The effectiveness of networks focused on the Social Support Act in Dutch local municipalities

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Abstract

This study investigates the relationship between level of integration (density and centralization) and network effectiveness. A part of the model of Provan & Milward (1995) is researched in-depth and tested in a service delivery network in the field of the Social Support Act (Wmo). Six cases are analyzed and data is collected through document studies and qualitative semi-structured interviews and analyzed using pattern matching and qualitative content analysis.

Results show three different patterns between level of integration and network effectiveness. The first is that both density-based and centralization-based integration results in a high effective network. The second pattern shows that low density-based integration and medium centralization-based integration lead to a low effective network. The last one demonstrates that a medium density-based integration and a high centralization-based integration results in a medium effective network.

Findings are in contrast with the findings of Provan & Milward (1995). However, in this study six items are found that give a more detailed explanation of how the level of integration affects network effectiveness. The six items are; (1) insight in each others’ range of services, (2) a case manager, (3) information exchange and communication between professionals, (4) no duplication of services, (5) release the own organizational interests and (6) mutual trust between professionals.

Although, only 6 cases were observed, the study contributes to the current literature by expanding the knowledge of whole network research and network effectiveness. Furthermore, this research provides municipalities who are responsible for the execution of the Social Support Act with valuable management information.

Key words: network effectiveness, whole network analysis, density and centralization.
Preface

The last decade networks are becoming a very important organizational form, because of the increase of societal complexity. Public and nonprofit organizations make an increasing use of networks, this leads to a rising demand for studies about the functioning and effectiveness of whole networks. The present study anticipates on this demand. The model of Provan & Milward (1995) is one of the milestones in the literature about whole networks and their effectiveness. This model has already sometimes been tested in different contexts, but in-depth insight in one of the relationships of the model is underexposed. By studying in-depth the relationship between level of integration and network effectiveness in a service delivery context through the model of Provan & Milward (1995) this study helps to extend the literature about the functioning of whole networks. This study was performed as part of my graduation for the Extended Master Organization Studies.

This thesis could not have been accomplished successfully without the assistance and support of various persons and organizations. Therefore, I would like to direct some words of appreciation to those who helped me through this thesis process. In the first place, I would like to thank Drs. R. Pranger and Prof. Dr. I. Bongers, first and second supervisor of this paper, for providing useful feedback and for guiding me into the right directions. Secondly, I would like to thank the respondents in the field of Social Support Act, who provided valuable information and feedback. Furthermore, I am thankful to the employees of IVA beleidsonderzoek en advies for facilitating and supporting this research where necessary. Moreover, I would like to thank my peers of the circle for their criticism, support and feedback. Thank you, to everyone who provided feedback on this paper in any way. And last, I would like to thank my family and friends for stimulating and supporting me to perform this Master Thesis with success!

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1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the topic of this paper; network effectiveness. In the first section (1.1) the research problem and research question are presented. Next, in section 1.2 the research context and in section 1.3 the relevance of this study are elaborated upon. In the final section (1.4) the structure of the paper is described.

1.1. Research problem and goal

Despite the ever-increasing importance of networks as a macro-level social issue (Raab and Kenis, 2009), network researchers in business, public management, and health care services still only have a limited understanding of consciously created goal directed networks (Provan, Fish, & Sydow, 2007). Networks are often analyzed as means to advance the individual goals of participating organizations (Milward, Kenis, & Raab, 2006). The dominant focus in the network literature on the organizational level is inadequate as organizational outcomes only exhibit how well individual organizations perform in the network context while neglecting essential parts of the collective logic (the "network effect") (Uzzi, 1996; Sydow & Windeler, 1998). This stands in contrast to the increasing importance of inter-organizational networks as collective production systems in today’s societies (Prahalad and Krishnan, 2008) and to the efforts of many governments to increase the effectiveness of public services by setting up or facilitating inter-organizational collaboration through networks (Raab & Suijkerbuijk, forthcoming).

Since the increasing complexity of current social issues leads to a rising demand for collaboration (Agranoff, 2003; Vollenberg, Raab & Kenis, 2007), interorganizational networks of public and nonprofit organizations have become a common mechanism for information exchange and service delivery (Provan & Milward, 2001; Milward & Provan, 2006). It is supposed, that interorganizational networks offer opportunities for extensive knowledge exchange, fast access to information, high levels of flexibility and creativity, and more capacity to handle complex problems (Alter & Hage, 1993; Provan & Kenis, 2008). Therefore, it is believed that these networks are an important mechanism to address wicked problems that cannot be tackled otherwise (Provan, Veazie, Staten & Teufel-Shone, 2005; Kenis & Raab, 2003; Agranoff, 2003). Moreover, it is assumed by “many policy official, funders, and service professionals that an integrated network of service delivery is the most effective approach for providing clients with a seamless continuum of care” (Provan, Huang & Milward, 2009, p. 873), because of the fact that an integrated, well coordinated network “minimizes duplication of services by multiple provider agencies while increasing the probability that all essential
services are provided” (Provan & Milward, 1995, p.3). Consequently, the effectiveness of a whole network is more important to clients, than the effectiveness of individual organizations (Provan & Milward, 1995; Kenis & Provan, 2008).

The literature on networks has grown to be extensive over the years. From organizational networks to social networks, “networks have been and continue to be an emerging and developing field of study, spanning multiple disciplines” (Provan et al., 2007, p. 479). Since the rise of network research, the main focus of scholars in this field has been on network formation (Oliver, 1990; Ebers, 1997; Walker, Kogut & Shan, 1997), and structural characteristics of networks (Wasserman & Faust, 1994; Tichy, Tushman & Fombrun, 1979). Work regarding whether and under which circumstances consciously created networks in the public sector are actually effective has started to emerge during the last decade (Raab & Suijkerbuijk, forthcoming). However, very few scholars (see e.g. Agranoff, 2003; Turrini, Cristofoli, Frosini, & Nasi, 2010; Klijn, Stijn & Edelenbos, 2010) focus on complete inter-organizational networks and their impact on outputs and outcomes on the network level in a comparative way (Raab & Suijkerbuijk, forthcoming). A reason for the lack of attention to whole networks research is that it is time consuming and subject to researcher’s subjectivity (Vollenberg, et al., 2007).

There is even less research done about the effectiveness of networks (Provan & Milward, 1995; Provan & Kenis, 2008; Geelhoed, 2010 & Mannak, 2010). The clear lack of empirical evidence as to why certain networks are more effective than others has limited the contribution of research into this field (Salancik, 1995). Only, a few studies have explicitly measured whole network effectiveness or network level outcomes, like Provan and Milward (1995). They have investigated the effects of network structure and network context on network effectiveness, by comparing four mental health care networks. They studied the relationship between network structure (integration\(^1\) and external control\(^2\)) and network context (system stability\(^3\) and resource munificence\(^4\)) on the one hand, and network effectiveness on the other hand, incorporating their findings into a model. “In order to broaden the empirical basis in this field and increase the external validity of Provan and Milward’s findings” (Vollenberg et al., 2007) several papers have elaborated on the model of Provan and Milward or tested their hypotheses in another setting (Provan & Sebastian, 1998; Vollenberg et al.,

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\(^1\) Integration has to do with the aspects of the overall compactness of a network.

\(^2\) External control is the way the funding is received and controlled in the network.

\(^3\) System stability refers to the same network members participating in prolonged network activity.

\(^4\) Resource munificence is defined as the level of funding for a network.
Nevertheless, many questions with respect to the functioning of whole networks, and network effectiveness still must be answered (Provan, Fish & Sydow, 2007). The model of Provan & Milward (1995) is a milestone in the literature about the effectiveness of whole networks. Their model is a very complex model which requires the necessary research, but unfortunately so far this model has only been a few times tested empirically. The few studies are not enough, there is still asked for the necessary research. One of the things that are underexposed in the literature is in-depth insight in the relationship between level of integration and the network effectiveness. Consequently, it is of scientific interest to study the relationship between the level of integration and the network effectiveness proposed by Provan & Milward (1995) more in-depth to come to a broader understanding of network effectiveness and the concept of whole networks. Thus, the present study provides in-depth insights in the relationship between the level of integration and network effectiveness, since no research before studied the relationship in-depth. For this purpose; the following research question is formulated: “To what extent and how does the level of integration influence the network effectiveness in a service implementation network (a network focused on the Social Support Act in Dutch local municipalities)?”

1.2 Research Context

The empirical research is conducted in the area of the Social Support Act (Wet maatschappelijke ondersteuning, Wmo), which is a new law in the Netherlands. In January 2007, the Social Support Act was established in the Netherlands. The Dutch government introduced this act to make sure that people can live independently and can participate in society as long as possible, whether or not helped by friends, relatives or acquaintances (Ministerie van Volksgezondheid, Welzijn en Sport, 2007). If that is not possible, there is support from the municipality. Welfare foundations, care organizations, many other social organizations and the municipality work together. The goal of the Social Support Act is to share the responsibility of health care with the people in the society. The local governments will guide people who need more help to the right services. The municipality provides grants to organizations in the society, so that the organizations can provide facilities that ensure that everyone can participate in society. Examples of facilities are: provide household assistance, build group homes, make public buildings more accessible, and organize neighborhood barbecues and much more.
The reason why the Social Support Act is appropriate for the research problem outlined in section 1.1, is explained below here. There are two reasons. Firstly, municipalities as a director are responsible for the implementation of the Social Support Act and each municipality strikes a different balance (Rijksoverheid, 2011). The municipality determines largely how they want to shape and implement the Social Support Act (Rijksoverheid, 2011). One way in which the vision and implementation of the Social Support Act can be achieved within a municipality, is through a network where all the social organizations are involved in (Vereniging van Nederlandse Gemeenten, 2010). These networks have arisen from the needs of the municipality and its partners to screen in complex situations what the support needs of citizens are (Vereniging van Nederlandse Gemeenten, 2010). The way the network takes shape in practice varies by municipality and the cohesion may also vary in shape and intensity. The extent to which and the manner in which the interaction between members of the network is formalized varies by municipality (Vereniging van Nederlandse Gemeenten, 2010). So, this Social Support Act is implemented in certain municipalities by a service implementation network of organizations, “a specific type of public management network that governments fund to deliver services to clients and that is based on joint production and integration of services, often for vulnerable citizens like the mentally ill” (Milward & Provan, 2006). Municipalities have no insights into the differences of the cohesion of the networks and do not know how the network can be best shaped in terms of cohesion so that the network functions effectively. Secondly, these kinds of networks are chosen, because there was one municipality in the Netherlands which had contacted the researcher, since that municipality was struggling with the research question of this study and asked for more research. In short, these networks are interesting cases, because the cohesion of the networks varies by municipalities.

1.3 Relevance

The relevance of this study is twofold. First, this research is of scientific relevance, because it fills a gap in the literature. The model of Provan and Milward (1995) has been applied in different types of networks a few times. But, the studies done in the past did not focus on the in-depth insights of the relationship between level of integration and network effectiveness, which diminishes its overall validity. By testing a part of the relationship of the model of Provan & Milward (1995) in-depth which has not been done before, the external validity of the model is increased, adding to the general understanding of whole networks and the measure of network effectiveness. Furthermore, this study is of scientific relevance, since it extends the knowledge about the functioning of whole networks, because this study contributes to new insights in the relationship between level of integration and network effectiveness. So, this study contributes to the literature, because (1) it
further investigates the theory of Provan & Milward (1995) in an empirical setting; (2) it studies to what extent and how the level of integration is related to the network effectiveness in a service implementation network and (3) it extends the knowledge about the functioning of whole networks.

Secondly, this study is of societal and practical relevance since it offers the networks insights in to what extent and how the level of integration in the networks influences the network effectiveness. By doing this, it provides valuable management information to the municipalities and other actors in the Social Support Act network (practical relevance) and other networks in a comparable situation (societal relevance). The societal problem is that the shape of the networks varies per municipality and also the cohesion between organizations in the network varies in shape and intensity. Insights into these differences and insights into how well the levels of integration of these networks are and whether the network functions effective, are missing. This study provides insights into these differences. There is one Dutch municipality in the Netherlands that has asked for more research since they miss insight in the level of integration of its network and how effective its network functions. For municipalities and its partner organizations it is valuable to gain insight in how the level of integration of the network is and how effective this network now is. Because, when municipalities know how the organizations in the network are connected and how effective this connectedness is, municipalities will have insight in what they have to change in the level of integration of the network to make the network functions more effectively.

1.4. Structure

The previous chapter has provided an introduction to the topic of network effectiveness and the research question attended to in this research. The following chapter provides a theoretical background to the research, elaborating on whole network research, the model of Provan and Milward (1995) and the variables in this study; level of integration and network effectiveness. Next, the methods of this research are explained in chapter three. The fourth chapter contains general descriptions of the cases, individual case scores and descriptions of the findings of the in-depth relationship between level of integration and network effectiveness. These scores and findings are discussed in chapter five, where limitations of the research are also described. Finally, in chapter six conclusions are presented and recommendations for future research are provided.
2. Theoretical Background

This chapter highlights the main concepts in this study, namely level of integration and network effectiveness. The first section describes networks in general and thereafter network effectiveness is elaborated upon. The third section provides deeper insight into the model of Provan & Milward (1995). In the final section the level of integration is further explained.

2.1 Networks

The idea behind network formation in the public and private sector is that today’s problems are of such complex character that a single organization is not able to grasp this complexity (Geelhoed, 2010). Higher levels of market complexity require organizations to specialize (Ebers, 1997). However, organizations can only specialize in a limited amount of areas. Inter-organizational collaboration allows organizations in the network to draw on each other’s resources and expertise, in order to attend to this problem (Milward & Provan, 2006). Besides access to resources, organizations engage in inter-organizational relations for cost reduction, to increase legitimacy, for efficiency purposes or for legal or regulatory requirements (Oliver, 1990). It is important to ensure adequate collaboration between partners in the field of public management network formation. “As the public sector produces, delivers and allocated goods to citizens, network outcomes are especially salient, and the rationale for organizations cooperating to accomplish system goals rather than organizational ends is often stronger than in the private sector” (Provan & Milward, 1995, p.3).

Inter-organizational networks and consortia are, of course, not new, but we can observe in many areas such as public management, health care, innovation, research and development as well as the creative industries, an increased number and importance of networks (Raab & Suijkerbuijk, forthcoming). Scholars studying networks prefer to apply other terms like strategic alliances, coalitions, inter-organizational relationships, partnerships or cooperative arrangements, rather than the term network. Despite different used terms for networks, all definitions include common attributes like interaction, relationships, connectedness, collaboration, collective action and cooperation (Provan et al., 2007). Brass, Galaskiewicz, Greve and Tsai (2004) define a network as “a set of nodes and the set of ties representing some relationship or lack of relationship between the nodes” (p. 795). In this definition the content of the tie is only limited by the interpretation of the researcher (Brass et. al., 2004). In contrast Alter and Hage (1993), Jones, Hesterly and Borgatti (1997) as well as Barringer and Harrison (2000) take a more narrow definition of networks. They define networks as “constellations of businesses that organize through the establishment of social, rather
than legally binding, contracts” (Barringer & Harrison, 2000, p. 387). The organization of the relationship is based on maintaining social contracts, despite the fact that legally binding contacts exist in every network. Hereby, they limit the definition of a network to social contact between organizations (Geelhoed, 2010). Provan et. al. (2007) provide yet another perspective on networks by defining it as “a group of three or more organizations connected in ways that facilitate accomplishment of common goals” (p. 482). The idea behind this definition is that actors within a network share a common interest and engage in the exchange of resources in order to achieve a common goal (Börzel, 1998, p.254). This way, common goal accomplishment has become the determining factor of the network.

