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Designing public-private partnerships for development

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Abstract :

Public-private partnerships (PPPs) for development are increasingly used to address public problems that exceed the capacities of a single sector. Nevertheless, these partnerships are challenging and many of them come up against collaborative inertia. A commonly suggested remedy is to develop more effective and bespoke modes of structuring and coordinating the partnership. However, the literature on PPPs often simplifies diversity and does not differentiate between various structural forms. A typology from the network literature serves as a starting point for gaining a deeper understanding of effective PPP structures and the management of the various design challenges which correspond to them. This article argues that additional challenges stem from the specific context of PPPs for development and thereby extends existing insights into the typology. Building on the structural contingency literature, the article develops a conceptual framework for the management of PPP-specific design challenges and elucidates cautious implications for the effective use of different PPP structures. The resulting framework is illustrated with three short field examples of PPPs for development.

Keywords :

collaboration, coordination, governance, partnerships for development, public-private partnerships, structural contingency

INTRODUCTION

Companies have become increasingly engaged in public-private partnerships (PPPs) for development and contribute in terms of managerial expertise, technical assistance, financial aid, and in-kind donations (Kolk, van Tulder, & Kostwinder, 2008). For example, Nestlé uses its nutrition expertise in education programs to fight malnutrition, and major technology firms such as Microsoft, Cisco, and Oracle provide their technologies and know-how to promote development opportunities. In PPPs for development, companies, governments, and civil-society organizations combine their resources and jointly address a societal problem to foster development (i.e. commitment to advancing human well-being). However, such collaboration is difficult (World Economic Forum, 2005) and many partnerships come up against “collaborative inertia” (Huxham & Vangen, 2000a: 293). Hence, the work output is

much lower than expected, with a discouraging impact on all partners involved.

This article argues that in addition to the challenges brought about by collaboration itself (e.g., coping with ambiguity, complexity, and dynamics (Huxham & Vangen, 2000b)), PPPs for development confront partners with complex particularities and their respective challenges. That is, the partners have to cope with different organizational and sectoral backgrounds (Caplan, 2001), strike a balance between shared accountability and partner autonomy (Thomson & Perry, 2006) while respecting existing areas of authority, and balance efficiency and beneficiary involvement (Lowndes & Sullivan, 2004). To overcome or avoid collaborative inertia, the development of more effective, accountable, and tailored modes of structuring and coordinating the partnership is considered important (e.g., Rosenau, 1999). Yet, scholars who discuss common challenges in PPPs for development tend to simplify diversity, do not differentiate between their various structural forms, and refer to PPPs merely in the plural.

A closer look at the reality of PPPs for development, however, shows that the collaboration dimensions – that is, joint decision-making, administration, organizational autonomy, mutuality, and trust (Thomson & Perry, 2006) – reach different levels in different PPP structures. Hence, how do different structures facilitate or complicate the handling of common challenges, and what are the implications for designing effective PPPs for development? In response to Rein and Stott's (2009: 79) call to go beyond a "one-size-fits-all" approach to PPPs for development, this article examines the role of different structures for the handling of common design challenges. This examination seems important to deepen our understanding of the concept of "collaborative inertia" in PPPs for development. Respective insights contribute to building a framework that may facilitate more informed and tailored decisions with regard to structuring PPPs and helps anticipate and overcome design challenges.

For this purpose, the article starts with a discussion of the notion of "PPPs for development," outlines their particularities, and embeds them into the wider field of networks. In view of the scarcity of insights into different PPP structures, a structure-based typology taken from the network literature is subsequently presented. Factors that have been identified as relevant to structure effectiveness are discussed and extended with findings from the broader literature on structural contingency. Yet, owing to the particularities and specific challenges of PPPs for development, structural contingency relationships in these partnerships seem more complex and need to be explored in more depth. Consequently, the methodology used to undertake such an endeavor in this study is presented. More precisely, the original description of the three effective structures is juxtaposed with insights from the literature on inter-organizational networks and structural contingency. This juxtaposition allows for an analysis of how these structures may facilitate or complicate the management of PPP-specific design challenges. Based on this theoretical analysis, the article develops propositions for the management of the challenges in the different structures. Additionally,

to give the readers an easy access to the discussion and allow them to gain a firmer grasp of the structural forms, illustrative insights into three practical PPPs for development are presented. Finally, the framework's implications for practice and theory are elucidated.

PPP_s FOR DEVELOPMENT

In the narrow and traditional sense, the notion of PPPs refers to legally formalized forms of cooperation between public and private parties. A broader and more recent definition of PPPs, however, also includes less formalized cooperation (Kouwenhoven, 1993: 120). The latter occurs when partners perceive high uncertainty in terms of the expected net benefits and high governance costs that would result from a contract (Rangan, Samii, & Van Wassenhove, 2006). In this context, the contributions of public and private actors need to be closely coordinated to achieve the PPP's goal, while contracts are perceived as impractical and offering limited relief (Rangan, et al., 2006). Focusing on the broader definition of PPPs, this article discusses PPPs for development that are increasingly considered as adequate instruments to tackle public development problems for which unilateral approaches have failed or are likely to provide insufficient results (McQuaid, 2000; Kolk, et al., 2008).

