice: New tools for critical discourse analysis*. Oxford University Press.
- Vurro, C., Dacin, M. T., & Perrini, F. (2010). Institutional antecedents of partnering for social change: How institutional logics shape cross-sector social partnerships. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 94, 39–53. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-011-0778-0>
- Wæraas, A., & Nielsen, J. A. (2016). Translation theory ‘translated’: Three perspectives on translation in organizational research. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 18(3), 236–270. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12092>
- Waldorff, S. B. (2013). What is the meaning of public sector health? Translating discourse into new organizational practices. *Journal of Change Management*, 13(3), 283–307. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14697017.2013.822673>
- Wedlin, L., & Sahlin, K. (2017). The imitation and translation of management ideas. In R. Greenwood, C. Oliver, T. B. Lawrence, & R. E. Meyer (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of organizational institutionalism* (2nd ed., pp. 102–127). SAGE Publications Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446280669.n5>

How to cite this article: Hustad, O. (2022). From global goal to local development policy: How partnerships as a policy idea changes through policy translation. *Development Policy Review*, 00, e12659. <https://doi.org/10.1111/dpr.12659>