The section above demonstrates the diversity in definitions when referring to a network. This study adopts the definition of networks provided by Raab & Suijkerbuijk (forthcoming) as it combines different definitions into one with an inter-organizational focus. “Networks can be defined as groups of legally separate organizations connected with each other through exchange relationships, common or complementary goals and common bonds or social relationships that are sustained over time” (p.4).

To study networks, no single theory exists. In general, two theories can be identified, those that analyze from the perspective of individual organizations, and those that analyze from the perspective of the whole network. Provan et al. (2007) developed four different typologies of network research within these theories: research into the (1) impact of organizations on other organizations through dyadic ties, (2) impact of individual organizations on a network, (3) impact of a network on individual organizations and (4) whole networks or network-level interactions. The latter is the focus of this study. “This perspective presumes that a network involves many organizations collaboratively working toward a more or less common goal and that the success of one network organization may or may not be critical to the success of the entire network and its customer or client group” (Provan et al, 2007, p. 485). The next section discusses the concept network effectiveness in the case of whole network research.

2.2 Network Effectiveness

Most research on networks, in both the profit and not for profit or public sector, has focused on issues such as network formation (Oliver, 1990), network governance (Thompson, Frances, Levacic & Mitchell, 1991), power and influence in networks (Marsden, 1983, Brass, 1984) and so on. However, little attention has been paid to the issue of overall network effectiveness and its determinants.
Among the few studies that have dealt with that topic, Provan and Milward’s (1995) researches about mental care networks act as a benchmark. In studying mental care networks, these authors used comparative case studies from four large cities in the US to investigate whether the success of the network depended on the structure and the context networks. Provan and Milward’s (1995) preliminary framework, subsequently expanded by Provan and Sebastian (1998), represents and remains a milestone in the research about the determinants of a network’s overall effectiveness, paving the way for subsequent insights and further conceptualization of the concept of network effectiveness (Provan and Milward, 2001). Provan and Kenis (2008) define network effectiveness as “the attainment of positive network-level outcomes that could not normally be achieved by individual organizational participants acting independently” (p.4). Milward and Provan (2006) have distinguished four types of network purposes: service implementation; information diffusion; problem solving; and community capacity building. They state that public sector networks can collaborate on these four tasks, to make progress that cannot be achieved within the boundaries of individual organizations (Milward & Provan, 2006). Evaluation of network effectiveness is especially important for those who formulate public policy at local, state, and national levels, so that scarce public funding can be allocated to service-delivery mechanisms that are utilizing resources efficiently while adequately serving public needs (Provan & Milward, 2001).

According to Provan and Milward (2001), to take care of the interests of the different stakeholders, network effectiveness must be evaluated on three levels: the community level (containing principals and clients as key stakeholder groups), the network level (principals and agents as key stakeholders) and the organization / participant level (clients and agents as key stakeholders). Only the network level is studied in this research, since it is not possible in the given time frame of this research to let the citizens (clients) of the municipalities take part in this study. In that case, you had to send to a very large proportion of citizens of each municipality a survey and that would have required more time and work than there was available in this study.

The effectiveness of a network can be assessed in a number of different ways. A first way of assessing network-level effectiveness is by the number of actual services and projects delivered by the network (Provan & Milward, 2001). One advantage of a network is that it allows for the provision of a broad number of services and projects that collectively address the full needs of citizens (clients). Yet, these services may or may not be adequately provided by the network (Provan & Milward, 2001). At one extreme, only a limited number of services may be offered by the organizations comprised by the network, forcing citizens to go outside the formal network to meet
their full needs. At the other extreme, when too many organizations and programs are involved, this will result in a confusing range of services with considerable duplication of effort. Therefore, the correct number of services that covers the full needs of the clients must be provided by a manageable number of organizations (Provan & Milward, 2001). A second way of evaluating network effectiveness is to assess the strength of the relationships between and among network members, especially across the full network (Provan & Milward, 2001). During the early development of network relationships, ties among most members tend to be relatively weak, as professionals and organizations test each other’s commitment and reliability. As the network matures, some of these links will completely dissolve as agencies discover which relationships work and which do not. “However, if a network is working well and is to be sustained over time, the ties among many network agencies will gradually strengthen, particularly among those with complementary services” (Provan & Milward, 2001, p.419). A final way of assessing network-level effectiveness is by evaluating its achievement of the network level goal(s) (Geelhoed, 2010 & Mannak, 2010). Actors within networks share common interests and engage in the exchange of resources in order to achieve a common goal(s) (Borzel, 1998, p.254), hereby common goal accomplishment has become the determining factor of network effectiveness (Geelhoed, 2010). All these three ways of assessing the effectiveness are used in this study and in chapter 3 will be explained how these ways can be measured.

2.3 The original theoretical model
One of the most prominent studies addressing the relationship between structural characteristics and network outcome has been conducted by Provan and Milward (1995) in their study into the U.S. mental healthcare sector. They studied the relationship between network structure (level of integration and external control) and network context (system stability and resource munificence) on the one hand, and network effectiveness on the other hand, incorporating their findings into a model. Figure 1 shows that network context is a moderator in the model of Provan & Milward (1995), which means that it is expected that the relationship between network structure and network effectiveness will be moderated by network context. In this study, only the variables level of integration and network effectiveness will be investigated. This is possible, since the cases are chosen in such a way that there exists no variation in the other variables (external control, resource munificence and stability).
For the sake of clarity, in the next section the other variables (external control, resource munificence and stability) of the model are explained briefly, even though they are not studied in this research. In section 2.4 the independent variable of this study, namely level of integration, will be explained in detail.

External control refers to the way the funding is received and controlled within the network. Funding can be direct provided through the state or indirect through a local intermediary organization. Furthermore, it can come from a single organization or be more fragmented and come from multiple organizations. System stability is defined as “the same network members participating in prolonged network activity” (Raab & Suijkerbuijk, forthcoming, p. 12). In networks where constant change would be disruptive for routines or operations, network stability and predictability are desired (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). Resource munificence is “the level of funding for an organization or network” (Provan & Milward, 1995, p. 214). Resource munificence is considered as, the higher the resources the greater the chances of effectiveness (Provan & Milward, 1995). The level of funding that is available will have an effect on quality and/or quantity of the services provided within the network. Resource munificence determines the activities the network can undertake (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). The level of integration is discussed below.

2.4 Level of integration

The concept of integration is ill-defined, which makes operationalization difficult and interpretation of outcomes confusing (Bolland and Wilson, 1994). Provan & Milward (1995) have considered integration rather broadly in their study. According to their study, integration refers to “the aspects of the overall compactness of a network” (Scott, 1991, p.92). Integration is focused on issues of both interconnectedness among provider agencies and the extent to which provider agencies are integrated and coordinated through a central authority (Morrissey & Calloway, 1994), which include density and centralization. According to Scott (1991), both concepts refer to different aspects of the
overall “compactness” of a network. “Density describes the general level of cohesion in a network” (Provan & Milward, 1995, p.10) and measures the interconnectedness between organizations in the network. “Centralization describes the extent to which this cohesion is organized around particular focal points and refers to the power and control structure of the network, or whether network links and activities are organized around any particular one or small group of organizations” (Provan & Milward, 1995, p. 10). According to Provan & Milward (1995) density and centralization are important complementary measures.

According to Provan & Milward (1995) there are two indicators for measuring the overall network centralization, namely; the indicators core agent centrality (if there is one or some parties in the network who have the control) and concentration of influence (if there is one party who has the power in the network). Density is difficult to measure and interpret, only on the basis of the indicator “general level of cohesion”, because it is a very broad aspect at a high abstract ion level. Therefore, is searched for related aspects of cohesion (in the network) in the literature which could measure and interpret the general level of cohesion. That has yielded the following aspects; inter-agency cooperation (Eschenfelder, 2007), communication lines (Eschenfelder, 2007), conflicts of interest (Reagans, 2003), willingness to invest time and effort in sharing knowledge and information with others (Reagans, 2003) and mutual relations (Oliver, 1991). In chapter 3 will be explained how these indicators of centralization and aspects of cohesion (density) are measured in this study.

A network needs to be integrated in order to ensure the full provision of care within the network and for the client to be able to navigate its way through. Integration takes place when organizations that provide services to a particular client group work together to coordinate the services these clients need (Provan & Sebastian, 1998). At the level of the whole network, integration that happens through a central core agency aiming at coordinating the other members of the network is more effective than integration defined through multi-lateral interactions (Provan and Milward, 1995, 2001). The general belief behind integrated networks of service provision is that collaborating service providers will enhance overall effectiveness by utilizing resources more efficiently, recognizing and treating client problems better, and facilitating access to information and expertise (Alter & Hage, 1993; O’Toole, 1997; Provan and Milward, 2001; Huang & Provan, 2007). In order to achieve such a high level of services integration, centralized coordination of services across a complex and diverse network is deemed necessary (Sydow & Windeler, 1998; Fried, Johnsen, Starrett, Calloway & Morrissey, 1998; Huang & Provan, 2007).
Provan and Milward (1995) have investigated both density-based and centralization-based integrated networks and found density to be of little relation to network effectiveness. Networks with a high centralization-based integration on the other hand were found to be highly effective. Therefore, they formulated the following proposition: “Other things being equal, network effectiveness will be enhanced when the network is integrated, but only when integration is achieved through centralization of the network. Networks that are both centrally integrated, though a core agency, and decentrally integrated through cohesive links among network members, will be less effective than networks that are predominantly centralized (Provan & Milward, 1995, p.25)”.

Other researchers who tested the proposition found the following results. Vollenberg et. al (2007) found in their study both centralization-based and density-based integrated networks to be less effective. Morrossay and Calloway (1994) confirm this, as in their view, complexity is increased, which lowers the overall effectiveness. Provan and Sebastian (1998) add to this that full network-based integration can hamper effectiveness through complexity, but that integration over sub-networks or cliques yields positive network effectiveness. Subsequently, Raab and Suijkerbuijk (2011) found small networks to benefit from density-based integration since trust can be created and larger networks to benefit from centralization-based integration for coordination purposes. A combination of both density-based integration and centralization-based integration will yield a negative effect (Geelhoed, 2010). Because of the mixed findings, in-depth knowledge of the relationship is necessary.

The conceptual model of this research is shown below.
3. **Methods**

In this section, the methodology of the research is elaborated on. Respectively, the research design, sampling strategy, concept measurement, data collection, data analysis, and the research quality indicators are discussed.

### 3.1 Research design

The goal of this research is to gain insight in the relationship between level of integration and network effectiveness. By comparing networks, insight can be gained in to what extent the different levels of integration are related to network effectiveness. Because of the above mentioned points, a multiple comparative case study will be the best research design. This design provides possibilities to gather in-depth case knowledge, by means of qualitative information and to compare sets of cases (Yin, 2003). By studying cases in-depth, more and probably new information can come up which was unknown before, and therefore new outcomes can be discovered in this study (Eisenhardt, 1989).

This study is a qualitative research (interviews and document study). Qualitative research is the most useful design for gathering the data, because this study is interested in in-depth information, which can be best gathered by conducting (face-to-face) interviews. Furthermore, it is not as in quantitative research to map out numbers, but to provide an insight into the research problem in this study (Bryman, 2008). In total six municipalities will be investigated, since that is the maximum number of municipalities which can be studied in-depth within the given time frame. The unit of analysis in this study will be the whole network (service implementation networks focused on the Social Support Act in Dutch local municipalities). The representatives of the organizations participating in the networks will be the unit of observation. They are usually policy advisors, policy makers, managers or directors.

### 3.2 Sampling Strategy

The sample strategy that is used in this study is convenience sampling. A convenience sample is “one that is simply available to the researcher by virtue of its accessibility” (Bryman, 2008, p. 183). This sample strategy is chosen, because the investigator had already access to one municipality and for the other cases the researcher used its own network to get access into municipalities. The networks focused on the Social Support Act in Dutch local municipalities are selected as unit of analysis, because of the practical relevance of the study for the benefit of these networks and because of the opportunity to research several whole networks.
Purposive sampling is used for selecting the right cases, since those Social Support Act networks are selected that vary on the independent variable of this study (level of integration) and the choice to select the cases in such a way that there exists no variation on the other variables (external control, resource munificence and stability). In total 3 cases with high levels of integration and 3 cases with low levels of integration are selected. As said above, these cases are selected which are equal to external control, system stability and resource munificence. The reason for keeping these other independent variables of Provan & Milward (1995) equal is that this study is interested in how and to what extent the level of integration influences the network effectiveness.

A fact sheet was developed with information about (1) level of integration, (2) system stability, (3) resource munificence, (4) external control, and (5) network effectiveness. This fact sheet was needed to make a solid selection of 6 municipalities which were further researched in the data collection. Municipalities were first contacted by telephone. As mentioned earlier, the investigator used people from its own network, so in a lot of municipalities, relations were contacted and they could tell which person the researcher needed for its study. In this way the researcher had a reference, namely its relation in the municipality. During this telephone conversation a brief explanation of the study was given. The municipalities that were interested were visited in order to discuss the context and goal of the research more extensively. At the end of the conversation the person had to fill in a short questionnaire (see Appendix III) for finding out all the information of the fact sheet. Based on the fact sheet a selection of cases was made.

The table below illustrates the reason for the number of cases (6) in this study, because of time constraints no more cases (6) can be studied in the term of the research. Unfortunately, collecting data on whole networks is complicated and time consuming which – among other reasons - has led to a relatively small number of studies and a small number of cases in each study (Provan et al., 2007).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of study days</th>
<th>Total number of study days every month</th>
<th>Number of interviews per network</th>
<th>Total number of interviews</th>
<th>Total hours for conducting and working out interviews</th>
<th>Total hours remaining for writing the thesis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60 days (480 hours)</td>
<td>10 days (80 hours)</td>
<td>8 interviews</td>
<td>48 interviews</td>
<td>36 days (288 hours) (6 hours per interview)</td>
<td>24 days (192 hours)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The data of this research is gathered through semi-structured interviews with policy makers, policy advisors, managers and directors of the participating organizations in the networks focused on the Social Support Act in Dutch local municipalities. For the semi-structured interviews purposive sampling is applied, respondents with the most knowledge on the level of integration and the network effectiveness are questioned. Policy makers, policy advisors, managers and directors are interviewed, since these people have the most insight in the network and they can give a broad picture of the functioning of the network on all organizational levels (managerial, tactical and operational).