As a collaborative effort on the part of autonomous organizations based on non-commercial relationships, PPPs for development are neither dominated by authoritative integration or supervision (i.e. "hierarchy"), nor by price or contract mechanisms (i.e. "market"). Rather, these partnerships are characterized by a situation in which complementary interests lead to interdependent relationships based on trust and reciprocity – thus a "network" form of organization (based on Powell, 1990: 300-305). To make the collaboration work, partners have to agree on shared goals, rules, standard operating procedures, and the division of tasks, risks, and responsibilities (Bryson, Crosby, & Stone, 2006). At the same time, PPPs for development confront partners with particularities – and specific challenges – that distinguish them from traditional collaboration in a "network" form, such as business alliances and intra-sector or non-operational networks.

First, they bring together partners from different sectors. While closely collaborating for an operational solution to a public problem, the partners need to successfully manage significant differences stemming from diverging institutional logics, cultures, and *modi operandi* in public, private, and civil-society organizations (Caplan, 2001). Second, PPPs interfere in areas that are commonly the government's responsibility (e.g., health, education, and water) and over which the government will not abandon its governance rights and duties (Rosenau, 1999). Consequently, the partners have to respect existing ownership and hierarchy structures, and adapt their partnership design accordingly, especially when defining the partners' autonomy and areas of shared account-

ability. Third, PPPs for development aim to provide a solution specifically tailored to the public problem they address – its success often depends on the beneficiaries' acceptance and support (Rein & Stott, 2009). Thus, a successful solution may require the involvement of beneficiaries (i.e. citizens) who are frequently disparate individuals sharing no overarching structure and who maintain different attitudes towards the PPP (Lowndes & Sullivan, 2004). Since increased involvement on the part of a broad set of beneficiaries may complicate governance and coordination processes, PPPs for development need to strike a balance between partnership efficiency and beneficiary integration.

STRUCTURAL FORMS

To understand how partners acknowledge different sources of tension in their PPP design, a closer look at the “black box” of partnering seems necessary, that is, to explore the use of structures and procedures to govern, coordinate, and control joint actions in different contexts. Although there are structural typologies for operational PPPs regarding the partners' interdependence (Austin, 2000; Sandfort & Milward, 2008), partner composition (Selsky & Parker, 2005), and scope (Kolk, et al., 2008; Waddock, 1991), insights into the differences in the use of governance and coordination arrangements are still scarce. However, the way in which partners govern and coordinate their PPP seems to have a great impact on the extent to which they are exposed to design challenges and the way they tackle them.

It therefore seems helpful to back the analysis with insights from the broader literature on networks, that is, institutional arrangements of legally autonomous organizations that come together through the establishment of social contracts or agreements, rather than legally binding contracts (see e.g., Barringer & Harrison, 2000; Kilduff & Tsai, 2003; Sydow & Windeler, 1998). This definition may also include PPPs for development since, like networks in general, they must be governed in a way that differs from a hierarchy or market logic. Scholars have contributed to the description and analysis of network structural characteristics using concepts such as density, centrality, and structural holes (Burt, 1992; Kilduff & Tsai, 2003). Furthermore, exploring how partners share governance and coordination tasks in goal-oriented networks, Provan and Kenis (2008: 233-241) define three structures. Based on a contingency approach, they argue that for a network to be effective in achieving its collective goal, there should be a fit between the modes of governance and coordination, and at least four contingency factors. These factors include the number of participants and the need for network-level competencies (i.e. administrative and networking capabilities as well as financial and managerial resources), given that networks are particularly difficult to organize and manage as the number of participants increases (Alter & Hage, 1993). Furthermore, the levels of goal consensus and trust density are identified as contingency fac-

tors (Provan & Kenis, 2008). Indeed, trust is a key element of cooperative relationships (Ring & Van de Ven, 1992; Sydow, 1998) and priorities seem to be especially important under conditions of uncertainty (Brass, et al., 2004), as is the case with PPPs for development. Table 1 summarizes the initial insights into the three structures.

Table 1. Structural forms (based on Provan & Kenis, 2008)

	Lead organization structure	Shared governance structure	Administrative organization structure (AO)
Governance (i.e. decision-making)	Centered	Joint decision-making	Structured, joint decision-making (e.g., decision-making committee)
Coordination (i.e. integration of tasks)	Centered	Joint coordination	Centered
Predictors of effectiveness			
Number of participants	Moderate	Few	Moderate to high
Trust density	Low (highly centralized)	High	Moderate (partners monitor the AO)
Goal consensus	Moderate	High	Moderate
Need for partnership-level competencies	Moderate	Low	High
Management of design challenges			
Inclusive decision-making versus efficiency	Favors efficiency	Favors inclusive decision-making	Favors efficiency
Internal versus external legitimacy	Favors external legitimacy	Favors internal legitimacy	Tension sequentially addressed
Flexibility versus stability	Favors stability	Favors flexibility	Favors stability