3.3 Concept measurement

In chapter 2 is indicated that in chapter 3 will be explained how the indicators of the variables level of integration and network effectiveness are measured in this study. Therefore, in this section, the method of measuring the concepts level of integration and network effectiveness will be discussed. An overview of the operationalization is shown in appendix I.

3.3.1 Level of integration

In chapter 2 is already mentioned that network integration is ill defined, providing difficulties for its operationalization. Integration is defined as the “overall compactness” of a network. The level of integration is divided into two issues, which complement each other according to Provan & Milward (1995). Density and centralization are these issues.

Density is defined as the “general cohesion” of the network. However, this is a too abstract and broad concept and therefore is made use of indicators related to the general cohesion of the network, which together determine the degree of density. It involves the following five indicators; inter-agency cooperation, communication lines, conflicts of interest, willingness to invest time/effort in sharing knowledge/information and mutual relations. Based on the five indicators, questions are formulated (see Appendix II) for the interviews to determine what the degree of density is. For each indicator is measured whether the network scores high, medium or low on the indicator. For every indicator is shown now when the network scores high on it. Firstly, the network scores high on the indicator conflicts of interests, when there are little or no conflicts of interest. Secondly, the network scores high on the indicator communication lines, when there are good and short communication lines. Thirdly, the network scores high on the indicator mutual relations, when there are good mutual relations. Fourthly, the network scores high on
the indicator willingness to invest time and effort, when there is a great willingness to invest time and effort. Finally, the network scores high on the indicator inter-agency cooperation, when there is intensive cooperation. The total score for all indicators together determine whether the network scores high, medium or low on the degree of density. The degree of density of a network is high, when on at least four of the five indicators are scored high. The degree of density of a network is low, when on all indicators is scored low or on maximum one of the five indicators is scored high and on the others low. The degree of density of a network is medium, when on all indicators is scored medium or on at least two medium and the others high.

Centralization is defined as the “cohesion of the network around a focal point”. According to Provan & Milward (1995) there are two indicators for operationalizing the overall network centralization, namely the indicators; core agent centrality and concentration of influence. The core agent centrality is measured by investigating if there is one or maybe some parties in the network who have the coordination. The concentration of influence is measured by studying if there are one or two parties who have the decision power in the network. Based on these two indicators, questions are formulated (see Appendix II) for the interviews to determine what the degree of centralization is. For both indicators is measured whether the network scores high, medium or low on the indicator. For both indicators is shown now when the network scores high on it. The network scores high on indicator core agent centrality when there is one or some clear core agent(s) in the network. The network scores high on the indicator concentration of influence when there are one or two parties who have the decision power in the network. The total score for both indicators together determine whether the network scores high, medium or low on the degree of centralization. The degree of centralization of a network is high, when at both indicators is scored high. The degree of centralization of a network is medium, when at one of the two indicators is scored high. The degree of centralization of a network is low, when at none of the indicators is scored high.

### 3.3.2 Network effectiveness

Network effectiveness regards “the attainment of positive network-level outcomes that could not normally be achieved by individual organizational participants acting independently” (Provan & Kenis, 2008. p.4). As was mentioned in section 2.2 of this thesis, the network effectiveness can be assessed in a number of different ways (1) the number of actual services and projects delivered by the network, (2) the strength of the relationships between and among network members, especially
across the full network and (3) achievement of local network level goals. In this study these three ways are used as indicators to measure the level of network effectiveness. Based on these three indicators, questions are formulated (see Appendix II) for the interviews to determine what the level of network effectiveness is. For each indicator is measured whether the network scores high, medium or low on the indicator. For all indicators now is shown when the network scores high on it. The network scores high on the indicator strength of relationships, when the strength of the relationships is strong in the network. The network scores high on the indicator achievement of network level goals, when (almost) all goals are achieved in the network. For the number of services is for all three possible scores shown when the network has that score. The number of services is high when the number is above the 20 services, medium when the number is between the 10 and 20 services and low when the number is below the 10 services. The total score for all indicators together determine whether the network scores high, medium or low on the level of network effectiveness. Firstly, the network is highly effective, when the network scores high at all the three indicators of effectiveness. Secondly, the network effectiveness is low, when the network scores low at all the three or two of the three indicators of effectiveness. At last, the network is medium effective, when the network scores high at two of the indicators of effectiveness or scores medium at all three or two of the three indicators of effectiveness.

3.4 Data collection

This research is based only on qualitative data, because this study is not interested in mapping out numbers (as in quantitative research), but this research is particularly interested in in-depth information of the research question and research problem in this study. This research is based on qualitative data, which is collected through document studies, semi-structured face-to-face interviews and some semi-structured telephone interviews. The data is gathered in networks focused on the Social Support Act in Dutch local municipalities. These networks are studied, since in these networks the cohesion between organizations in the network varies in shape and intensity and the extent to which and the manner in which the interaction between members of the network is formalized varies by municipality. Moreover, insights into these differences and insights into how well the levels of integration of these networks are and whether the network functions effective, are missing.
There were two phases in the data collection. In the first phase semi-structured interviews were performed with policy makers or advisors, directors and managers of the organizations participating in the network. In the second phase a document study was carried out.

### 3.4.1 Phase one—semi-structured interviews

In the first phase, at each network semi-structured interviews (N= 7 or 8 interviews per network) of approximately 1 hour were performed. In total 51 respondents divided over 45 interviews have been interviewed. The main goal of these semi-structured interviews was to collect in-depth data about the level of integration and network effectiveness. Semi-structured interviewing is a method which is used very often to collect in-depth data on the relationships between variables (Boeije, 2008). “The goal of this style of interviewing is to ensure that interviewees’ replies can be aggregated and this can be achieved reliably only if those replies are in response to identical cues” (Bryman, 2008, p. 193). The interviewees in this study are policy makers, policy advisors, directors and managers of the participating organizations in the network. These respondents are interviewed since these people have the most insight in the network and they can give a broad picture of the functioning of the network on all organizational levels (managerial, tactical and operational). They are usually the focal point of their organization for other network members. Through these interviews, general information about (the background of) the network was acquired, as well as insight in the level of integration of networks and the network effectiveness.

All the interviews were anonymous and respondents were told that the information given would be treated confidentially to stimulate them to be more open. The interviews were recorded. A semi-structured topic list for the interviews (see Appendix III) was developed. Based on the indicators of the variables (level of integration and network effectiveness) questions for the topic list were formulated (see section 3.3.).

### 3.4.2 Phase two – Document study

In the second phase, a document study was carried out. An analysis of documents and materials was used as additional data to the interviews in order to complement the information from the interviews. Documents and materials that were used were different articles, books, policies and meeting summaries that are useful and available for this study. The researcher was only interested in documents that contained more background information of the network and documents that contained information of the level of integration and effectiveness of the network. Some examples
are policy documents from the different local governments that describe the Social Support Act for their municipality or minutes of project meetings. These different sources of data are used in order to strengthen the answers on the research question, which is called triangulation (Eisenhardt, 1989). However, the document study only yielded additional background information of the networks.

3.5 Data analysis

3.5.1 Semi-structured Interviews

All the interviews were recorded and transcribed at the end of the data collection. The transcripts of the interviews were very detailed worked out, with the literal texts of the respondents. This was done so that the researcher was sure no important information was missed. This yielded in a rich data set of many pages. In order to structure the data and to be able to analyze it accordingly, a coding scheme was developed. This scheme was made based on the content of the topic list for the interviews, literature and the data of the interviews. The scheme below (next page) gives an impression of the coding scheme:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Code (indicators)</th>
<th>Individual remarks</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level of integration:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>density</td>
<td>cohesion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inter-agency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cooperation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communication lines</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conflicts of interest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Willingness to invest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mutual relations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of integration:</td>
<td>Core agent centrality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>centralization</td>
<td>Concentration of influence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network effectiveness</td>
<td>Number of actual services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strength of relationships</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Achievement network goals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Per team a data matrix has been developed. First, the researcher has given a color to each code. Next, all the transcripts have been read to link the statements of the respondents to the codes, by giving the right colors of the codes to the remarks. By doing this, selective coding was applied, since phrases of text in the transcripts were marked in the color of the different codes. Those marked remarks were pasted in the coding table in the column “individual remarks”. By following the structure of the coding scheme the copied remarks were grouped behind the same code. This gave the researcher the opportunity to get a clear overview of all the data on a specific concept or indicator. In the final column “results” the data of the column “individual remarks” was summarized. To get an overview per variable per network, for each variable of each network a file was made which contained all the data of the indicators of that variable. In this way, the data was grouped and could be used to answer the research question.

Furthermore, after the data was well organized and grouped for patterns could be searched. This method is called “pattern matching”, which makes this study use of. Pattern matching implies the matching of an observed pattern (a pattern of measured values) with an expected pattern (a hypothesis) and deciding whether these patterns match (Hak & Dul, 2009). For example, according to the theory of Provan & Milward (1995) there is a match between the observed and the expected pattern, when networks with high levels of centralization enhance the network effectiveness. The observed pattern(s) can give an answer at the research question to what extent does the level of integration influence the network effectiveness. After the observed pattern was found, the observed pattern was matched with the expected pattern (hypothesis of Provan & Milward, 1995). Finally, this study had made use of qualitative content analysis. Qualitative content analysis is defined as “a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying patterns” (Hsieh, Shannon, 2005, p. 1278). In the above sections is exactly described this systematic classification process of coding and identifying patterns.

Finally, for the analysis of the in-depth insights in the relationship a table had been made with items that could give an explanation of how the level of integration affects the network effectiveness. The items were mentioned by the respondents during the interviews. In the table behind every item the explanations of the respondents were noted. This table contained the comments of all respondents together, because in each case the same items were mentioned by the respondents. In this way, a clear overview of the items could be presented that provided more in-depth insight in the
relationship between level of integration and network effectiveness. The analysis of the in-depth insight in the relationship could help to support the observed pattern in this study.

### 3.5.2 Document study

The researcher had asked the contact person of each municipality to send relevant documents. All the documents were collected, after which they were read generally to see if there was interesting information in it. Two files with the titles of the documents were made, one with relevant documents and one with no relevant information. All relevant documents had been read carefully and interesting pieces of text were marked and placed in a table behind the right concepts. The concepts in the table were: background information network, density, centralization and network effectiveness. In this way, a clear overview of the results of the document study per concept was available. After the analysis of the interviews was done, these results of the interviews were checked with the results of the document analysis. However, it turned out to be that the document analysis only yielded additional information about the background information of the network.

### 3.6 Research Quality Indicators

This section further explains the research quality indicators of this study, namely; reliability, internal validity, external validity and construct validity.

#### 3.6.1 Reliability

Reliability has to do with the consistency of the measurement of the study. With respect to the reliability, it can be argued that the cases are selected carefully to decrease the chance on errors or mistakes. However, the measurement of network effectiveness is influenced by respondent’s perception of the effectiveness. The reliability of the results is increased, since more than one data source is used (interviews and a document study) and interviews are semi-structured.

#### 3.6.2 Internal validity

Internal validity has to do with the adequate interpretation of the empirical findings. In this study, a multiple comparative case study design is used, since this is the most suitable research design to determine to what extent and how the level of integration influences the network effectiveness in the context of the Social Support Act. However, researcher’s subjectivity can decrease the internal validity by translating the empirical findings. So, internal validity is difficult to gain in this study because the outcomes are qualitative (subjective) which makes it difficult to interpret the outcomes of this study as a causal relationship because there is no statistical proof of in this study. On the
other hand, a case study has the possibility to research deeper causal mechanisms by means of an intense study to the research subject (Hutjes & van Buuren, 1992).

### 3.6.3 External validity

The external validity regards the possibilities to generalize the research findings to broader population. The external validity of this research will be moderately low, because of the low number of cases (6), so that the results cannot be generalized that easily to a broader population. Nevertheless, all six networks are studied through a few methods of data collection, which allows for in-depth knowledge into the networks. Therefore, the results can be generalized over the broader population of networks focused on the Social Support Act in Dutch local municipalities, when the smaller population is kept in mind when drawing conclusions.

### 3.6.4 Construct validity

The construct validity is relatively high. Construct validity increases by using different sources of data, namely semi-structured interviews and different documents and by operationalizing the concepts well, since the theoretical concepts are checked by means of the literature and discussed extensively with the interview members. Furthermore, by interviewing face-to-face, the interviewer can explain the different questions and concepts so that the meaning of topics will be clear for every respondent.
4. Results

This chapter discusses the findings of the comparative case study and the findings of the in-depth relationship between level of integration and network effectiveness.

4.1 Individual case scores

In the following sections you will read the following: (1) general description of each case/network based on information from the interviews and document study, (2) scores and justification of the scores for each network on the variables from the conceptual model based on statements from the interviews and (3) description of the findings of the in-depth relationship between level of integration and network effectiveness based on statements from the interviews.

4.1.1 Alan

Network Alan is located in a municipality with a population between the 75.000 and 100.000. In this network, interviews have been conducted with 9 people. The network consists of the following organizations: municipality, volunteer center, welfare organization, welfare organization elderly, home care organization, social work, care and nursing home, seniors’ organizations, housing association, disability organization and mental health institution.

In the table below, the scores on the variables for network Alan are presented:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of integration:</th>
<th>Level of integration:</th>
<th>Network effectiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Density</td>
<td>Centralization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the following sections a justification of the scores on all the three variables (density, centralization and network effectiveness) is given.

Level of integration

Density:

Firstly, the following statements are related to the inter-agency cooperation. The interviewees mention that in this network, the welfare organization, social work and the volunteer center are merged recently. One respondent has made the following remark: “The merger basically means that a number of parties, which are related to the Social Support Act, are now bundled into one organization, which makes the control compact and communication lines to the municipality very
short”. There is cooperation at the middle-management, board and operational level. At the operational level there are case consultations. The most cooperation takes place around projects. At the operational level there is a neighborhood-oriented dialogue, this is facilitated by the welfare company. Most projects are started from the initiative of the municipality. In the projects structural dialogue takes place. In network Alan many projects are going on in which more than two companies cooperate with each other. According to the interviewees, the inter-agency cooperation is very intensive. Secondly, in general the communication lines between people and organizations are very short in this network, because everyone can quickly find each other (at managerial as well as at operational level) and knows the social map of the municipality. The respondents underline that doors are always open, so that everyone can easily walk in or call each other and therefore communication lines between organizations and professionals are very good. Thirdly, the interviewees have said the following about the conflicts of interest. There are a few conflicts of interest between organizations. The few conflicts of interest that exist, have particularly to do with the shift of activities from the Exceptional Medical Expenses Act to the Social Support Act, because of the savings that are likely to come and, therefore restlessness exists in the various organizations. However, the few conflicts of interest that exist are of minor nature and have little or no influence on the cohesion of the network according to the members of network Alan. Fourthly, the respondents notice that the mutual relations between organizations and professionals are very good. They stress that the relations are good, because people like each other and grant each other something. Conflicts between professionals are rare, and otherwise they are solved quickly. Finally, the members notice that all the organizations understand the importance of the cooperation, so the organizations do not see each other as rivals, but just as partners. Organizations find out that they cannot work alone anymore and that they will need other organizations and need to share information and knowledge and information. According to the respondents, there is a great willingness to invest time and effort in sharing knowledge and information with each other.