In a hub-organization or lead organization structure that is generally marked by low density and high centrality, a single organization has a great impact on key decisions, and coordinates the major partnership-level activities (Dhanaraj & Parkhe, 2006; Jarillo, 1988; Sydow & Windeler, 1998). For this structure to be effective, the number of participants should be moderate, given a lead organization’s restricted partnership-level competencies (Provan & Kenis, 2008). Trust density between part-

ners can be low, but dyadic trust levels with the lead organization need to be relatively high to make the partnership work (Dhanaraj & Parkhe, 2006). Likewise, the goal consensus in effective structures can be moderately low, but partners need to agree with the partnership's main direction as proposed by the lead organization (Provan & Kenis, 2008). In a **shared governance structure**, generally characterized by high density and low centrality, the partnership's governance and coordination depend exclusively on the involvement and commitment of all partners (Provan & Kenis, 2008). The effective use of this structure requires a small number of participants, high trust density and goal consensus, but necessitates only low partnership-level competencies (Provan & Kenis, 2008). If there is a high or moderate number of participants, a resulting high need for partnership-level competencies, and moderate trust density as well as goal consensus, an **administrative organization structure** might be more effective (Provan & Kenis, 2008). In this context, partners mandate a separate administrative entity to manage the PPP operationally and build formal board or committee structures to facilitate the partners' decision-making processes (Provan & Milward, 1995). Hence, levels of density and centrality tend to be moderate.

Further insights into the three structures may be deduced by embedding them in the broader discussion of structural contingency. Some of the most important contingencies can be grouped under three main headings: task uncertainty, organizational size, and task interdependence (Donaldson, 2001: 17-23). First, a centralized structure with increased specialization and formalization is considered to fit low task uncertainty, whereas a decentralized structure with little formalization and specialization fits high task uncertainty (Burns & Stalker, 1961; Hage & Aiken, 1969). Consequently, although acknowledging that PPPs for development are generally played out in relatively volatile environments (Kolk, et al., 2008), we can assume that the more centralized lead organization and administrative organization structures fit slightly stabler environments.

Second, high levels of bureaucratization (i.e. specialization and formalization) are considered to fit large organizations (Child, 1975; Mintzberg, 1979). Accordingly, since the number of partners increases from the effective shared governance to lead organization to the administrative organization structures, we can expect an increasing level of specialization and formalization. Third, the higher the level of task interdependence¹, the less appropriate the extensive use of specification and formalization (Thompson, 1967; Van de Ven, Delbecq, & Koenig, 1976). In this regard, partners in a lead organization structure contribute to the lead who coordinates and governs the PPP activities (Provan & Kenis, 2008: 235). This indicates sequential partner interdependence centred on the lead. In a shared governance structure, partners jointly undertake the work, which suggests team interdependence (based on Van de Ven, et al., 1976). In an administrative organization structure, partners may be interdependent in a reciprocal way as there are two-way connections in carrying out implementation tasks while different work streams are coordinated by the administrative entity. Overall, this shows that the level of interdependence increases from the lead or-

1. Interdependence can be pooled (indirect connection only), sequential (direct, one-way connection), and reciprocal (direct, two-way connection; Thompson, 1967: 54-65) as well as in team arrangements (work is jointly undertaken; Van de Ven, et al., 1976: 324).

ganization to the administrative organization, followed by the shared governance structure. Based on Van de Ven and colleagues (1976) we can thus expect a lower level of formalization in an effective shared governance structure.

Overall, taking into account that the development of tailored and effective modes of governing and coordinating the partnership is considered to be a remedy for overcoming challenges (Rosenau, 1999), and has an impact on partnership performance (Provan & Milward, 1995), the described typology may serve as a starting point to analyze the implications different structures have when handling design challenges. Indeed, Provan and Kenis (2008) focus on the inherent tensions between administrative efficiency and inclusive decision-making among partner organizations, between internal and external legitimacy, and between the structure's flexibility and stability. They find that lead organization structures tend to favor efficiency over inclusive decision-making, external over internal legitimacy, and stability over flexibility. While shared governance structures tend to favor inclusive decision-making, internal legitimacy, and flexibility, administrative organization structures tend to shift towards efficiency and stability, whilst addressing the tensions regarding internal and external legitimacy in a sequential manner (Provan & Kenis, 2008). However, the understanding of these structures' role in managing the challenges that PPPs for development face in view of different partner backgrounds, the involvement of beneficiaries, and the increased need for shared accountability, is lacking.

PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATIONS

To explore how the structures at hand facilitate or complicate the management of additional challenges that stem from the specific context of PPPs for development, this article juxtaposes insights from the broader discussion of networks and structural contingency with the original description of the effective structures. Additionally, the article introduces three illustrative examples, shedding light on the way in which the PPP structure influenced the management of design challenges in the particular context of the case. Illustrative case studies serve primarily to facilitate access to a topic, and to allow for a firmer grasp of key variables and their relationships in a concrete setting (Yin, 2003). In this study they allow the reader an easy access to the context of PPPs for development, and give an idea of how the theoretical framework could be observed in practice. These case insights therefore illustrate the management of design challenges in their respective contexts, and reflect the theoretical discussion. However, the cases are not used to test the propositions and, of course, no claim is made for their generalizability. In order to select PPPs that exemplify the three effective structures, I approached coordinators of three broad PPP programs regrouping PPPs with similar designs in the area of education² (i.e. Nestlé's Healthy Kids Program, the Global Education Initiative, and Madrasati's School

2.Owing to increased human resource costs and strategic challenges stemming from poor public education, many companies engage in PPPs for development to improve the quality of education (Selsky & Parker, 2010).

Program). From the large number of PPPs under these programs, I chose three examples that the coordinators referred to as being among the most effective and that, together, cover all three structures. For the purpose of this study, partnership effectiveness is defined as the attainment of positive partnership-level outcome regarding its goal (Provan & Kenis, 2008) with accepted and appreciated partnership practices (Sydow & Windeler, 1998).

For each PPP, I studied both internal and published documents. In addition, I conducted a total of 26 interviews with actively engaged representatives from the corporate, public, and civil-society partner organizations, as well as with community members to capture various viewpoints (see Appendix 1). The interviews took about 40 minutes. While I transcribed the entire interviewees, I sent a shorter executive summary to the interviewees for approval. To identify emerging patterns for PPP-specific design challenges and their implications, I analyzed the data by using a theory-based coding scheme (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The first example refers to an educational program called "Nutrir", which Nestlé developed together with child nutrition experts as well as health and education authorities to raise awareness of nutrition and health among school-age children in Brazil. Nestlé, the initiator of this lead organization structure, is the main responsible for governing and coordinating the partnership activities. This PPP is deemed effective as its education program has been implemented in over 4000 schools, and many of these schools voluntarily participate in the subsequent Nutrition award program to further build on the insights acquired through the main program. The program is adapted to the local school environment and has become more sophisticated over the years. The relationships between Nestlé, the schools, and the ministry are considered to have improved since the start of the PPP.

Second, in a shared governance structure, CTA-Toyota, the NGO called "Madrasati", and major school stakeholders in collaboration with the ministry of education, seek to improve the overall learning environment of an underprivileged school in Jordan. In this partnership, all partners are jointly involved in the overall decision-making and coordination processes. So far, the PPP has performed important activities, slowly moving from small to large-scale activities. For example, the PPP saw to the installation of interactive learning ICT systems, and organized workshops for its effective use. A relative indicator of the PPP's progress is the students' improved results in the national final exams. Besides, the partners have gradually increased stakeholder involvement and strengthened cooperative attitudes among partners and beneficiaries. Third, the Egyptian Education Initiative illustrates an administrative organization structure. Here, three ministries, eight multinationals, and over 20 local companies collaborate to improve the Egyptian education system. More precisely, they seek to develop skills and capacities through the introduction of ICT. To govern their PPP, the partners set up a board structure and charged the Project Management Office with the overall coordination of the different PPP activities. By 2009, most of the planned activities were realized and operational objectives were

achieved. Furthermore, increasing their efforts' sustainability became another objective. The partnership processes strengthened cooperative attitudes and further changes were made to improve the PPP (e.g., development of monitoring and communication mechanisms within the education system).

THE MANAGEMENT OF DESIGN CHALLENGES

Building on theoretical insights elaborated on above, the following discusses how the three structures facilitate or complicate the management of challenges stemming from different partner backgrounds, the increased need for shared accountability, and the involvement of beneficiaries. Practical examples are given to illustrate how the challenges are managed in the specific contexts of the three case studies.

Handling of different partner backgrounds

By combining the competencies and capacities of partners from different sectors, the latter may tackle public problems better than they could alone. However, to come to a solution, partners have to cope with differences in their professional languages, organizational (and sometimes ethical) cultures and ways of working, as well as occasional hidden agendas (Huxham & Vangen, 2000a). Furthermore, prejudice and misunderstandings between sectors may prevail and consequently hamper communication and the development of joint modes of operation (Huxham & Vangen, 2000b).

Business partners, for example, are often criticized for their lack of community relationships, relying excessively on technical solutions, and pursuing only commercial interests (Caplan, 2001). The public sector's common weaknesses are generally thought to be its lack of reliable funding and technical resources, corruption, high staff turnover, ineffective bureaucracy, and frequent resistance to change (Caplan, 2001). The civil-society sector, meanwhile, is often criticized for its lack of sufficient and predictable funding, for its sometimes uncoordinated and labor-intensive way of working, and for adopting ideological rather than practical approaches (Caplan, 2001).

The different partner backgrounds may translate into divergent time frames or "lead time" (World Economic Forum, 2005). Business partners tend to be slow in making initial decisions, while expecting instant action and delivery. Conversely, civil-society organizations tend initially to be incredibly keen and then rather slow to deliver. The public sector is often quick to engage but then risks becoming mired in bureaucracy (World Economic Forum, 2005). Moreover, the public sector may also calculate according to public election time cycles, the business sector according to quarterly or year-end financial cycles, and the civil-society sector according to donor-funding frameworks.

In a PPP structure, the number of partners involved increases the time required to understand each partner's interests and ways of working.

Likewise, the level of interdependence and interface structures define how closely partners work together: each additional step involved in joint coordination presents potential for tension as well as an opportunity to deepen mutual understanding. Furthermore, formalization may reduce ambiguity during the PPP's implementation (based on Van de Ven, et al., 1976). Thus, if only a moderate number of partners collaborate in an effective **lead organization structure**, complexity stemming from different partner backgrounds is reduced. Furthermore, as the lead mainly governs and coordinates the PPP activities, for which partners are principally interlinked in sequential interdependence centered on the lead, this structure may reduce the required interaction and risk of tensions. In its central position, the lead organization may set standards (Sydow & Windeler, 1998) and transfer the key elements of its way of working to the partnership. For example, the lead organization may integrate the management of administrative tasks into its own organizational structure. This allows for formal and hierarchical coordination mechanisms, namely structure, programming, and routines (Van de Ven, et al., 1976), and reduces direct partner interaction in coordinating the PPP's implementation.