In short, the network shows a high density-based integration, because the network scores high on all five indicators of density (general cohesion).

Centralization:
Firstly, the respondents have noticed the following about the core agent centrality. The municipality and the merger of the three organizations are the core agents in the network. Most of the time coordination of activities or projects is done by one of these parties, so the input of these parties is
very big in the network. At the operational level, the merger of the three organizations is the central player of the field, because this organization has direct contact with citizens and they have good relationships with all the organizations in the network, which makes them a central player. When, it comes to developments in policy and funding than the municipality is in control. The municipality involves partners in major developments and asks partners to provide input and ideas, because they see what the problems in the neighborhoods are and where the focus should be on. The network members notice that the municipality is mainly directing, which is steering, but not too tight. The municipality gives the organizations in the network enough space to experiment to do things in a different way. Mainly, the municipality tries to stimulate organizations to cooperate with each other. Secondly, the interviewees underline that the concentration of influence is in hands of the municipality. They mention that the municipality is the party that decides what happens with the funding and which subsidies are provided to which organizations.

In summary the network demonstrates a high centralization-based network, since on both indicators the network scores high. The municipality and the merger of the three organizations are the core agents and the concentration of influence is in hands of the municipality.

**Network effectiveness**

As the main goal everyone notices to keep the society livable through not letting raise the care costs enormously and work together more effectively. Citizens need the best space to develop initiatives and support should be provided where necessary. The respondents notice that by getting and keeping in the picture the right vulnerable citizens and helping these people and not offering activities double, the network will function more effectively and costs will not rise that much. Offering no activities double is a sub goal. Another sub goal the respondents have mentioned is the mutual respect and confidence in the knowledge and skills of other professionals and organizations. Through mutual respect and trust, it is easier for professionals to transfer clients and to exchange information with other professionals. The members of network Alan notice that the final sub goal is to provide the maximum possible services with the limited resources they have. The goal is broadly based and widely supported within the network. According to the respondents network Alan is well on track to meet the goal and a lot of goals are already as good as achieved. The merger of the three organizations ensures activities and services are effectively organized and costs are reduced. Owing to this, there is no fragmentation anymore and knowledge, products and services are bundled.
According to the interviewees there is little duplication of services and activities. There is great mutual respect for and confidence in each other’s knowledge and skills.

In total, the respondents have noticed 24 services and projects that are provided by the network, which is a high number of services and projects. According to the members these services and projects cover the full needs of the citizens. A complete list of all the services is shown in the Appendix IV. The respondents have highlighted one service that is a best practice. According to the respondents the care and convenience services are a good example of a service that collectively addresses the needs of clients. The network has five elements removed from the household assistance and that work is now done by volunteers or people on benefits. It includes the following five elements; washing and ironing clothes, heating and cooking meals, assistance to a specialist, messenger service and the cold meal. Following the network members are the reasons for the execution of these activities by informal helpers, to provide services cheaper and to remove the work pressure from the professional.

The network members indicate that the relationships are very strong, since everyone knows each other and knows to find each other. They notice that if a link is lost, because someone leaves a particular organization, there are enough other strong links with that particular organization. According to the respondents the directors, professionals and volunteers see each other everywhere in the neighborhoods or otherwise they meet each other regularly during all kinds of consultations, through which relations can be maintained easily.

In brief, network Alan can be characterized as a high effective network, since the network scores high on all three indicators of network effectiveness.

4.1.2 Bailey

Network Bailey is located in a municipality with a population between the 175.000 and 200.000. The network consists of the municipality, volunteer centre, an umbrella organization of primary health care and elderly care, welfare organization, housing associations, disability organization, seniors’ organizations and mental health institution. In this network 8 people have been interviewed.
In the table below, the scores on the variables for network Bailey are presented:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of integration:</th>
<th>Level of integration:</th>
<th>Network effectiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Density</strong></td>
<td><strong>Centralization</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the following sections a justification of the scores on all the three variables (density, centralization and network effectiveness) is given.

**Level of integration**

**Density:**
Firstly, the interviewees have mentioned the following about the inter-agency cooperation. In network Bailey there are three major monopoly organizations that work closely together; the volunteer centre, welfare organization and the umbrella organization of primary health care and elderly care. The respondents notice that the municipality has a covenant with the care agency. In this covenant the three monopoly organizations collaborate with the municipality and each other. The network members indicate that from the covenant a plan is established and within that plan there are many projects. They underline that within the projects is often a clear division of labor and specific agreements are made. The specific agreements are regularly evaluated and as necessary adjusted. The monopoly organizations join in most of the projects and if they lack expertise, other smaller organizations with specific expertise of the topic are involved. According to the interviewees the inter-agency cooperation is intensive, since at all levels (management, middle management and operational) reasonably close collaboration takes place. Secondly, the mutual relations are good. The organizations and professionals in the city know each other very well and also know very well of each other who is doing what. One of the members stresses the following: “the contacts are easily accessible; everyone knows to find each other easily”. According to the members there is great mutual respect and trust between professionals and organizations and rarely there are conflicts. Thirdly, communication lines between professionals and organizations are good and short. The interviewees mention that at all levels professionals meet each other regularly, so that they can discuss things easily. The directors have a special ‘future group’ in which they speak each other regularly and try to see together which way the city has to go. At the operational level, professionals meet each other regularly during case consultations. The managers also meet each other in many consultations according to the respondents. Outside these meetings organizations and professionals can also easily meet or call each other when needed. Fourthly, the respondents underline that there
is a great willingness to invest time and effort in sharing knowledge and information. They mention that every organizations seeks the cooperation and professionals and organizations share where necessary and possible knowledge and information with other professionals and organizations. This willingness to share is very large in the whole network. Finally, the members of network Bailey mention that in general organizational interests play a very minor role; there is acted in the interest of the client. As the professionals understand that another organization can better support the client, the client is transferred without any problems. They notice that of course there are some conflicts of interest, but they are almost always subordinate to the common interests of the network.

Based on the interviews the density-based integration is high in network Bailey, because of the high scores on all five indicators of density.

Centralization
Firstly, the respondents have noticed the following about the core agent centrality. They indicate that the municipality is the core agent in the network. The three monopoly organizations are close around the municipality. By most of the projects and services some or one of these four organizations has the coordination. According to the members of network Bailey, in general, the municipality is reasonable guiding the network. Secondly, the network members underline that when it comes to providing subsidies, the municipality is the party who has the last word, since they manage the money. Therefore, the municipality has the ultimate authority. However, the respondents note that the care office also finances partly, because of the covenant they have with the municipality, but the shape of the Social Support Act is largely owned by the municipality.

The network level of centralization-based integration is high, because on both indicators of centralization the network scores high. The municipality is the core agent and also has the influence in the network.

Network effectiveness
According to the network members one of the main purposes of the network is that each party does what where he is good at and that every party especially need to know who where comes and who does what. The respondents stress that this requires many mutual tuning and this is a sub goal. They indicate that when there is a good tuning, that prevents that not exaggerated many professionals come behind the front door of a client. It is the intention that one of the professionals takes the
coordination and looks what kind of help is necessary for the client and then looks which parties can offer that help. Following the network members, ultimately, it is the aim to improve the quality of the services, the clients get the help that they need and that accumulation of care is avoided. The respondents mention that on the board and management level are broadly based and widely supported, but on the operational level that is not always the case. At the operational level professionals are trained in a certain way and have a particular master of works. In general, network Bailey is hard on track to meet the goals, but the members indicate that the one service is already further than the other service in the extent to which the aims are met. The interviewees notice that the following goals have been achieved fairly. First, organizations in the network know which organization is good at what and in general, professionals have in view which professionals are also at work in a family. Secondly, the professionals at all levels meet each other regularly; there is considerable tuning between the professionals. As last, the respondents remark that accumulation of care is increasingly avoided. However, they notice that what should be still improved, is the coordination that one professional takes in a family, because not always does a person takes the lead. According to the respondents, in general, a large part of the goals is already achieved.

The members of network Bailey mentioned in total 22 services and projects that are delivered by the network, which is a high number of services and projects. According to the members these services and projects cover the full needs of the citizens. In appendix IV is the complete overview of the services and projects provided by network Bailey. One project is highlighted as a best practice according to the members, because this project conforms to the aim of the network and strengthens the linkages between the members. This project is the social bar. In every neighborhood is once in a while this social bar. The goal of this social bar is the creation of an informal meeting place for all people who are active in the field of education, housing, care, welfare and social services. The members indicate that it is targeted to maintain your contacts, inform each other of developments and knowledge- and information exchange. New members can introduce themselves and initiatives for new services or cooperation can be discussed.

The respondents indicate that the strength of the relationships between the network members are well in network Bailey and everybody knows each other and can find each other easily. Parties try as best as possible to ensure that they are not dependent on one person in their organization that has contacts with other organizations, but several people in the organization have contacts with the same organizations. The relationships are good embedded in the different organizations.
Network Bailey is perceived as a high effective network, since the network scores high on all three indicators of network effectiveness.

### 4.1.3 Chest

Network Chest is located in a municipality with a population between the 100,000 and 125,000. In this network, interviews have been conducted with 9 people. The network consists of the following organizations: municipality, volunteer center, home care organizations, welfare organization elderly, welfare organization, social work, care and nursing homes, seniors’ organization, housing associations, disability organizations and mental health institution.

In the table below, the scores on the variables for network Chest are presented:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of integration: Density</th>
<th>Level of integration: Centralization</th>
<th>Network effectiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the following sections a justification of the scores on all the three variables (density, centralization and network effectiveness) is given.

**Level of integration**

**Density**

Firstly, the inter-agency cooperation is not very intensive in network Chest. The respondents indicate that it differs per level of the cooperation is good or not. At the board level, the cooperation is often very difficult, while at the operational level, the professionals have been working together regularly. According to the members the platform housing, welfare and care is a clear example of the difficult cooperation between the different parties, which has been discontinued recently. Very little was happening in that platform, especially members hung back in their chairs and had a mentality that the municipality had to settle everything. One of the members has the following remark; “organizations are now slowly down from their tower. The door of the organization opens and they are cautious looking over their wall”. It is noticed that organizations are now trying to find out where cooperation could be possible. Secondly, the network members stress that mutual relations between professionals and organizations are reasonable. Broadly speaking, the members know of each other what each organization is doing and in what neighborhoods they are active, but when it comes to small business not. It is underlined that the relations are not of such a nature that professionals
easily appeal to each other. The reason for this is that professionals do not know each other good enough. Thirdly, the members notice that communication lines are not really short and good. They remark that professionals meet each other still very little, through which professionals do not know each other very good. As a result, this makes the communication between professionals very difficult. The respondents notice that there is still much duplication in terms of service, because there are still many professionals behind the front door of clients. According to the respondents the services can often be done with fewer professionals. They emphasize that if it is really necessary to come with so many professionals in a household, there should be regularly tuning between the professionals. However, the respondents underline that there is a lack of communication between professionals and communication is needed for good tuning between professionals. Fourthly, the members underline that there is a slowly growing willingness to invest time and effort in sharing knowledge and information between professionals and organizations. Although there is a growing willingness to cooperate with each other, organizations often do not look at what they can do together (in particular organizations that are doing quite the same work). In this way, the cohesion of the network is still hindered according to the members. Finally, the respondents notice that conflicts of interest are quite very large in network Chest. Personal interests often play a very large role and that complicates the coherence of the network according to the network members.

The Chest network is marked as a low-density based integration, due to the low scores on all five indicators of density.

Centralization
Firstly, the respondents have noticed the following about the core agent centrality. The network members do not have an unambiguous answer about which organization(s) is the core agent in the network. It is very different for each service or project which party holds the coordination. Therefore, there is no clear core agent. Most respondents indicate that the municipality is the party that should take the coordination, because they are neutral in the social field and they are there for all citizens. According to the municipality, they only take the role when they have a direct interest; otherwise they find that the social organizations must assume this role. The social parties mention that where the municipality has the coordination role, they are controlling and facilitating. Secondly, the concentration of influence is in hands of the municipality. The interviewees mention that the municipality makes policy and has also budgets; therefore they are the party with the power of decision.
The network level of *centralization-based integration is medium*, since the network scores high on one of the two indicators of centralization, namely at the concentration of influence.

**Network effectiveness**

One of the main goals that the members of network Chest mention, is; *“a balanced supply of housing, welfare and care, so that citizens can as well as possible participate and can as independently as possible stay alive”*. The members indicate that to get the balanced supply, there are several sub goals. One of the sub goals is, that support is organized close by the citizens, so in the neighborhoods where the citizens live. Also, is a sub goal that professionals know of each other who is doing what and know of each other when they are working in the same family. In the latter case the respondents indicate that it is important that there is regular tuning between the various professionals, so that no business is done twice. Through regular coordination professionals can better inform each other and transfer knowledge. In addition, the tuning can also ensure that one person takes the lead and prevent too many professionals are in a family according to the network members. According to the members of network Chest another important sub goal is that borders between organizations disappear, because it is not every organization itself, but together the parties must ensure that the citizens are served. The point is that citizens can participate as fully as possible in society and who supports the citizen in this, does not matter. The members state that the network goals are broadly based and widely supported at all the levels (board, managerial and operational). The aims have still long not been reached according to the respondents, but the first step in the good direction has been made. During the interviews the members have noticed that own organization interests still play a large role, as a result of which at the board level it is difficult to realize the aims. The board level is the place where the lines must be set. The respondents stress that around specific projects some goals are reached, but concerning structural matters, it becomes cumbersome, few aims are reached. They underline that there are still borders between organizations. It is also still common that many professionals are in a family and services are done twice and thus little coordination takes place between the professionals. According to the members the achievement of the goals is still very minimal.

Fifteen services and projects that are provided by network Chest have been mentioned by the network members, which is a medium number of services. According to the respondents these services and projects do not cover completely the full needs of the citizens. The complete overview of all the services is shown in appendix IV. One service is highlighted as best practice according to the respondents. This service is the residential service zone. This service is available in four districts. One
of the districts is a highly ageing zone. The members of network Chest indicate that all facilities in the area of housing and care are presented, but in terms of welfare and recreation there is little in the neighborhood. Outside in the park sports equipment are put down. In the park also activities are organized for citizens to ensure meeting between citizens. In another district organizations are busy to develop a health boulevard. All organizations have been involved in the realization of the service areas in the four districts. The respondents underline that this service is an example to reach one of the aims, namely organizing the support close to citizens.

According to the members the strength of the relationships is low. In network Chest, professionals, managers and directors know to find each other around projects, but outside the projects it becomes more difficult. They note that outside the projects professionals meet each other rarely, which make it difficult to maintain relations. The respondents underline that the relationships are not very good embedded in the organizations.

The Chest network is currently believed to be low effective as the network scores low on two of the indicators and medium on one of the indicators (number of services and projects) of network effectiveness.

4.1.4 Davis

Network Davis is situated in a municipality with the number of citizens between the 190,000 and 215,000. The network consists of the following organizations; municipality, volunteer center, home care organizations, organizations in the field of care and nursing homes, welfare organization, social work, seniors’ organizations, housing associations, disability organization and mental health institution. In total is spoken with 9 people.

In the table below, the scores on the variables for network Davis are presented:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of integration:</th>
<th></th>
<th>Network effectiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Density</td>
<td>Centralization</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the following sections a justification of the scores on all the three variables (density, centralization and network effectiveness) is given.
Level of integration

Density

Firstly, the interviewees stress that there is intensive inter-agency cooperation. They notice that most cooperation takes place around numerous projects, which are often put forward by the municipality. On specific project level, there is certainly worked together. Besides these projects, there is also increasingly cooperation between organizations. For example, three organizations (welfare organization, home care organization and the housing corporation) itself have sought the cooperation. This collaboration focuses on seeing possibilities, finding opportunities and turning those opportunities and possibilities into concrete actions. In this way, there are many collaborations emerging between more organizations. Secondly, the respondents notice that the communication lines are of a medium level, since not all professionals at the operational level always speak the same language, whereby it sometimes takes longer to reach agreement. In addition, the members stress that these professionals do not always know each other, so they cannot easily reach each other and that makes the communication difficult. However, at the middle management and board level communication lines are good and short. The interviewees mention that at these levels managers and directors meet each other regularly, so that they can easily discuss things. They stress that doors are always open to talk about matters. Thirdly, the members underline that mutual relations in the network are medium, since not at all levels there are good personal relationships. They notice that particularly at the middle management and board level there are good personal relationships. At these levels there are many joint initiatives. The respondents stress that the managers and directors can easily appeal to each other and there is great mutual respect and trust in each other’s knowledge and skills. However, the network members state that from a number of projects has become clear that professionals in the districts do not know everyone. They notice that at the operational level the relations are not of a high level, since not everyone knows each other. The first part of some projects was aimed to get to know each other better. In addition, professionals at the operational level cannot easily appeal to each other or drop in. Fourthly, the members notice that the willingness to invest time and effort in the sharing of knowledge and information is very large. According to the respondents of network Davis, there is certainly a great willingness to cooperate by every organization and organizations are also aware that they need the work of other parties. The members underline that during numerous meetings there is plenty of information and knowledge exchange. However, when competitors are presented in the same meeting, they will not show all their expertise, only what is necessary. The interviewees notice that this has to do with conflicts of interest. Finally, conflicts of interest play a role by particularly directors; organizations will not disclose all information to their competitors. According to the respondents organizations are working
together certainly, but more what is most convenient and sometimes too little on a common goal focused. The members find the conflicts of interest at a medium level, because not always play the conflicts of interest a role and directors really do their best to subordinate those interests.

In short, network Davis demonstrates a medium-density based integration, due to the medium score on three indicators (communication lines, mutual relations and conflicts of interest) and the high score on two indicators (inter-agency cooperation and willingness to invest time and effort in sharing knowledge and information).

Centralization
Firstly, the next statements of the core agent centrality have been made by the respondents. All the members of network Davis mention that the municipality is the core agent in the network. Not by all activities or projects is the municipality the coordinating organization sometimes that is an organization with specific expertise about the project or activity. For example, by the dementia consultation the aged care organization has the lead and by the smart care the municipality is the coordinator. In nearly every project or activity the municipality is involved. The respondents emphasize that the municipality tries to manage by coming up with clear proposals and ideas and tries to take organizations along in it. But, there is also room for organizations to come up with own initiatives and ideas, there is even asked for by the municipality. Secondly, the interviewees have noticed that the municipality has the influence in the network. They have stressed that ultimately the municipality is the organization that specifies whether or not anything is done by means of subsidies they do or do not provide.

Centralization-based integration is high, due to the high scores on both indicators of centralization. The municipality is the organization with the core agent centrality and the concentration of influence.

Network effectiveness
The members of network Davis mention that the most important goal of the network is to offer a safety net for vulnerable citizens, in which the citizens can as long as possible have a pleasant and minimum acceptable way of life. According to the respondents the safety net can be created by providing a good qualitative support and the necessary care to the vulnerable people and people who need it. The point is that everyone can participate in society and is as self-reliant as possible. The network members indicate that there are some sub goals to provide the good qualitative
support. Firstly, care should not be delivered twice. Secondly, there should be not too many professionals at work in one family, but few professionals who do the work in one family. The members of network Davis mention that for both professionals and families, it is clearer if there are only some professionals behind the front door of a family. As third sub goal is mentioned that greater coordination between professionals can also prevent duplication of things and that too many professionals are present in one family. In the fourth place, some members underline that the network should have the financing of the Social Support Act in hand, so that care remains affordable and accessible to all citizens. It is stressed that there is less and less money and more and more elderly, so there must be tried to keep with less money for more people the Social Support Act available. As last point is mentioned that organizational interests must be put aside and there must be intensive cooperation towards a common goal. The network members emphasize that there must only be acted in interest of the client, which for the client is the best. According to the respondents, the network aims are broadly based and widely supported at all the levels (board, managerial and operational). They declare that there has just been started to realize the goals. At the operational level professionals are very committed to their clients and they want only one thing that their clients are helped well. But on the management and executive level own interests still play a role. There are still sometimes the same things done by different organizations. However, the members notice that the network is already quite capable of creating a safety net. In addition, there is increasingly a party that takes on the coordination, which reduces the number of professionals at work in a family. The members notice that the achievement of the goals is at a medium level, since the network is already quite capable of achieving some of the goals.

The members of network Davis have in total mentioned 21 services and projects that are provided by the network, which is a high number of projects and services. According to the members these services and projects cover the full needs of the citizens. The complete overview of all the services is shown in appendix IV. One service is highlighted as a best practice according to the respondents. This service is the scooter garage. According to the respondents, a scooter garage is built in a nursing home in the municipality. Many older people had a scooter, then they deceased and nothing was done anymore with the scooter. The network members indicate that often the people need this scooter only once a week. Therefore, there is a kind of garage made in the nursing home, where a certain number of scooters are placed and people can make use of it. It is underlined that in this way the scooters are used much more effectively and large amounts of money are saved.
According to the interviewees the strength of the relationships is medium, so not very strong, but also not very weak. The respondents indicate that managers and executives know to find each other well and meet each other regularly. At these two levels the organizations have good personal relationships with other organizations. An executive has stated: “the relationships are intense and accessible, and directors and managers know to find each other easily. We walk easily together in and we all know each other”. However at the operational level, the relationships are less strong, a number of projects have shown that not all professionals know each other. The interviewees note that professionals cannot appeal easily to each other. At the operational level it is still very much everyone for itself. The respondents underline that independently outside projects, professionals on the operational level know each other hard to find.

Network Davis is perceived as medium effective as on two of the three indicators of network effectiveness the network scores medium and on only one indicator high (number of services and projects).

4.1.5 Eliot

Network Eliot is located in a municipality with a population between the 75,000 and 100,000. In this network interviews have been conducted with 8 people. The network consists of the following organizations: municipality, volunteer center, home care organizations, welfare organization elderly, social work, care and nursing home, seniors’ organization, housing association, disability organization and mental health institution.

In the table below, the scores on the variables for network Eliot are presented:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of integration: Density</th>
<th>Level of integration: Centralization</th>
<th>Network effectiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the following sections a justification of the scores on all the three variables (density, centralization and network effectiveness) is given.

**Level of integration**

**Density**

Firstly, according to the members of network Eliot, there is little intensive inter-agency cooperation,
because every organization is still working very individually. In general, the respondents have emphasized that the cooperation is still more theory than practice, because on paper organizations agree that there should be cooperation, but in reality that cooperation is still not well established. The members notice that there are since a while a number of professional organizations that have established a steering group to develop a new structure of cooperation. The housing corporation, welfare organization, home care organization and an elderly care organization have taken place in the steering committee. These parties have created a structure for the network which is called the coordination point elderly work. It is noticed that at the board level commitment has been achieved between these organizations, but at the operational level it is given shape. It is also noticed that the cooperation that there is now, is mainly about further shaping the coordination point. Besides this, there is little other cooperation. The respondents indicate that the cooperation and meetings around the few projects that there are, are still occasional and very fragmented. Secondly, mutual relations are not very good. The members note that there are a few connections between professional organizations and volunteer organizations. They notice that at the board level, the directors of the various organizations meet each other occasionally, but not enough to call it strong mutual relations. In addition, most organizations and professionals know each other too little. Therefore, professionals have little understanding what organizations do exactly what kind of work. The respondents emphasize that the steering committee is now looking at how more relations between organizations can be embedded in the network (coordination point elderly). Thirdly, the respondents emphasize that the communication lines between professionals and organizations are not very good. They notice that the professionals meet each other rarely and even do not always know each other, in this way it is difficult to communicate with each other. When multiple professionals are at work in a family, there is communicated rarely about who is doing what. In this way, many services are done twice, because there is no coordination and communication between professionals. Fourthly, the interviewees underline the willingness to invest time and effort in sharing knowledge and information is not very great, because organizations are focused barely on the cooperation. They stress that organizations do not really look beyond their own borders with the result that professionals are certainly not aimed at sharing knowledge and information with other professionals. Finally, the respondents notice that conflicts of interest play a large role. They underline that the autonomy of organizations and releasing the organizational interests are the main reasons why the partnership is difficult to establish. The coordination point elderly work is an example that shows how difficult the cooperation is going, because two parties are not always present at the meetings and are busy with their own organizational interests.
The Eliot network is characterized by a low density-based integration, due to the low scores at all five indicators of density.

Centralization

Firstly, the respondents notice there is not yet a clear core agent, according to most of them the municipality should be that organization. They indicate that the municipality should be the organization that takes their role and establishes the cooperation. However, the municipality is very cautious, so little cooperation is achieved and the network is still very fragmented. The members remark that the municipality is still seeking for their role and how they should take on that role. In general, the members notice that the network lacks a controlling party that develops the network, since there are few connections. Secondly, the concentration of influence is in hands of the municipality. According to the interviewees, the municipality has the decision power, because they provide subsidies and have the last word about the funding. In addition, the municipality develops policy and other organizations are minimal involved in this development.

In short, the network level of centralization-based integration is medium, since the network only scores high on the indicator concentration of influence and low on the indicator core agent centrality.

Network effectiveness

In general, is underlined that the main purpose of the network is that vulnerable people are supported as well as possible, so they can continue to function optimally in society. Vulnerable people have to get the right help that they need. The network has to ensure that every citizen in the municipality can function in the social intercourse and that citizens are as self-reliant as possible. The members emphasize that as citizens are self-reliant, they can better participate in society and they can do something for someone else. The respondents notice that the questions that vulnerable people have, should be solved with a good range of services. The clients must note that there are sufficient services. The members also notice that the clients should not feel that a lot of organizations do not work together, because the clients become the dupe of it. In order to have a good answer to a question, it is important that professionals and organizations know each other, which is also a sub goal according to the members. Another sub goal that is mentioned is that professionals and organizations know of each other what they do and know who is by a client at work. According to the members a kind of case manager should there be who has the overview. This case manager identifies what the problem is and indicates what kind of support is needed for the
client. The case manager is also a sub goal. The last noticed sub goal is that all the services and support must be organized with the resources and finances that are available in the network. The members believe that the purpose is generally supported, because organizations are aware that the cooperation should be established. However, there are little steps taken to reach the goal. Members indicate that the cooperation is at an early stage, which makes it difficult to already reach network level goals. It is underlined that organizations are primarily focused on their own organizational interests and goals. Also, a lot of professionals and organizations do not know each other well. The respondents mention that therefore organizations do not always have a good answer to a question of a client and try to solve it by themselves, while another organization could provide better support. There are still lots of professionals working in a family and they are not even aware who else is working in that family, a case manager is missing. The members notice that the achievement of the goals is at a low level, since there are only small steps taken to achieve the goals.

The respondents have enumerated in total 9 services and projects that are provided by the network, which is a low number of services and projects. They underline that the number of services and projects does not cover at all the full needs of the citizens. Most of these services and projects exist not so very long. One service is highlighted by the network as best practice. This service is the neighborhood business. According to the members in one district a neighborhood venture is established. There are four organizations part of, namely; the welfare organization, social work, housing association and the municipality. This business must minimize the number of professionals that are in a family at work. One of the members explains how it works; “as a citizen in the district needs support, the citizen goes to the neighborhood business and explains there his problem. The four organizations try to find a suitable answer to the problem. In this way the citizen does not need to search for the right organization”. This business acts as a kind of case manager in the district.

The members of network Eliot notice that the strength of the relationships is very low. A lot of organizations do not even know each other. There are a few linkages between some organizations. The respondents mention that the few linkages that exist are even not of strong character.

Network Eliot is assigned as low effective since the network scores low on all three indicators of network effectiveness.
4.1.6 Filex

Network Filex is situated in a municipality with the number of citizens between 120,000 and 145,000. The network consists of the following organizations; municipality, welfare organization, organization that supports people with disabilities, social work, care and nursing homes, seniors’ organizations, home care organizations, housing associations and mental health institution. In total is spoken with 8 people.

In the table below, the scores on the variables for network Filex are presented:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of integration: Density</th>
<th>Level of integration: Centralization</th>
<th>Network effectiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In the following sections a justification of the scores on all the three variables (density, centralization and network effectiveness) is given.

**Level of integration**

**Density**

Firstly, the respondents have said the following about the inter-agency cooperation. In network Filex, there is since one year a steering committee elderly policy, because there were many individual projects, which are now merged into the steering committee. According to the respondents it is a consultation at middle management level, where the main parties in the municipality working in the field of elderly are involved. Once a quarter this committee comes together. However, not all organizations in the network are represented in this committee. The members underline that this committee is mainly focused on sharing knowledge and maintaining relationships. They notice that at the board level directors know where to find each other, but there is very little concrete cooperation. At the operational level there is already some cooperation. The respondents underline that in some districts professionals work together in a kind of community center. Not all organizations in the network are represented in this center. Once a month there is a consultation between the professionals on how things are going and what kind of problems there are. The members notice that the inter-agency cooperation is medium, since at the board level the cooperation is moderate and at the middle management and operational level not all organizations in the network are involved. But, the cooperation that exists at the middle management and operational level is good and intensive. Secondly, the communication lines are reasonable. The
interviewees stress that at the middle management level in the steering committee there is a lot of communication going on and professionals also know to find each other well. They notice that at the operational level the professionals in the community center communicate a lot with each other. At the board level directors know to find each other, but there is not much communication until now. The respondents emphasize that there are not very good communication lines with those organizations and professionals that are not in the steering committee and community center. These professionals are often poorly informed of developments and are not yet well achieved. Because of the above mentioned points the lines of communication are of medium level according to the members. Thirdly, the mutual relations are reasonable. The interviewees notice that the relations between the professionals in the steering committee and in the community center are good. These professionals know each other very well and know who they need to call for what. The members underline that the contacts with professionals who are not represented in this committee and center are not very good. They notice that the professionals in the center and committee often do not know these other professionals and that is logical as you barely see or speak each other. According to the respondents, the relations between directors are of reasonable nature, they know each other and have no quarrels, but they are still too focused on their own organization. The respondents notice that the mentioned points indicate that the network scores medium on mutual relations.