For example, Nestlé Brazil coordinates the Nutrir education program according to an established partnership framework. Thereby, potential tensions related to governance and coordination practices are largely avoided. However, when implemented at a school, the program's content and implementation practices are adapted to the local partners' expectations and the local conditions.

In the effective **shared governance structure**, partner differences might be extremely apparent since the partners have to decide and coordinate all issues through direct interaction. Indeed, team interdependence involves an increased need for coordination in general, and for rules, group meetings, and personal communication in particular (Van de Ven, et al., 1976). If no single partner sets the ground rules for the shared work, building common ground is not only important but also particularly challenging (Gray, 2007). Frequent interaction and the high level of interdependence may lead to an increased potential for conflict in this structure.

At the Jordanian school, it took several partner meetings and small-scale activities over a period of at least one year to get to know each other, overcome initial mistrust, and develop a joint way of working that enabled a constructive and structured engagement.

In an effective **administrative organization structure**, often many partners with diverging backgrounds come together. An increase in partners amplifies the use of formal coordination mechanisms for the structure to be effective (Child, 1975; Van de Ven, et al., 1976). In an administrative organization structure, the structural entity may help formalize rules and processes. These arrangements may guide partner interaction and reduce tensions during the PPP's implementation. With

regard to PPP governance, the reciprocal partner interdependence may necessitate frequent partner meetings (based on Van de Ven, et al., 1976). However, formal decision-making structures can help find common ground. Furthermore, the administrative organization's staff may act as mediators, help develop relationships (Stott, 2007), and pool as well as evaluate the lessons learned from successfully handling different partner backgrounds. The partners can then build on this knowledge to deepen their mutual understanding and improve their way of interacting.

For example, at the Egyptian Education Initiative, the partners have formalized the tasks and processes of each decision-making committee, which helps reduce tensions and set a joint way of working. Moreover, the Project Management Office serves as the major contact point for operational coordination, tries to smooth out conflict, and discovers the best practices across different work streams.

Proposition 1: Challenges stemming from the partners' different backgrounds are

- a) largely avoided in effective lead organization partnerships;
- b) frequently encountered in effective shared governance partnerships;
- c) reduced in effective administrative organization partnerships.

Balancing partner autonomy and shared accountability

Partners not only have different backgrounds; they also pursue their organizational self-interests. In other words, they follow their organizational mission and maintain an identity distinct from the partnership, which is nonetheless built on shared interests and common partnership goals (Tschirhart, Christensen, & Perry, 2005; Wood & Gray, 1991). Hence, partners in collaboration seek to maintain individual control and meet their own accountabilities. At the same time, in PPPs, they have to acknowledge their responsibility towards the other partners, and recognize that PPPs are commonly played out in areas that fall under the government's sphere of authority. The public partner is the one accountable to the citizens (Rosenau, 1999) and will be reluctant to share overall governance rights and duties. Consequently, the partners' joint influence is limited to solving the problem at hand, without calling into question the government's authority. Consequently, the partners need to be jointly accountable not only to keep the PPP functioning and transparent (Thomson & Perry, 2006), but also to respond to an increased need for shared accountability in view of their intersection with the government's sphere of authority. This requires a partner to disclose information and comply with the shared expectations of resource commitment, execution of tasks, and sharing of responsibilities and risks.

In an effective **lead organization structure**, the central position offers the lead relatively more autonomy and decision-making power (Sydow & Windeler, 1998), once the PPP's overall sphere of activity

has been agreed upon with the government. The sequential interdependence centered on the lead should make it possible to define areas of responsibility clearly and according to the partners' resources and competences. As other partners' involvement is generally limited to specific tasks, it facilitates the management of shared accountability. Consequently, in the effective lead organization structure, the balance between partner autonomy and accountability may shift towards the autonomy side.

In the practical example, Nestlé has signed an agreement with the government that defines Nestlé's area of autonomy for the PPP, that is, an additional education program that complements existing structures. During the implementation phase, everyone involved in the education program is then accountable to Nestlé with regard to predefined tasks.

In an effective **shared governance structure**, the tensions between shared accountability and partner autonomy are particularly acute. Since all are equally involved in governance and coordination, and in view of numerous points of intersection that call for shared accountability, it is difficult to define clear areas of responsibility and autonomy. Rather, team interdependence exposes partners to an increased need for coordination and accountability (Van de Ven, et al., 1976), which they have to align with the needs of their individual organizations (Thomson & Perry, 2006).

In the Jordanian school partnership, the partners meet regularly to brainstorm about future activities within the PPP's area of responsibility. The school principal has the final decision on whether to implement a suggested activity. However, as the partners move towards more critical changes addressing teaching content and style (e.g., interactive teaching methods using ICT), the government critically and closely scrutinizes the suggestions. While the partners jointly follow up on achievements, no formal monitoring systems are developed to ensure shared accountability. This sometimes delays joint activities.