Fourthly, the members notice that the willingness to invest time and effort in sharing knowledge and information is great by all professionals. They remark that at the middle management level the steering committee spends much time in sharing knowledge and information and also at the operational level much time is spent in sharing knowledge between professionals in the community center. Finally, the interviewees notice that conflicts of interest play large a role, but mainly at the board level. At that level organizational interests play a major role and the directors especially think about the autonomy they loose with the cooperation. The respondents remark that professionals do look beyond their own organizational borders and serve the common interests and in particular the interests of the client. According to the members, network Filex scores medium at the indicator conflicts of interest, since at the board level the interests play a major role and on the other two levels the interests play a minor role.

Network Filex shows a medium-density based integration, since the network scores medium on four of the five indicators and high on one indicator (willingness to invest time and effort in sharing knowledge).
Centralization

Firstly, according to all respondents the core agent in network Filex is the municipality. It is also remarked that the welfare organization is also a fairly central player in the network, but they depend on what the community decides and the municipality gives them the mandate to get things done. The municipality is the organization that makes connections between organizations, so that organizations are working together. One of the respondents states: “the municipality is the driving force and takes the management role clearly in their hands, or else nothing happens”. The members stress that the municipality provides clear direction to the implementation of the Social Support Act, how they want to see it. Secondly, the interviewees notice that by providing subsidy, the municipality can easily guide the implementation. The final decision power is in hands of the municipality; they make the policy and manage money.

The network is marked by a high centralization-based integration, because of the high scores on both indicators of centralization.

Network effectiveness

According to the respondents the main goal of the network is to help people live so responsibly and independently as possible. If people can organize more themselves and need less care, enormous costs can be saved. The members note that the self organizing also has to do with vital people in the area of vulnerable citizens who support them through volunteer work. In this way costs can also be saved, because fewer professionals are needed. Organizations and professionals have to provide citizens with the best possible service and help and support them where needed. One of the members mentions as purpose; “a safety net for those who need it and that they can easily find the way and that there is a simple and clear social map of all institutions in the city”. As a sub goal the respondents have noted that professionals and organizations must dare to stand off clients and trust in other professionals’ knowledge and skills, that the other professionals will provide the right support. They notice that also here it comes to acting in the interests of the client and saving costs as the client is supported immediately by the right professional. Another sub goal that is connecting to this is being at work with as minimal as possible professionals in a family. A final sub goal that is noticed is that the municipality only has a facilitating role and no longer has a leading role; the whole implementation of the Social Support Act should be left to the social society. The municipality only provides a number of principles and the organizations will get it to work. The respondents believe that the goals are generally broadly based and widely supported, but that in particular by care organizations organizational interests still play a role and that they prefer to help clients themselves.
In general, the members of network Filex indicate that quite a few steps have already made to reach the goals, but there are definitely a few years more needed before everything is as far as has previously been thought. The network is already quite capable to create the safety net. It is also underlined that there is more and more acted in the interest of the client, but it certainly happens that quite many professionals are in a family at work. Yet, there is increasing mutual trust in each other’s knowledge and skills. However, the members have noted that still some things have to change in the mindset of organizations and professionals, so that everything becomes more obvious. The municipality is in fact still quite decisive and steering, while the organizations have to take more initiative and pick up more by themselves. As last positive development is indicated by the respondents that there are a large number of people who like to volunteer to support vulnerable people. The members have noticed that the achievement of the goals is at a medium level, since the network is already quite capable of achieving some goals.

In total 22 services and projects that are provided by the network have been noted by the respondents, which is a high number of services and projects. According to the members these services and projects cover the full needs of the citizens. The complete overview of all the services and projects is shown in appendix IV. One service is highlighted that is a best practice according to the respondents. That is the laundry and ironing service. This service was first part of the household assistance. According to the members the reason for removing this service out of the household assistance is to save costs. The laundry is collected from people’s home and is done at a central place. This work is done by people in the assistance allowance. After a few days they bring back the clean laundry to all people.

According to the members of network Filex at the operational level the strength of the relations is strong between professionals who are together at work in the community center. However, the strength of the relations between the professionals of the community center and professionals from outside the community center is not very strong. They do not often speak each other and the professionals outside the community center are not always informed of developments in the district. At the middle management level the managers meet each other regularly and know to find each other regularly in the steering group. However, it is noted that not all parties are in the steering committee and with those parties the relations are somewhat less strong. Some members have mentioned that the municipality is the party who has made the connections so that organizations are working together and visiting each other. At the board level directors know to find each other and at this level relationships are pretty strong. The fact that the parties do not all speak the same
language, also ensures that the strength of the relations is not very strong between all parties according to the respondents. The members mention that the strength of the relations is medium, since not at all levels relationships are very strong.

The Filex network can be labeled as *medium effective*, since the network scores medium on two of the indicators (strength of relationships and achievement of network goals) and high on one indicator (number of actual services and projects).

### 4.2. Summary of individual case scores

The complete data is presented below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Network</th>
<th>Level of integration: Density</th>
<th>Level of integration: Centralization</th>
<th>Network effectiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alan</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bailey</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chest</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davis</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eliot</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filex</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results show two networks are both density-based and centralization-based integrated, while two other networks seem to be low density-based and medium centralization-based integrated. Two networks show a medium density-based integration and a high centralization-based integration. Two networks are characterized by a high effectiveness, two other networks are characterized by a medium effectiveness and the last two networks are characterized by a low effectiveness.

### 4.3 Findings in-depth relationship

To understand more of the found relationship between level of integration and network effectiveness in the cases, this section will provide more detailed insights in the relationship. All the respondents have been asked some questions (see appendix II) to get these more detailed insights in the relationship. According to the interviewees, the items listed below give a deeper description of how the level of integration influences network effectiveness.

The first item which has been noted by the respondents is; insight in each other’s range of services. The organizations have in mind what their limitations are and know what they can deliver. When
they have a problem, they look around what other organizations can do in this problem. So everyone knows who is good in what. According to the interviewees the network functions in this way effectively, because every organization in the network knows what the qualities and services of every other organization is, so that clients can be helped quickly by the right organization in the network. One respondent has remarked: “you know to find each other quickly and you know what you can do for each other. Professionals need to know exactly who can provide which service”. Professionals and organizations should be aware of each other’s knowledge and skills. The interviewees have stated that professionals have to use each other’s knowledge and skills and therefore should know what each other’s knowledge and expertise is. In this way, professionals can find each other easily and keep in mind what is the work of other organizations.

Secondly, has been noticed a kind of case manager in the network. Coordination between the organizations and professionals themselves is crucial. Several people have indicated that a case manager contributes to more coordination takes place. Moreover, the use of a case manager prevents that too many professionals in a family are on the floor. The case manager determines what care or service is needed and what specific organization can deliver that care or service, in this way the network functions effectively, since the right service is quickly delivered by the right organization. The respondents underline a good coordination of the assistance is needed when the care becomes too complicated. One interviewee says: “By using a case manager it is avoided that the client has to tell five times the same story to another professional every time”. Also, is noted that the exchange of information goes more quickly when there is one party that takes control in a household and that not too many professionals are at work in one family.

The third noted item is the information exchange and communication between professionals. The respondents stress the importance of the sharing of knowledge about trends and developments and respond to these trends and developments. Also, they indicate that it is helpful if professionals speak the same language with each other, so they can quickly and easily tune things. By speaking the same language tasks can easily be divided. The interviewees stress that organizations have to know of each other where every organization is at work and there should be mutual communication of clients. Professionals should inform each other of what they identify by a client, when they know what professionals more are at work by a client. It is noticed that it is important when a client comes with a question, professionals are aware of what is all going on with the client. This is only possible when professionals provide each other with information and communicate with each other. The members
remark that when there is good communication and information exchange between professionals, the network can function effectively, because everyone is well informed on all developments.

Fourthly, has been underlined no duplication of services. The respondents stress that duplication can be avoided when one professional has the control and professionals know of each other what everyone’s skills are. They have noticed that when there is good communication and everyone knows who what does and information and clients are shared, activities or services are not done twice. Also, is stressed with the use of a case manager and by speaking the same language it can be prevented that care or services are delivered twice. According to the interviewees duplication must be avoided for functioning effectively as a network. They notice that if certain services are done twice, there is a chance that other services are not done and then the network does not function effectively.

The fifth item which has been called by the respondents is releasing the own organizational interests. The organization interests should be subordinate and therefore organizations should cross own organization borders. By giving away the organizations own interests and aims, it is easier to reach the common goals. One interviewee has formulated it in the next manner; “as long as every organization stays at its own island and continues to defend their own organization and does not allow other organizations, you will never reach effectiveness”. According to the respondents organizations should certainly not remain engaged with the interests of its own organization, because then the cooperation would never take place. The members notice that the network functions effectively when own organizational interests are subordinate and all organizations pursue the common goal.

Finally, the network members have noted that there should be mutual trust between professionals and organizations. When professionals grant or trust each other, it is easier to share mutual information, knowledge or customers if that is necessary. The interviewees indicate that if there is no faith, doors of organizations remain closed and there will be little or no cooperation. Professionals must dare to trust the professionalism of other care workers. The respondents notice that when there is trust between professionals, professionals are willing to cooperate and share knowledge, information and clients, allowing the network to function effectively.
4.4 Summary of findings in-depth relationship

In total the interviewees have mentioned six items that give a deeper explanation for the found relationship between level of integration and network effectiveness in this study. The first item is insight in each others’ range of services and qualities. As second item a case manager who has the control. In the third place the communication and information exchange between professionals. The fourth item is no services or projects are done twice. The fifth item is to release the own organizational interests. The final item is mutual trust between professionals.
5. Discussion and Limitations

This chapter reviews the main findings of this study.

5.1 Discussion

This study has intended to provide in-depth insights in the relationship between level of integration and network effectiveness, by testing a part of the model of network effectiveness by Provan & Milward (1995) in a service delivery context. Looking at the results of the six Dutch networks, one can clearly recognize a pattern that leads to high network effectiveness. This pattern illustrates that a cohesive network structure combined with a centralized coordination of services is likely to be an effective condition for networks (Alan and Bailey). This finding will be further discussed in section 5.1.1. In the following sections you will read the following: (1) theoretical implications, (2) practical implications and (3) limitations.

5.1.1. Theoretical implications

To come to a broader understanding of network effectiveness, the observed pattern (relationship between level of integration and network effectiveness) in this study need to be interpreted in light of the proposition of Provan & Milward (1995).

Proposition: “Other things being equal, network effectiveness will be enhanced when the network is integrated, but only when integration is achieved through centralization of the network. Networks that are both centrally integrated, though a core agency, and decentrally integrated through cohesive links among network members, will be less effective than networks that are predominantly centralized” (Provan & Milward, 1995, p.25).

Findings of this study are not in line with the findings of Provan & Milward, as they suggest that only centrally integrated networks are effective. Findings in this study suggest that effectiveness can be achieved through both density-based and centralization-based integration (Alan and Bailey). Further, findings of the present study show density-based integration leads to network effectiveness. Hereby, contradicting the findings of Provan & Milward (1995), who argue only centralization-based integration leads to network effectiveness. Therefore, the observed pattern in this study is not similar to the predicted pattern (propoosition) of Provan & Milward (1995) and the proposition is rejected in this study. Besides, this study is also in disagreement with the study of Morrissey & Calloway (1994) who stated, networks can never be both integrated through density-based and centralization-based integration. Also, the study of Vollenberg et al. (2007) does not support the findings of this study, since they found in their study both centralization-based and density-based
integrated networks to be less effective. The findings in this study are partly in line with the findings of Raab & Suijkerbuijk (forthcoming), because they also find effective networks in their study to be characterized by high density (and low centralization). They argue that networks operating in a cohesive system are to be effective. The present study has also found that result.

One of the possible reasons for the differences in findings concerning level of integration might be that Provan & Milward (1995) used another methodology for measuring level of integration than was applied in this research. This remark about differences qua measurement might be true for the research that is conducted here. Because, it was sometimes not possible to use the same measurements in this research as Provan & Milward (1995) did, due to (1) time restrictions and (2) the high abstraction level of the concepts (particularly level of integration). Firstly, these authors had one year the time to collect their data; they have carried out extensive structured interviews with clients and their families. In addition, they also carried out interviews with clients’ case managers or therapists. Unfortunately, in this study there was not the time to involve all stakeholders and therefore, it was decided to interview people who had the broadest perspective on the functioning of the network, its members (managers, directors, policy advisors and policy makers of the organizations involved in the network). The second remark about abstraction level is made, because Provan & Milward (1995) have measured the concepts at a very high abstraction level. In their study they have noticed that the concepts are ill-defined, which makes the operationalization difficult and the interpretation of the outcomes confusing. Therefore, in their study, they have chosen deliberately to measure the concepts at a global/abstract level. In their study, this was probably possible because in the network was mainly cooperation at the operational level and they have measured the level of integration based on this level. While in this study at all levels (board, middle management and operational level) there is cooperation in the network. This makes the network more complex, since there is cooperation at all levels and it is easier to measure the concept in a consistent way when the concept is made operational as specified as possible. Therefore, this study has searched for indicators or aspects of the concepts that could operationalize the concepts more specified.

An interesting question is: what if there had been sufficient time to carry out the research? Would it have yielded different results when this study was carried out in the same way as Provan & Milward (1995) did? When for example, multiple stakeholders would have been included in this study, different findings regarding the concepts could have been found. Take for example network effectiveness into consideration. For instance, the end-users of the services of the network (citizens)
could consider a certain service as ineffective, while the network-level goals are achieved according to the network members. The combination of both opinions would increase the validity and reliability, since the concepts would have been measured more thoroughly. But it should be taken into account that regarding public networks, external stakeholder groups seldom exist for networks, as they do for organizations (Provan & Milward, 2001). Moreover, those groups tend to judge the network effectiveness on what specific organizations or professionals in the network either do or not do, rather than how well the network service has been provided as a result of network activities. So, it can be questioned whether including different stakeholders in this study would have had a positive effect on the quality of the findings. Still, it may have been worthwhile, since other results would likely be found and validity and reliability would have been increased. Moreover, asking network members to judge their own accomplishments may result in the possibility that they overestimate their own capacities. In general, people are less critical towards their own functioning than that of others. Thus, it is very likely that the findings in this study look better now than they are in reality, since the findings are based solely on the opinions of the network members.

If you look at the results found in this study, you could say that of the two aspects of level of integration, density has a greater influence on network effectiveness than centralization. For example, the individual case scores show that every level of density leads to the same level of network effectiveness. When the level of density is high, the network effectiveness is also high. That is not the case with the level of centralization, only in two cases (Alan & Bailey) centralization has the same level as network effectiveness. In the remaining four cases centralization has a higher level than network effectiveness, which gives the impression that the aspect is of lesser influence on the score of network effectiveness. Besides, as you look to the six items that give a more detailed explanation of how the level of integration affects network effectiveness, it seems that nearly all six items are related to density rather than to centralization. Five of the six items can be related to density and that are the following five; mutual trust, insight in each other’s range of services, information exchange and communication, duplication of services and releasing the own interest. Only one item can be related to centralization and that is the case manager. Also, these findings indicate that in this type of network, (service implementation) network density has a greater impact on network effectiveness than centralization.

A few sections back, there has been spoken about the difference in the results. This difference in the results between this study and the research of Provan & Milward (1995) can be nuanced on the basis of the findings of the in-depth relationship. The findings of the in-depth relationship have shown that
there are six items that explain how the level of integration can influence network effectiveness. Remarkably, as mentioned above is that five of the six items are related to density and the other item is related to centralization. All five items (of density) have a positive effect on network effectiveness. This means that the higher or better the network scores on the five items, the higher the level of density is and the higher the network effectiveness will be. Also the only item of centralization has a positive effect on network effectiveness. The higher the network scores on this item, the higher the level of centralization and the higher the level of effectiveness. These nuances support the findings of the individual case scores in this study and thus show that in this type of network, a cohesive network structure indeed leads to network effectiveness, in contrast to what Provan & Milward (1995) have found. Therefore, this study certainly contributes to the literature of network effectiveness and whole networks, as new (in-depth) insights are shown.

The concept level of integration is in the research of Provan & Milward (1995) and also in this study consistent with the general network structure concepts of density and overall centralization. According to Scott (1991) these concepts refer to differing aspects of the overall “compactness” of a network. Density describes the general level of cohesion in a graph and centralization describes the extent to which this cohesion is organized around particular focal points. According to Provan & Milward (1995) both aspects are complementary measures. Yet, this is strange, because both aspects are measured separately and also at the end for both variables a conclusion is made separately. It looks like that the level of integration is a compound variable of two independent variables that can vary separately. Therefore, it seems that both aspects are two independent variables that are not complementary to each other. It is not logical that both aspects are complementary to each other, since they can vary independently of each other and can score separately at both aspects high, medium or low. Further research could study whether this assumption is correct.

It is interesting to briefly go through the preceding section. In itself, it is to argue that low levels of density and a high degree of centralization leads to effectiveness and this relationship shows that both aspects of level of integration are complementary to each other. Because, even though there is little cohesion in the network, a central coordination of services could make sure that the network is operating effectively. The central players can ensure that the network is well coordinated, because they have the overview and see what should or should not happen and in that way the network is controlled efficiently and can function effectively. Also, for a high level of density and low degree of centralization it can be argued that it leads to network effectiveness. This relationship also implies that both aspects of the level of integration are complementary to each other. If there is a very good
cohesion in the network, then there is not a centralized coordination of services necessary needed for functioning effectively as a network. Whenever, there has been good cohesion in a network, so when professionals or organizations are very well connected to each other, they find each other easily, all know each other, doors are always open and problems can be solved or discussed easily. This allows the network to function very effectively. The good cohesion (such as good communication lines and good mutual relations) makes sure that things are going well and are aligned, so that the network can function effectively and will reach high levels of network effectiveness and there is no central player necessarily needed. Raab & Suijkerbuijk (forthcoming) have shown that effective networks in their study are characterized by high density and low centralization. But, if you look at a low degree of density and a low degree of centralization is it impossible to reach high levels of network effectiveness. The combination of these levels indicates that the aspects are not complementary to each other. If there is no cohesion and no central player, then there is little or no compactness between the parties in the network and therefore it is impossible to achieve high network effectiveness. If the aspects are complementary, this would mean that if one aspect fails somewhere, the other aspect complements it. For example, if the aspect of density shows little cohesion, then the aspect of centralization must ensure that there will be more compactness in the network by using a more central player in the network. In this relationship, this is not the case. Therefore, it can be doubted strongly whether the aspects are complementary to each other. Also a high degree of density and a high degree of centralization show that both aspects are not complementary to each other. When the network already has a very strong density level, what has a central player still further to complement? As already mentioned a few lines back, when there is high density in a network, the network can function effectively and no central player is needed. However, it is really the question if those aspects of the level of integration complement each other and not just two independent variables are. If they really complement each other as Provan & Milward (1995) argue, it is not logical that a combination is possible that both aspects score high together or both aspects score low together.

There are a few characteristics of municipalities/networks in this study where should be paid attention to, because it seems that they have an influence on the relationship. The first characteristic is size of the municipality/network. Size of the municipality is here related to size of the network, because in general, the bigger the size of the municipality the more complex the network and the more partners there are involved in the network. The study of Raab and Suijkerbuijk (2011) argue that small networks are more effective with a high level of cohesion, while large networks are more effective with centralization-based integrated structures. However, this line of reasoning is not
congruent with results found in the present study. Network Alan and Eliot are compared to the other networks a lot smaller, but network Alan is both, density-based and centralization-based integrated, while network Eliot is medium centralization-based integrated. Network Davis is the largest, which is centralization-based and medium density-based, but does not even score high on effectiveness. In this study it seems that size does not have an influence on the relationship. Another feature is the age of the municipality. In old municipalities that already exist hundreds of years, relations are already centuries old, as they exist for many years, making it difficult to suddenly change the level of density. Relations are an aspect of density. The advantage of young municipalities is that relations do not exist very long and therefore the level of density can be changed more easily. In addition, those municipalities are also constructed on the basis of contemporary developments, so that they are constructed a lot more efficient. The interviews revealed that this is a defining characteristic if the degree of cohesion was changed easily or not. Therefore, it seems that this characteristic has an influence on the relationship.

There remains one more methodological implication and that is the following. In section 3.2 (sampling strategy) was mentioned that in this study 3 cases with high levels of integration and 3 cases with low levels of integration were selected. Unfortunately, the individual case scores show that this is not the case. The variable density shows a gradual scale, 2 cases with a high density level, 2 cases with a medium density level and 2 cases with a low density level. This is a good scale division, because in this case two cases with a medium level are included, enabling smaller differences to become clearer, because there is also a middle scale. However, centralization shows not such a good scale division, since there are 4 cases with a high centralization level and 2 cases with a medium centralization level. A critical point that can be placed here is that there is no case in this study that has a low level of centralization, so you do not know what the effect is of a low level of centralization on network effectiveness. But on the other hand, this seems not a big issue, because as discussed earlier in the theoretical implications density seems to be of greater influence on network effectiveness than centralization.

5.1.2 Practical implications

In this section, the practical implications of the study are discussed.

According to the results there is one pattern through which high levels of network effectiveness can be achieved. Thus, there is one pattern leading to high network effectiveness; namely density-based
integration in combination with centralization-based integration. This pattern presents implications for municipalities as to how to structure the network. From the structural perspective the municipalities should be aware the network is both density-based and centralization-based integrated. If municipalities have to make a choice on which variable they have to focus, than they will have to focus more on density. Because, the theoretical implications have shown that density has a greater influence on network effectiveness than centralization.

To optimize the level of integration in order to reach a higher level of network effectiveness, there are some items where municipalities should pay attention to. For optimizing the density level, the following five items are important to reach a high level of network effectiveness. Firstly, to reach higher levels of effectiveness all organizations and professionals in the network should have insight in each other’s range of services. When everyone is aware of what services and support are provided by which organization, the network can function effectively, because everyone knows when which organization has to provide a certain service. In this way, it is prevented that an organization is simply going to offer support, while actually that is the work of another organization. Secondly, when there is optimal communication and information exchange between professionals and organizations, the network will reach higher levels of effectiveness. In a network with optimal communication and information exchange, everyone is aware of all developments going on in the network and therefore everyone is provided with key information. In this way, the network can function optimally. Thirdly, to reach a high level of network effectiveness, there should be done no services twice. If there is much duplication of services, unnecessary time is lost to the same service, while that time could be spent to providing another service. A high level of effectiveness will be reached, when there is no duplication of services, since all available time is optimally utilized. Fourthly, when there is mutual trust between professionals and organizations, the network will reach higher levels of effectiveness. If there is mutual trust in each other’s knowledge and skills, professionals and organizations will appeal to each other’s capabilities and therefore there will be more collaboration created and in this way the network will function effectively. If there is little or no trust, there will be little or no cooperation and then effectiveness will never be achieved. Finally, to reach a high level of network effectiveness, organizations have to release the own organizational interests. When organizational interests are subordinate to the joint interests and everyone pursues common (network) goals, the network functions very effectively, since everyone acts in the interest of the network.

For optimizing the centralization level, the following item is important to reach a higher level of network effectiveness. There has to be a case manager in the network, preferably always the same
organization, so that there is no confusion, because everywhere it is the same organization that has the coordination. A case manager can see what services will and will not be necessary and can indicate which organizations are required to provide the services. In this way, the network functions effectively at a high level, because no unnecessary services are delivered and the services that are needed are provided by the right organizations.

5.2 Limitations

In this section, the limitations of the study are discussed.

Firstly, the data captured in the network have been collected at only one point in time, while network structures are likely to evolve over time. However, the measurement approach adopted in this study did not allow for assessing the dynamic nature of network processes across time. Therefore, direction of causality is assumed, not tested. Moreover, due to time restrictions it was not possible to collect the data at different points in time.

The second limitation of the study, regards the number of observed cases. Since research on whole networks is both complex and time consuming, only six networks were taken into account in view of time. Because of the low number of cases, by which the external validity of the study is somehow restricted and the reliability is limited. This study is not enough to make any hard claims about the full population.

Thirdly, the findings in this study are limited by the type of network that is studied in this research – a service implementation network in the Social Support Act. Other types of networks such as information diffusion networks, problem solving networks or community capacity building networks (Milward & Provan, 2006) may be very different in terms of the relationship between level of integration and network effectiveness and might be featured by different network dynamics. Further research is needed in other types of networks to determine whether the findings of this study are valid in the other types of networks.

The fourth limitation of the study is the measurements of the variables that were based on subjective measures. When asking respondents to judge their own accomplishments or the accomplishments of the networks in which they are involved in, there might be a chance they give an overestimation of the accomplishments. Normally, people are less critical towards their own functioning than that of others. An attempt was made to reduce the subjectivity, by means of
collecting multiple sources of data (semi-structured interviews and document studies) and incorporating multiple network members (policy advisors, policy makers, managers and directors). However, the subjective measure remains.

Fifthly, this research has not exactly used the same measurement as Provan & Milward (1995). This was not possible, since Provan & Milward (1995) have measured the concepts (particularly level of integration) at a high abstraction level (not very detailed), whereby the operationalization of the concepts becomes very difficult. In addition, they had plenty of time. To make the operationalization easier and clearer in this study, there is in the literature searched for indicators of the concepts. Because the concepts are measured in a slightly different way, therefore it may be that different results in this study are found than those in the study by Provan & Milward (1995).

The final limitation, concerns the fact that data regarding network effectiveness has only been collected from one stakeholder of the network, namely its members. When for example, the operationalization of network effectiveness of Provan & Milward (1995) would have been applied, including multiple stakeholder perspectives, different findings regarding the concept could have been found. However, it should be taken into account that regarding public networks, external stakeholder groups seldom exist for networks, as they do for organizations (Provan & Milward, 2001). Moreover, external stakeholder groups tend to reward network-level effectiveness on what specific network organizations or professionals either do or do not, rather than how well the network service has been provided as a result of common network activities. It can therefore be questioned whether including different stakeholders in this study would have had a positive effect on the quality of the findings.
6. Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter provides a short summary of the research and provides an answer to the research question (6.1). Furthermore, based on the discussion, limitations and conclusions some recommendations for further research are made (6.2).

6.1 Conclusion

The last decade networks are becoming a very important organizational form, because of the increase of societal complexity. Public and nonprofit organizations make an increasing use of networks, this leads to a rising demand for studies about the functioning and effectiveness of whole networks. Therefore, the present study anticipated on this demand by testing partly the model (relationship between level of integration and network effectiveness) of Provan & Milward (1995) in a service implementation network and by studying in-depth this relationship, since detailed insight in this relationship of the model is missing. To that end, the following research question was formulated; “to what extent and how does the level of integration influence the network effectiveness in a service implementation network?”

The research question was investigated by gaining in-depth knowledge and insights on six network focused on the Social Support Act in Dutch local municipalities through a document study, semi-structured face-to-face interviews and some semi-structured telephone interviews. Networks were scored on both variables. The results show three patterns between level of integration and network effectiveness. The first pattern shows high density-based integration combined with high centralization-based integration is sufficient for a network to be highly effective. Two networks have shown this pattern (Alan and Bailey). The second pattern shows a low density score combined with medium centralization-based integration leads to a network to be low effective. Two networks have shown this pattern (Chest and Eliot). The final pattern shows medium density-based integration combined with a high centralization scores leads to a network to be medium effective. Two networks have shown this pattern (Davis and Filex). These results imply that service implementation networks should be both density-based integrated and centralization-based integrated to lead to effective networks. So, regarding the first part of the research question (to what extent) can be concluded that there is a pattern (relationship) between level of integration and network effectiveness.

Furthermore, the level of integration has a high influence on the network effectiveness, since high levels of both density-based and centralization-based integration leads to high network effectiveness. Therefore, it can be concluded that the observed pattern (relationship) is not similar to
the predicted pattern (proposition) of Provan & Milward (1995) that rejects the proposition. This means that the central hypothesis formulated by Provan & Milward (1995) in this research is not confirmed.

The second part of the research question has focused on the found patterns and has explained the found patterns. Six items are found that give a more detailed explanation of how the level of integration affects network effectiveness. The first item is; insight in each other’s range of services. The network functions effectively, because every organization in the network knows what the qualities and services of every other organization is, so that clients can be helped quickly by the right organization in the network. The second item is; a case manager in the network. The case manager determines what support is needed and what specific organization can deliver that support, in this way the network functions effectively, since the right service is quickly delivered by the right organization. As third item; information exchange and communication between professionals is mentioned. When there is good communication and information exchange between professionals, the network functions effectively, because everyone is well informed on all developments. The fourth item is duplication of services. There must be no duplication of services, so that the network can function effectively. As fifth item; releasing the own organizational interests is mentioned. The network functions effectively when own organizational interests are subordinate and all organizations pursue the common goal. The final item is mutual trust between professionals and organizations. When there is trust between professionals, professionals are willing to cooperate and share knowledge, information and clients, allowing the network to function effectively.