In the effective **administrative organization structure** the balance might shift towards accountability. Reciprocal interdependence may make it easier to define clear areas of responsibility for each partner (and thereby define areas of autonomy and accountability), and needs relatively less coordination than team interdependence (Van de Ven, et al., 1976). At the same time, the increased size of the PPP may call for higher levels of formalization and specialization with regard to the partners' tasks and the organization of the administrative entity (based on Mintzberg, 1979). This, in turn, may foster the clear definition of accountability structures. In addition, as the administrative entity's sole purpose is to manage the PPP, it is specifically required to be transparent, and to report on the partners' contributions and the PPP's outcome. Thus, this structure might help define each partner's rights and duties, and foster shared accountability.

At the Egyptian Education Initiative, the partners have defined their tasks and responsibilities as well as those of the Project Management Office, and they have set up well-organized monitoring and evaluation systems. Each partner organization is accountable for sub-objectives in its area of responsibility.

Proposition 2: The balance between partner autonomy and shared accountability

- a) tends to shift towards the autonomy side in effective lead organization partnerships;
- b) creates tensions in effective shared governance partnerships;
- c) tends to shift towards the accountability side in effective administrative organization partnerships.

Balancing efficiency and beneficiary involvement

The third challenge relates to balancing beneficiary involvement and partnership efficiency. On the one hand, partners want to provide a customized and sustainable solution to a societal problem. According to the PPP's scope, sustainable solutions are often those that are shaped according to the beneficiaries' needs and elicit their sense of ownership (Rein & Stott, 2009). On the other hand, increasing beneficiary involvement delays the decision-making process and complicates coordination (Barr & Huxham, 1996). This, in turn, may hamper PPP efficiency.

With one organization dominating the decision-making processes, the effective **lead organization structure** may centralize control and, thus focus on efficiency (based on Burns & Stalker, 1961), with trade-offs in beneficiary involvement³. Although the customization and adaptation of the solution are no less important, the lead might attempt to solve the inherent tension between involvement and efficiency by inviting beneficiaries to share their insights and needs. Finally, it may be the partners – and the lead partner in particular – who make the decisions.

For example, while the Nutrir program's key parameters are fixed, Nestlé and the local implementation partners consult each school's stakeholders to ensure that the program's content fits school-specific needs.

In the effective **shared governance structures**, beneficiary involvement has to be particularly well managed to avoid burnout, frustration, and ineffective processes (Barr & Huxham, 1996), especially when the partners coordinate their PPP informally. That is, in the absence of an administrative entity that coordinates the involvement of beneficiaries and team interdependence between partners calling for increased coordination (Van de Ven, et al., 1976), partners in shared governance may only have limited capacity to involve beneficiaries. The structure therefore does not facilitate striking a balance between the need to involve beneficiaries, and the task of keeping the PPP processes efficient.

3. Please note that PPPs for development in which a civil-society organization whose particular aim is to involve and empower stakeholders is the lead, may provide an exception. Hence, the subsequent discussion does not include this case.

In line with their restricted capacities at the Jordanian school partnership, and suffering from less constructive attempts at the very beginning, the partners reduced beneficiary involvement to a selected school committee and slowly broadened their involvement once their PPP had become more stable.

An effective **administrative organization structure**, in turn, may facilitate beneficiary involvement. While the increased number of partners may necessitate higher levels of formalization and specialization (based on Child, 1975; Mintzberg, 1979), this may help integrate beneficiaries in an efficient way. In other words, it allows for structured and representative participation, while the administrative organization's staff coordinates integration and assumes more routine administrative burdens.

At the Egyptian Education Initiative, the partners have clearly defined to what extent beneficiaries are integrated into the PPP, involve them in the formal monitoring and adaptation processes, and encourage the development of local support structures.

Proposition 3: The balance between beneficiary involvement and efficiency

- a) tends to shift towards efficiency in effective lead organization partnerships;
- b) creates tensions in effective shared governance partnerships;
- c) tends to shift towards beneficiary involvement in effective administrative organization partnerships.

DISCUSSION

The analysis shows that partners in PPPs for development face additional challenges that need to be considered in designing effective partnerships and thus complements Provan and Kenis's framework (2008). In an effective **lead organization structure**, the lead's role reduces the points of interaction. It may thereby help reduce the points of conflict stemming from (moderate) partner differences. This structure may be effective if the desired solution requires less joint coordination (Van de Ven, et al., 1976), and the lead has the core competencies and resources for solving the problem while needing selected inputs from the other partners. Thus, effective PPPs with a company as lead seem to be those whose main tasks are technical in nature, require specialized knowledge, and are closely linked to the company's value chain. The lead's central position tends to limit beneficiary involvement to predefined areas, while granting the lead more autonomy and limiting shared accountability to defined areas. Consequently, with a company as lead, this structure may be effective for tasks that have a narrow intersection with and can be clearly distinguished from the

government's sphere of authority. Overall, these criteria suggest a "programmatic" partnership scope; that is, the PPP addresses a relatively structured problem, is narrow in scope, involves few organizations, and approaches the public problem with a technical or expertise-based solution (Waddock, 1991).