Results of the present study contribute to the understanding of network effectiveness and whole network research. First, by testing a part of the model of Provan & Milward (1995) in a service delivery network. Next, the findings contribute to the knowledge on network effectiveness through studying in-depth the relationship between level of integration and network effectiveness in the context of networks focused on the Social Support Act. In addition, the knowledge on the functioning of whole networks is extended through providing new insights in the relationship between level of integration and network effectiveness. Furthermore, the present study provides insights for municipalities to either optimize the level of integration of their network to reach a higher level of effectiveness. It also offers municipalities insights into differences in cohesion between networks. The next section presents recommendations for further research.
6.2 Recommendations

In this section, several (6) directions for further research are provided based on the discussion, limitations and conclusions.

Firstly, this study was only based on service implementation networks. However, there are many other types of networks, including information diffusion networks, problem solving networks or community capacity building networks. Further research is needed in these other types of networks to determine whether the results of the service implementation networks found in this study can be applied to other types of networks.

Secondly, as mentioned in the limitations section the data in this research was gathered at only one point in time, while network structures are likely to evolve over time. For further research it is recommended to investigate the same networks during several years (longitudinal). In this way, changes in the development of networks can be taken into account.

Thirdly, the number of observed cases in this study was relatively low; as a result the total coverage of the observed cases was also low, which makes it hard to make solid statements. Further research should extend the number of cases to for example 10 or 15; so that the coverage will be increased and more solid statements about network effectiveness in a service implementation network can be formulated.

Fourthly, the concepts level of integration and also network effectiveness should be extended and more specifically defined. For further research it must be clear on the basis of which indicators the concepts can be measured. The way Provan & Milward (1995) have described and measured the concepts is at a high abstraction level. This study has attempted to formulate some kind of indicators of the concepts, but to be sure if these are the right ones for measuring the concepts, further research is needed.

Fifthly, as mentioned in the discussion, the researcher has some doubts about whether it is true that the level of integration is a combination of both density and centralization, or that both independent variables are. More research is needed to find out whether these doubts are correct. Further research should investigate what the result is as both variables are included as independent variables in the research.
Finally, since this study has only collected data from one stakeholder of the network, its network members, further research is needed to include perspectives of multiple stakeholders. When further research involves multiple stakeholders it can be tested if the same results are found as in the present study and if that is not the case, the research can study where the difference comes from.
7. References


## APPENDIX I – Operationalization table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Calculation of score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Network effectiveness</td>
<td>Network effectiveness</td>
<td>- the number of actual services and projects delivered by the network&lt;br&gt;- the strength of the relationships between and among network members&lt;br&gt;- achievement of local network level goals (Provan &amp; Milward, 2001)</td>
<td>Low effectiveness&lt;br&gt;Medium effectiveness&lt;br&gt;High effectiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network structure (Level of integration)</td>
<td>Density</td>
<td>- cohesion of the network:&lt;br&gt;  • inter-agency cooperation&lt;br&gt;  • communication lines&lt;br&gt;  • conflicts of interest&lt;br&gt;  • willingness to invest time/effort in sharing knowledge/information&lt;br&gt;  • mutual relations</td>
<td>Low density&lt;br&gt;Medium density&lt;br&gt;High density</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centralization</td>
<td>- core agent centrality&lt;br&gt;- concentration of influence</td>
<td>Low centralization&lt;br&gt;Medium centralization&lt;br&gt;High centralization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX II – Topic list

Topic list representatives of the organizations in the Wmo network

1. **Introductie**
   - onderzoek naar de netwerk effectiviteit van het Wmo spelersveld.
   - invloed van de aansturing en netwerk samenhang op netwerk effectiviteit.
   - Netwerk is de gemeente en de partner organisaties in het Wmo spelersveld.

2. **Algemeen**
   - Wat is uw functie binnen de organisatie waar u werkzaam bent?

3. **Netwerk structuur**
   **samenhang van het netwerk/Density**
   - **samenwerking tussen organisaties**
     - Hoe ziet de samenwerking tussen organisaties er uit?
     - Op welk niveau wordt er samengewerkt?
     - In welke mate wordt er in wisselende vormen gewerkt tussen de organisaties onderling?
     - Wat is er goed aan de manier waarop er samen wordt gewerkt binnen het spelersveld?
     - Wat is er niet goed aan de manier waarop er samen wordt gewerkt binnen het spelersveld? (wat zou u anders willen zien/doen?)

   - **Belangentegenstellingen**
     - In hoeverre is er sprake van belangentegenstellingen tussen de organisaties onderling?
     - Waar bestaan die belangentegenstellingen uit?

   - **Onderlinge verhoudingen**
     - Hoe zien de onderlinge verhoudingen eruit?
     - Hoe beoordeelt u die onderlinge verhoudingen?
     - Met welke organisaties heeft uw organisatie het meest contact/werkt uw organisatie het meest samen?
     - Met welke organisaties heeft uw organisatie het minst contact/werkt uw organisatie het meest samen?
     - In hoeverre heeft iedere partner contact met iedere andere partner?

   - **Bereidheid om tijd en inspanning te leveren in het delen van kennis en informatie**
     - In welke mate zijn organisaties bereid om samen te werken?
     - Hoe groot is de bereidheid van organisaties om tijd en inspanning te leveren in het delen van kennis en informatie?
- **Communicatielijnen**
- Hoe ziet de onderlinge communicatie er uit?
- Op welke manieren wordt er onderling gecommuniceerd?
- Hoe beoordeelt u de onderlinge communicatie?

**De mate waarin en samenhang plaats vindt rondom 1 centraal punt**

**Centralization**
- **Centrale kern agent**
- Is er een organisatie (of twee) die de activiteiten coördineert of worden de activiteiten gezamenlijk gecoördineerd? Waarom is het zo? Wie is die coördinerende organisatie?
- Hoe zou jij de rol typeren van deze organisatie?

- **Beslissingsmacht**
- Is er in het spelersveld sprake van een organisatie die de beslissingsmacht heeft of is er gezamenlijke beslissingsmacht?
- Bij wie ligt die beslissingsmacht?

**4. Netwerk effectiviteit**

- **Behalen van netwerk doelen**
- Wat ziet u als belangrijkste doel van het netwerk?
- In hoeverre wordt dit doel algemeen onderschreven?
- In welke mate worden de doelen behaald?

- **Aantal diensten en projecten geleverd door het netwerk**
- Welke gezamenlijke diensten worden er geleverd?
- Welke gezamenlijke projecten worden er gedaan?
- In hoeverre dekken deze diensten en projecten de volledige behoeften van burgers?
- Welke dienst of project is volgens u een best practice? Leg uit.

- **Sterkte van de relaties**
- Hoe goed zijn de relaties met andere organisaties/professionals?
- Hoe sterk zijn die relaties?
- Bent u via meerdere wegen verbonden met de andere organisaties? (dus wanneer een van die wegen/linken wegvalt, blijft de relatie/het contact dan voortbestaan).

- **Algemene vragen (extra)**
- Wat vindt u zelf van de effectiviteit van samenwerken?
- Bent u tevreden over het functioneren van het netwerk? Leg uit.

- **Inzichtvragen relatie**
- Wat in (de samenhang van) het netwerk draagt bij aan de effectievere zorg?
- Hoe draagt (de samenhang van) het netwerk bij aan de effectievere zorg?
APPENDIX III – Short questionnaire selection of cases

Korte vragenlijst

De effectiviteit van integrale Wmo netwerken

Wat: Een onderzoek naar de effectiviteit van zes integrale Wmo netwerken. Een integraal netwerk is een onderling verbonden geheel van organisaties en instanties waarvan de gemeente ook deel uitmaakt. Integrale netwerken zijn ontstaan vanuit de behoefte van gemeente en haar partners om in complexe situaties in beeld te krijgen wat de ondersteuningsbehoeften van de burger in kwestie is en welke oplossingen daar het beste bij passen.

Waarom: De Kanteling in de Wmo vergt een omslag van claim- en aanbodgericht werken naar vraag- en resultaatgericht werken. Een dergelijke omslag vraagt in veel gemeenten om ingrijpende veranderingen, zowel in de interne organisatie als in de relatie met burgers en partnerorganisaties. Een aantal gemeenten werken met integrale wijkgerichte netwerken (Wmo netwerken), maar door de ingrijpende omslag in de manier van werken, is meer inzicht wenselijk in hoe de netwerken/Wmo het effectiefst vormgeven kunnen worden. In de wetenschappelijke literatuur is er echter vrij weinig bekend over de werking en effectiviteit van netwerken (zoals het integrale Wmo netwerk). Deze voorstudie biedt een aanzet voor de landelijke effectiviteitsmelting.

Hoe: Door middel van interviews met de vertegenwoordigers van gemeente / partnerorganisaties.

Door wie: Karen van de Weijer in het kader van haar master scriptie voor de opleiding Organization Studies aan de Universiteit van Tilburg en als onderdeel van haar traineeship bij IVA beleidsonderzoek en advies.

De informatie die u verstrekt zal vertrouwelijk worden behandeld. Alle respondenten ontvangen een rapportage over het netwerk op netwerk niveau. Informatie zal niet te herleiden zijn naar individuele personen of organisaties.

Alvast bedankt voor uw medewerking!!

Karen van de Weijer, Bsc
Trainee/project assistent IVA beleidsonderzoek en advies
 t. 013-4668431
e. K.v.d.Weijer@uvt.nl
Achtergrond gegevens

1. In welke gemeente bent u werkzaam?


Informatie over het netwerk

1. Wordt er binnen de gemeente gewerkt met netwerken waarin samenwerking van professionals plaatsvindt rond kwetsbare burgers?
   - Ja
   - Nee

2. Op welk niveau wordt er samengewerkt binnen die integrale netwerken?
   - regionaal
   - gemeentelijk
   - wijk

3. Nemen nog steeds dezelfde partnerorganisaties/professionals deel in het netwerk sinds de oprichting van het netwerk?
   - Ja
   - Nee

4. Welk bedrag is er dit jaar (2011) aan Wmo geld beschikbaar in de gemeente?


5. Op welke manier komt het Wmo geld het netwerk binnen?
   - via de Rijksoverheid
   - via subsidies
   - Anders, namelijk:

6. Vindt er controle van buiten af plaats over hoe het Wmo geld ingezet wordt? (of: moet de gemeente verantwoording af leggen aan een externe partij over hoe de gemeente het Wmo geld inzet?)
   - Ja
   - Nee

7. Door wie wordt die controle gedaan? (aan wie wordt die verantwoording afgelegd?)


8. Wie heeft de regierol binnen het netwerk?


9. Is er een of zijn er meerdere organisaties met beslissingsmacht binnen het netwerk?
   - een organisatie
   - meerdere organisaties
10. **In welke mate heeft iedere partner contact met iedere andere partner?**
   - nooit
   - zelden
   - soms
   - regelmatig
   - vaak
APPENDIX IV – Overview of the actual services provided by the network

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Network</th>
<th>Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alan</td>
<td>1) care and convenience services</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2) support point volunteer aid</td>
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<td>3) neighborhood bindery</td>
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<td>4) visible link</td>
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<td>5) customization</td>
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<td>6) move garden elderly</td>
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<td>7) daytime activities</td>
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<td>8) living room elderly</td>
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<td>9) Alzheimer café</td>
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<td>10) behind the front door</td>
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<td>11) smart care</td>
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<td>12) signaling network</td>
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<td>13) summer weeks elderly</td>
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<td>14) buddy project</td>
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<td>15) assistance with tax declaration</td>
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<td>16) personal security</td>
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<td>17) directed support</td>
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<td>18) residential service zone</td>
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<td>19) neighborhood-oriented dialogue</td>
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<td>20) WWZ consultation</td>
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<td>21) information system Guido</td>
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<td>22) personal support</td>
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<td>23) voluntary home care</td>
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<td>24) neighborliness</td>
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<td>Bailey</td>
<td>1) social bars</td>
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<td>2) integrated networks</td>
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<td>3) own strength indicator</td>
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<td>4) day time activities</td>
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<td>5) preventive home visits 70+</td>
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<td>6) be my friend</td>
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<td>7) early identification dementia</td>
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<td>8) meals provision</td>
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<td>9) big move</td>
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<td>10) talent in the neighborhood</td>
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<td>11) collective scooters</td>
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<td></td>
<td>12) buddy project</td>
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<td>13) personal coaches</td>
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<td>14) nursing teams</td>
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<td>15) visible link</td>
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<td>16) district profiles</td>
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<td>17) integrated community development</td>
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<td>20) voluntary home care</td>
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<td>21) dining tables</td>
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<td>22) pampering afternoons</td>
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<td>Chest</td>
<td>1) preventive home visit</td>
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<td>2) visit project for gay elderly</td>
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<td>3) day of the volunteer aid</td>
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<td>10) health project Crabbehof</td>
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<td></td>
<td>11) visible link</td>
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<td></td>
<td>12) residential service zone</td>
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<td><strong>4) day time activities</strong></td>
<td><strong>13) Alzheimer café</strong></td>
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<td><strong>5) buddy project</strong></td>
<td><strong>14) brigade form</strong></td>
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<td><strong>6) helping hands</strong></td>
<td><strong>15) information sessions (dementia)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>7) voluntary home visits</strong></td>
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<td><strong>8) neighborhood-oriented healthcare network</strong></td>
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<td><strong>9) project extended chain dementia</strong></td>
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**Davis**

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<th><strong>1) short lines</strong></th>
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<td><strong>15) taskforce 50+</strong></td>
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<td><strong>3) MOM</strong></td>
<td><strong>16) tax consultants</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4) dementia consultation</strong></td>
<td><strong>17) information meetings</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5) link team</strong></td>
<td><strong>18) living room elderly</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6) alcohol prevention 55+</strong></td>
<td><strong>19) day care activities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**7) care network Middle-Brabant</td>
<td><strong>20) the triangle</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8) smart care</strong></td>
<td><strong>21) scooter garage</strong></td>
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<td><strong>9) activities network</strong></td>
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<td><strong>10) mantelzorg platform</strong></td>
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<td><strong>11) management group housing, care and welfare</strong></td>
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<td><strong>12) home care service in the district</strong></td>
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<td><strong>13) consultation senior citizens’ organizations</strong></td>
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**Eliot**

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<tr>
<th><strong>1) neighborhood business</strong></th>
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<td><strong>3) Kalfsdonk café</strong></td>
<td><strong>8) social recreational activities</strong></td>
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<td><strong>4) network salon</strong></td>
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<td><strong>5) early detection vulnerable elderly</strong></td>
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**Filex**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>1) laundry and ironing service</strong></th>
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<td><strong>3) scooter pole</strong></td>
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<td><strong>4) quarter square</strong></td>
<td><strong>16) living project, day care for elderly</strong></td>
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<td><strong>5) crown on your neighborhood</strong></td>
<td><strong>17) desire to move</strong></td>
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<td><strong>6) bicycle repair service</strong></td>
<td><strong>18) buddy project</strong></td>
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<td><strong>7) loneliness project</strong></td>
<td><strong>19) voluntary home care</strong></td>
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<td>8)</td>
<td><strong>preventive home visits</strong></td>
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