An effective **shared governance structure** – governed and coordinated by all partners without any designated structural entity – particularly exposes partners to tensions arising from different partner backgrounds, balancing autonomy and accountability, as well as beneficiary involvement and efficiency. Overall, this structure may prove effective if the partners' differences seem surmountable and the PPP's scope is "federalist"; that is, if the problem relates to a specific group, requires increased interaction between few organizations, and addresses a limited group of beneficiaries (Waddock, 1991). The literature offers several suggestions on how best to handle the inherent challenges. First, a significant interest in the PPP's positive outcome is pivotal for partners to invest in building working relations and in defining a shared way of working (Wood & Gray, 1991). Then, open communication and personal relationships fostered by boundary-spanning individuals may help the partners develop mutual understanding, break down established stereotypes, and build common ground (World Economic Forum, 2005). Open communication also helps align partner autonomy with the need for shared accountability, as it allows partners to understand each other's interests and existing ownership and authority structures (Zadek, 2002). In order to foster accountability, agreements should specify ground rules and the performance targets for which each partner can be held responsible (Altenburg, 2005). To avoid inertia caused by the inclusion of beneficiaries, partners may map the relevant stakeholders and distinguish between those stakeholders who may provide valuable input (tangible or intangible) and those requiring veto or decision-making rights (Gray, 2007). Accordingly, beneficiaries can be involved while remaining in line with the partners' resources and experience (Huxham & Vangen, 2000b).

An effective **administrative organization structure** soothes tensions stemming from partner differences. Thus, it may be effective for problems that require the collaboration of many different partners, that is, for PPPs with a geographically and thematically broad scope, and for which the tasks can be divided into clear areas of responsibility. Otherwise, the partners cannot delegate coordination and areas of responsibility. Additionally, this structure's formal sophistication and the administrative organization may facilitate beneficiary involvement. Consequently, this structure may prove effective for solutions that require changes in existing systems and increased behavior-altering involvement of many stakeholders. These criteria correspond to a "systemic" PPP scope; that is, the problem is relatively indivisible and requires the interaction of many organizations (Waddock, 1991).

Suggestions on how to handle beneficiary involvement effectively in this structure acknowledge that simply having representatives on the board or committees is not enough (Lowndes & Sullivan, 2004). It is rather the role that such representatives play in decision making, their

influence vis-à-vis the partners, and their accountability to and understanding of wider stakeholder interests that stimulate public participation (Lowndes & Sullivan, 2004). To prevent beneficiary involvement from becoming overloaded and resulting in significant bureaucracy and coordination efforts, the criteria and modes for selecting representatives from certain stakeholder groups need careful attention (Rein & Stott, 2009). When managed successfully, beneficiary involvement may in the long term improve these PPPs' effectiveness despite requiring considerable effort, time, and resources. Table 2 summarizes the article's main contributions that extend the framework for the effective use of different PPP structures.

Table 2. PPP structures and additional predictors of effectiveness

Predictor of effectiveness	Lead organization	Shared governance	Administrative organization
Differences in partner backgrounds	Moderate	Minor to moderate (but a strong interest in aligning differences)	Moderate to manifold
Case illustration	Despite apparent differences in the public and private partners' working cultures, these differences do not significantly hamper joint work since Nestlé, as a well respected lead organization, can set the major framework and standards for the PPP's implementation.	While the partners at the Jordanian school had to overcome sector-specific stereotypes and mutual mistrust first, they realized that "at the end of the day, we are all Jordanians striving for a better future."	Due to EEI's broad scope, the partners have to cope with different ways of working across and within sectors. However, the Project Management Office and specific tools help align these differences.
Required level of shared accountability	Low to moderate	Moderate to high	High
Case illustration	The Nutrir PPP does not interfere with the schools' syllabi and is conceived as an additional after-school program. Nestlé signs an agreement with the government and, within the defined PPP scope, is free to shape the program.	The partners at the Jordanian school moved from small- to large-scale activities; in the latter, the government's approval is required and the partners are highly interdependent.	The partners of the EEI aim to reform the country's overall education system, coordinate the various partner contributions, and report the PPP activities to the government. To these ends, they needed to define clear accountability structures.
Required scope of beneficiary involvement	Narrow	Moderate	Moderate to broad
Case illustration	The Nutrir PPP is an expertise-based educational program seeking to provide children with access to basic information on nutrition, health, and hygiene. While the Nutrir program's key parameters are fixed, school stakeholders are consulted to adapt the program flexibly to school-specific needs.	To improve the overall learning environment of the Jordanian school and to overcome stalled mindsets, the partners have to involve the school stakeholders. However, in view of the partners' restricted capacities to do this, they first limited the involvement to a school committee with about four members. As their PPP became more stable, they slowly started broadening the teachers', students', and parents' involvement.	To develop skills and capacities through the introduction of ICT and thereby improve the educational system, EEI's success ultimately depends on the beneficiaries' constructive use of these technologies. Consequently, the partners involve the beneficiaries in the formal evaluation processes and encourage the development of local support structures (e.g., an ICT committee discussing the school's ICT plan and prioritizing all the necessary factors to fulfill this plan).
Scope (Waddock, 1991 applied)	Programmatic	Federalational	Systemic
Case illustration	Nutrir is conceived to raise awareness and increase knowledge of nutrition and health among school-age children in Brazil. Implemented in numerous schools, this expertise-based educational nutrition program comprises one main workshop and subsequent support for a period of one year.	In the Jordanian school partnership, an NGO, a company, and major school stakeholders work together to improve the learning environment of an underprivileged school. The PPP's scope is thus limited to a specific region.	The EEI is conceived to improve the country's overall educational system, including the areas of pre-university, university, and life-long learning. To address the manifold challenges inherent in this scope, the PPP requires the interaction of three ministries, eight multinationals, and over 20 local companies.

CONCLUSIONS

This article sheds light on the structural diversity of PPPs for development, on which literature is scarce. More precisely, it develops a framework that illustrates the implications that different structures have for the management of PPP-related design challenges. The article contributes to the PPP literature by applying a structural typology based on Provan and Kenis (2008) to the context of PPPs for development and, based on insights from the network and contingency literatures and logical deduction, enlarges it with factors that this specific context brings about. The analysis shows that the structures differ in the way in which they expose partners to tensions stemming from different partner backgrounds, from balancing partner autonomy and accountability, and from beneficiary involvement and efficiency.

Cautious implications for the effective use of each of the three structures in the context of PPPs for development are elucidated. In addition to the key predictors of effectiveness defined by Provan and Kenis (2008), namely trust, number of partners, goal consensus, and the need for partnership-level competencies, this article strongly recommends that the differences in partners' backgrounds, the areas of authority of all involved parties (especially the government's), the need for beneficiary involvement, and the PPP's scope, be taken into account. Thus, from a practical perspective, the framework may facilitate more informed and tailored decisions with regard to structuring PPPs for development and help anticipate design challenges. Furthermore, relying on the existing literature, best practices on how to handle the challenges in each structure are presented.

Based on a contingency approach, the framework's strength can be seen in composing a cluster of design factors that impact a PPP's effectiveness and thereby approaches the complexity of collaboration in PPPs. However, also its limitations are intertwined with the contingency approach, as "it would be naïve to think that the perfect taxonomy is the one that perfectly replicates reality" (Meyer, Tsui, & Hinings, 1993: 1182). This implies that there is rarely a perfect and unambiguous causality between a limited set of the key predictors for effectiveness and the PPP outcomes. Furthermore, a PPP's dynamic environment will complicate the fit among all design factors, while stimulating a process of continuous adaptation. Consequently, future research may explore how partners adapt their PPP design and possibly move from one structure to another. Additionally, while this article focuses on PPP design challenges that are reflected in the current literature, future research may explore further challenges and the bearing that these challenges have upon the effective use of the structures discussed. Overall, this article provides a first step towards a framework that – once empirically validated – will provide assistance in making more tailored decisions with regard to structuring PPPs for development and handling the respective design challenges. Reflections on different PPP contexts are a fundamental factor in improving PPPs for development and harnessing their potential for collaborative advantage in order to tackle public problems successfully.

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APPENDIX: Interviews and material

Nutrir Brazil		
Interview Partner	Position	Company
Company	Healthy Kids Global Program Coordinator	26.04. and 09.06.2010 (0h55; 1h45)
Company	Corporate Social Responsibility Head	16.07.2010 (0h35)
Company	Corporate Social Responsibility Manager	10.09.2010 (0h50)
Nutrition Expert	Independent	30.11.2010 (0h45)

Material: Meeting Minutes (internal); partnership descriptions (www.nestle.com; <http://www.nestle.com.br/portalnestle/nutrir/>; www.healthykids.com)

Jordanian School Partnership		
Interview Partner	Position	Date(s) and Length
NGO	External Relations Manager; Corporate Relations Coordinator	12.11.2009 (1h00)
NGO	Program Development Manager; Community Mobilizer	12.11.2009 (0h40)
NGO	Initiative Director	31.08.2009 (1h00)
Company	Marketing Manager	14.11.2009 (2h15) and 21.01.2010 (1h00)
Company	Marketing Coordinator, Social Committee	03.12.2009 (0h20)
Ministry of Education	Engineers	16.11.2009 (0h30)
Ministry of Education	Secretary General	24.11.2009 (written answers)
School Stakeholders	Teachers; Principal	15.11.2009 (1h00)
School Stakeholders	Parents; Students	15.11.2009 (0h30)

Material: Partnership Agreement, Partnership Strategy, Progress Report (internal); partnership descriptions (www.madrasati.jo)

Egyptian Education Initiative

Interview Partner	Position	Date(s) and Length
Ministry of Education	Former Head of Education	02.03.; 09.03. and 13.03.2010 (0h45; 0h50; 0h50)
Ministry of ICT	Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor	26.04.2010 (0h45)
Ministry of ICT	Program Manager	20.05.2010 (written answers)
Company I	Regional Manager Networking Academy	16.06.2010 (0h45)
Company II	Worldwide Education Strategy Director	14.04.2010 (0h40)
Company III	Program Specialist, Academy	26.04.2010 (0h40)
Company IV	Project Manager	22.04.2010 (0h45)
Broker Organization	Associate Director Global Education Initiative	02.09.2009 (1h00)
Broker Organization	Senior Director Head, Center for Global Industries	15.12.2009 (0h45)

Material: Toolkit Presentation (internal); Logical Frameworks (4x), Advisory Board Meeting Minutes (2x), Periodical Executive Summaries (4x), Results Matrix, Monitoring & Evaluation Strategy, Case Study; partnership descriptions (www.eei.gov.eg/)
